

# Municipality of East Hants



EAST HANTS

## Annual Report 2024/2025





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



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# Our Municipality





**Burntcoat Head Park**

# About East Hants

The Municipality of East Hants is a picturesque region, centrally located on mainland Nova Scotia. It is known for its vast areas of forest with small communities, a vibrant business scene and a scenic shore. East Hants has three unofficial regions: the Corridor, Central & Fundy Shore and Uniacke & Rawdon.

As a community, East Hants provides a renowned quality of life where people can enjoy the perfect blend of rural and urban lifestyles. It is home to one of the youngest and fastest growing populations in Atlantic Canada and has all of the amenities needed for day-to-day life. The estimated annual population in East Hants reached 26,370 in 2024 (Statistics Canada, Annual Demographic Estimates, 2024). An additional 1,203 people reside in the community of Sipekne'katik (Indian Brook).

In recent years, East Hants has experienced remarkable growth across various sectors. The business community has expanded, attracting new investments and fostering innovation. From small businesses to larger entities, East Hants continues to boost economic activity, creating jobs and bringing a diverse mix of industries. 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 highly skilled professionals.

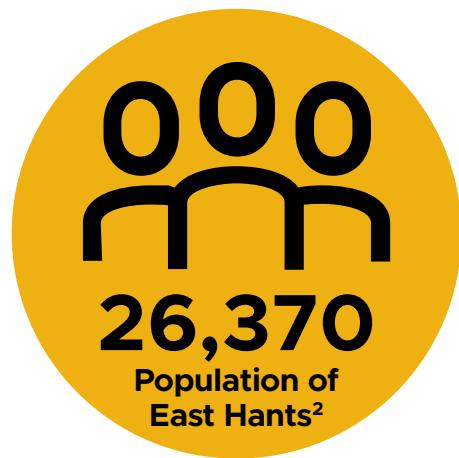
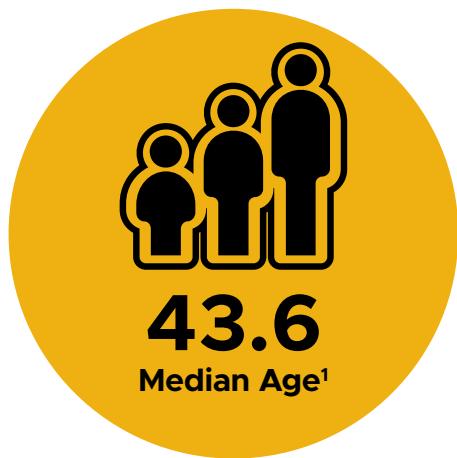
The Municipality owns and operates the East Hants Aquatic Centre, the East Hants Waste Management Centre, the East Hants Sportsplex, Fundy Tidal Interpretive Centre, Burntcoat Head Park and multiple parks, playgrounds and trail systems.

East Hants is defined by its natural beauty, strong sense of community, economic potential, and welcoming attitude. It's a place where residents can work, play, raise families, and grow businesses — all within a supportive environment.



## Our Mission

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





## Our Vision

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



<sup>1</sup>2021 Census | <sup>2</sup>Statistics Canada, Annual Demographic Estimates, 2024



# Message from the Warden

On behalf of East Hants Council, I am pleased to share the Municipality of East Hants' Annual Report, where we highlight key accomplishments and outline progress for 2024/2025. This time of year provides an opportunity to look back at the challenges we have faced and the successes we've experienced as a community. As Warden of East Hants, I believe we have been resilient in navigating the constant changes occurring around us. I'm especially proud of the incredible work done by our Council, residents, local businesses, community groups and municipal staff as we work together to continue to move forward and shape the future of East Hants.

A new Council was sworn in after the Municipal Election in October 2024. There are two new faces on council this term – Councillor Craig Merriam representing the newly created district of Lantz North-Milford and past Councillor Cecil Dixon who is returning to represent Enfield-Grand Lake. Councillor Carl MacPhee was elected Deputy Warden for a one-year term and I appreciate the support he provides. I would also like to extend my thanks to former Deputy Warden Wayne Greene for his leadership and support for the final year of our previous term – which was also his last year serving his community as a councillor. Council continues to work towards the goals and objectives in our current Strategic Plan, which is in its final year, while we work on a new plan to carry us forward.



The 2024/2025 fiscal year (April 1, 2024 – March 31, 2025) was a busy year, particularly for our planning department and committees. In addition to the normal high volume of development, we began planning strategies for the communities of Lantz and Mount Uniacke to help manage the steady population growth in those areas. We also reviewed our Accessible East Hants Plan and developed a new plan - Equitable East Hants - which addresses systemic racism, hate and inequity across municipal programs and operations. All departments continue to meet the many challenges that come with growth – we are fortunate to have dedicated staff who work hard every day to make this happen!

It is notable to mention that in 2024/2025, the Municipality of East Hants officially assumed day-to-day operations of the East Hants Sportsplex and celebrated the reopening of the East Hants Aquatic Centre, following extensive repairs due to flood damage sustained in 2023.

East Hants Council approved a budget for 2025/2026 that allows us to continue to provide the services and infrastructure needed in all areas of the municipality, while meeting our goal of keeping the tax rates as stable and affordable as possible. Looking back on the past year, we're reminded of how important it is to invest in essential services, support environmental sustainability and build strong connections with our residents and local businesses. We are committed to keeping East Hants a welcoming, inclusive, and affordable place to live, work and thrive and will work together to make it happen!



Eleanor Roulston  
Warden & District 11 Councillor



# Message from the Chief Administrative Officer

I am pleased to present the East Hants 2024-2025 Annual Report. The Annual Report is an insight to the past year's accomplishments, financial management and operational direction for the Municipality. Our capital planning and annual business plans are guided by high-level master plans which are formed by input from the community, industry experts and Council. These plans allow us to be successful in delivering on our mission of building strong, thriving communities. We have had another successful year, with a focus on long-term stability and growth for the Municipality and its current and future residents.

Council's strategic plan identifies four key strategies that guide our work: Sustainable Infrastructure, Corporate Excellence, Economic Prosperity and building Strong Community. The Annual Report provides information on the work that supported these goals over the past year.

We shape our communities through our Official Community Plan (OCP) and related bylaws and we shape our future through planning for infrastructure and community spaces. As we prepare for the 2026 OCP review, we have undertaken two secondary planning studies, for Lantz and Mount Uniacke, to inform the review. In September 2024, we completed a review of the Lantz Lagoon Optimization Study (2022), the expansion of the Enfield Water Treatment Plant (2023) and the East Hants Servicing Capacity Study (2024) to compile a report for Council on the optimal capital planning required to meet the needs of these utilities out to 2050. Work was also started on the Paley Brook Flood Mitigation Study, one in a series of flood studies over the next three years.



On the recreation front, our Playground Development Strategy saw two playgrounds built this year, the Centre Rawdon Community Park and East Uniacke Community Park, both of which have accessible components in their design. Significant community consultation has also taken place to shape the Recreation Facilities Master Plan, a plan that will shape our recreation spaces for years to come. My appreciation goes out to all of the staff and Council who have supported the reopening of our Aquatic Centre and the transition of the East Hants Sportsplex to municipal operations.

Council made a significant investment in human capital in 2024, adding much needed resources to public safety, information technology, environmental monitoring, project engineering, business development and recreation programming. With this investment comes notably improved planning, monitoring and regulatory compliance as well as hands on programming and services delivered to the community. We have also been able to respond to the changing landscape of emergency management planning and provide more engineering support to our operations managers.

The new Council of 2024 is focused on their community and prosperity. Their leadership along with the talented group of people I have the pleasure of working with every day, will ensure that East Hants continues to be a place people are proud to live, work and do business in. I want to thank Council, our staff and service partners for delivering on our mandate this past year and supporting us as we support our communities. My commitment to East Hants is that we will continue to strive for excellence in all that we do.



Kim Ramsay, CPA, CMA,  
Chief Administrative Officer



# Municipal Council 2024/2025



**Warden Eleanor Roulston**  
District 11 - Rawdon-Kennetcook



**Deputy Warden Carl MacPhee**  
District 4 - Shubenacadie-Indian Brook



**Sandra Garden-Cole**  
District 1 - Enfield Centre



**Norval Mitchell**  
District 2 - Elmsdale



**Eldon Hebb**  
District 3 - Nine Mile River- Belnan



**Keith Rhyno**  
District 5 - Maitland-Noel Shore



**Craig Merriam**  
District 6 - North Lantz-Milford



**Walter Tingley**  
District 7 - South Lantz



**Michael Perry**  
District 8 - Mount Uniacke -  
South Rawdon



**Elie Moussa**  
District 9 - South Uniacke



**Cecil Dixon**  
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. All are 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:

- East Hants & Districts Chamber of Commerce presented in September 2024
- Rural Communities Foundation of Nova Scotia presented in January 2025

The following bylaws were amended in 2024/2025:

- Bylaw A-200 Well & Septic Bylaw
- Bylaw IO-300 Sewer Bylaw
- Bylaw F-400 Tax Exemption Bylaw
- Bylaw P-400 Municipal Planning Strategy
- Bylaw P-500 Land Use Bylaw
- Bylaw P-600 Subdivision Bylaw
- Bylaw P-700 Heritage Property Bylaw
- Bylaw P-800 Civic Addressing Bylaw

The following policies were created or updated in 2024/2025:

- Budget Management Policy
- CAO Authority Policy
- Council Procedural Policy
- Council Remuneration & Travel Reimbursement Policy
- Disposal of Surplus Real Property Policy
- District Recreation Fund Policy
- Financial Guidelines – Volunteer Fire Departments
- Fire Service Funding Policy
- Hospitality Policy
- Management of Real Property Policy
- Municipal Fee Policy
- Municipal Tax Assistance Program (MTAP) Policy
- Procurement Policy
- Recognition Policy
- Solid Waste Tipping Fee Policy
- Special Reserves Policy
- Winter Clearing Standard for Roads and Sidewalks



# Municipal Staff

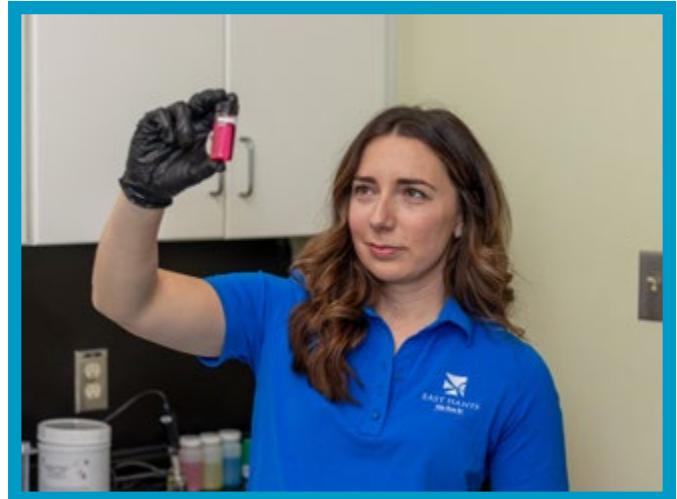
Municipal staff at East Hants make up six departments that deliver services in: Financial Management, Infrastructure & Operations, Parks, Recreation & Culture, Corporate Services, Planning & Development and the Chief Administrative Office. Staff use the Strategic Plan to implement and prioritize initiatives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

As of March 31, 2025, East Hants had 96 full-time equivalent positions. The average age of a municipal employee is 43 years old with 28% of the employees being 50 years or older (as of December 31, 2024).

The East Hants Aquatic Centre employs approximately 75 casual staff including Customer Service Representatives, Lifeguards, Trainers and Swim Instructors. The East Hants Sportsplex employs approximately 30 casual and term staff including customer service, facility operators, leadership roles, custodial and café staff. The Chief Engineer role at the East Hants Sportsplex was filled as a full-time equivalent role in 2024, as were six other roles at the Sportsplex in early 2025.

The seasonal staffing complement for Summer 2024 was 22 seasonal workers in the Parks and Tourism departments. We employ a number of casual recreation programming staff throughout the year for children, youth, adult, family and senior programming.

The Municipality hosted 21 learning events for staff and partners in 2024/2025 and supported individual training for job-specific skills development. This included specific training in the Tourism department and our Aquatics and Recreation teams.



# Senior Management Team



**Kim Ramsay, Chief Administrative Officer**

**Full Time Staff = 6.4**

**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), Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy requests, issues management.



**Adam Clarkson**

**Director of Corporate Services | Full Time Staff = 15.6**

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



**Wade Tattrie**

**Director of Finance | Full Time Staff = 13**

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



**Jesse Hulsman**

**Director of Infrastructure & Operations | Full Time Staff = 28**

**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 = 18.35**

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



**John Woodford**

**Director of Planning & Development | Full Time Staff = 14.65**

**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.



Long Lake, Mount Uniacke

# 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:

### **Identify future water sources and related master planning.**

- ▶ A water and wastewater service capacity review was completed in 2023/2024 and presented to Council in September 2024. This report outlined the capital upgrades required until 2050 for both water and wastewater infrastructure and will inform asset management and capital planning.
- ▶ Planning and design of the District Metering project began in 2024. Once established, this will allow for more complex analysis of system water use and efficiency, and most importantly is a critical tool for leak detection and water loss reduction.
- ▶ The Shubenacadie Water Treatment system had a production well failure in the summer of 2024, and was replaced to ensure redundancy in the Shubenacadie water supply.

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

- ▶ A property dashboard was created this year using mapping software and improved property data. This helped different departments work together to review municipally owned land and start planning how best to use it in the future.

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

- ▶ Hired an Asset Data Summer Student to assist with GIS data collection of municipal infrastructure.
- ▶ Performed baseline condition assessments on all Municipally-owned roads and sidewalks to better inform capital and operating budgets.
- ▶ Set up new processes between departments to handle incoming assets from projects and report them to the finance team.
- ▶ Launched a formal water and wastewater asset management program, including organizing hydrant inspection processes in GIS and working on building inventories of water and sewer lines.
- ▶ Improvements and additions to stormwater asset data including ages, materials and sizes of municipally-owned cross culverts and storm pipes to better inform lifecycle planning.
- ▶ Mapped and improved the digital inventory of Municipally-owned buildings.
- ▶ Invested in new high-accuracy GPS unit for asset data collection.

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

- ▶ The Municipality launched the pilot Water Supply and On-Site Sewage Disposal System Upgrade Lending Program “Well and Septic Loan Program” in Fall 2024 to provide eligible residents financing towards upgrading their water supply and/or septic systems. Within the 2024-2025 fiscal year, there were 4 approved applicants that moved through the program.
- ▶ The Municipality continued with the Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) Program this year, which offers eligible residents financing towards a Clean Energy upgrades for their property. In the 2024-2025 fiscal year, 2 applicants were moving through the PACE program.

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

- ▶ The Enfield Crosswalk Project fulfilled the need for a safe crossing location at the corner of John Murray Drive and Highway 2 in Enfield.
- ▶ \$100,000 Provincial Connect2 Grant received for Active Transportation Connection from Highway 214 to Kiln Creek.
- ▶ Council continues to navigate the management and development of the DAR line (a trail which extends from South Maitland to Mantua).
- ▶ Construction of a section of active transportation trail was completed on Highway 214 in Elmsdale.
- ▶ Preliminary work on the Mount Uniacke Streetlight project was completed. The project will see over 150 new streetlights installed throughout the Mount Uniacke area in 2025 – 2026.

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

- ▶ Construction of the new Shubenacadie Wastewater Treatment Plant was completed and the facility opened in August 2024. The new facility expands the wastewater treatment capacity for the community and enables more growth and development for the Shubenacadie service area.
- ▶ In 2024, planning began for the construction of a new parking lot in the village core of Shubenacadie. Additional parking will enable renewal of the village core commercial spaces, currently limited in development by lack of parking.
- ▶ Work was done in 2024 to get a wastewater sludge profile of the Lantz lagoon. This forms part of the ongoing detailed sludge management plan.
- ▶ The Brookside Wastewater Revitalization project received a Canada Housing Infrastructure Fund investment of \$6.3 million in March 2025. The project will upgrade wastewater and stormwater systems in an area of Lantz to strengthen resilience against extreme weather and increase capacity.



# 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.**

- ▶ Successfully merged the financial operations of the East Hants Arena Association with those of the Municipality.

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

- ▶ Successfully filled four vacant positions in the finance department with existing internal staff.
- ▶ Information Services staff prepared for upcoming retirements of employees by documenting processes, procedures and overlapping training periods with new hires to ensure business continuity and smooth transitions.
- ▶ Planned for staff succession by covering maternity leaves and hiring term employees to ensure continuity of service.

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

- ▶ New staff are onboarded with Procurement and Risk training where an overview of rules, risk mitigations, insurance information and Workers' Compensation Board coverage is presented.

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

- ▶ Hired a second Community Recreation Coordinator that was recommended in the Mount Uniacke Recreation Strategy to grow recreation programming throughout the municipality, including rural regions.
- ▶ Recruited a Manager of Protective Services to support our Emergency Management operations and relationships with RCMP and East Hants Fire Service.

**Enhance employee & councillor awareness of the cultural diversity of our community.**

- ▶ Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee continued their work of assessing and identifying internal opportunities to improve awareness and support for marginalized groups.
- ▶ Staff and Council prepared the Equitable East Hants Plan for submission to the Province on April 1, 2025. The plan represents East Hants' commitment to advancing equity and combating racism and will be actioned over the next three years.

**Ensure bylaws and public policy are in place to address current and future needs.**

- ▶ Council received training on climate leadership to prepare for updating the Climate Change Action Plan in 2025/2026.

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

- ▶ Council has set aside \$30,000 to review how accessible the Lloyd E. Matheson Centre, the East Hants Sportsplex and the Aquatic Centre are for people with disabilities. The goal is to find out what changes are needed to make these buildings easier for everyone to use.
- ▶ The Accessible East Hants Plan was updated to add new action items for addressing barriers identified by East Hants residents.
- ▶ The Centre Rawdon and East Uniacke Community Parks were constructed and each include accessible features.
- ▶ Municipal staff participated in plain language training to ensure communication is accessible to all residents.



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

- ▶ Municipal staff began the process of creating an Internal Communications Strategy to help build a more connected, informed and engaged organization.
- ▶ Council reviewed and reduced administration fees for Private Road Association billing and collections from 5% to 3%.



## Build stronger relationships between East Hants and Sipekne'katik.

- ▶ Municipal staff and Council members took part in the annual Freedom Day March on June 21, Indigenous Peoples Day, honouring survivors of the Shubenacadie Residential School.
- ▶ Met with Emergency Management staff from Sipekne'katik to discuss training and communication opportunities between the Municipality and their community.
- ▶ East Hants partnered with local artist Quentin Syliboy who is creating a series of murals depicting Mi'kmaw stories that will be displayed across East Hants.



# 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 Recreation added new programs at the East Hants Sportsplex such as senior's yoga and fitness programming, open turf time, adult and youth drop-in sport, indoor golf driving range, senior open skating, free walking track access and youth crochet club.
- ▶ Provided grants to not-for-profit tourism operators and community organizations to support attracting visitors from local, regional, national and international markets.
- ▶ Provided grants for recreation infrastructure to not-for-profit sport and recreation groups.
- ▶ Hosted a Volunteer Fair to support volunteer recruitment for community organizations.

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

- ▶ Staff began work to create the Recreation Facilities Master Plan to help guide recreation infrastructure and facilities for the future.
- ▶ East Hants Sportsplex daily operations were transitioned to the Municipality.

**Provide effective and efficient emergency management and support to the East Hants Fire Service (EHFS).**

- ▶ Provided urgent assistance to the Gore Fire department in arranging financing for a fire truck
- ▶ Council committed \$20,000 annual contribution to fire training facilities as well as \$235,000 for a training facility to be constructed in Noel for the Northern zone. This facility opened in fall 2024.
- ▶ Approved grants to Maitland & District and Noel & District Volunteer Fire Departments for trucks.

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

- ▶ The Municipality constructed two community playgrounds in 2024, the Centre Rawdon Community Park and East Uniacke Community Park.
- ▶ Active Communities Fund grant received for Playbox and recreation equipment at the East Hants Sportsplex.

**Ensure policing model accommodates future growth and community needs.**

- ▶ To support a growing community and rising public safety needs, the Municipality invested in policing by increasing the number of officers from 23 to 28 between 2021 and 2024 and launched a pilot project to add two detachment administration staff.
- ▶ Council worked with East Hants District RCMP to develop the Annual Performance Plan.
- ▶ Police Advisory Committee members had Police Board and Governance training with the Department of Justice.

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

- ▶ Celebrated the East Hants 2025 Design Awards recognizing those who have taken extra care and effort to make East Hants a more beautiful place to live by investing in our built environment.
- ▶ Provided financial support to the Uniacke Legion to add two flag poles at the Uniacke Legion Park - one for the East Hants flag and another for the Mi'kmaq Grand Council flag.
- ▶ Hosted free community events including East Hants Volunteer Awards, Explore Your Own Backyard at Burntcoat Head Park, Wetland Appreciation Day at Fundy Tidal Interpretive Centre, Splash & Celebrate at the East Hants Aquatic Centre, Winter Fun Day in Milford and free skates at the East Hants Sportsplex to showcase community assets and provide fun opportunities for residents.



## **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.**

- ▶ Initiated secondary planning strategies for the fast growing communities of Mount Uniacke and Lantz to guide future growth in these areas.
- ▶ The Heritage Incentive Grant Program allocated \$31,500 in Heritage Incentive Grants to eligible registered heritage properties.



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

- ▶ During Oceans Week at Burntcoat Head Park, we partnered with Confederacy of Mainland Mi'kmaq on a video shown inside the lighthouse and at the Mud-Piddock event.
- ▶ Supported a local Indigenous mural project through a live, interactive art demonstration.



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

- ▶ Use of the Recreation Access Program, offering up to 75% discounts on recreation programs to eligible households, was up 19% from the previous year.
- ▶ Included accessible playground components at Centre Rawdon Community Park and East Uniacke Community Park.



# 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.**

- ▶ Council began developing the Lantz Secondary Planning Strategy for 905 acres of undeveloped land west of the new Lantz Highway 102 Interchange. This work, led by FBM in collaboration with Englobe, will guide future community design and help identify the infrastructure needed to support development.
- ▶ Council began developing the Uniacke Secondary Planning Strategy for the Mount Uniacke and Lakelands area. This strategy will be incorporated into the East Hants Official Community Plan during its 2026 review. A community survey and public information meetings were held as part of the development of the strategy.

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

- ▶ The Updated Business Plan for Transit has been completed and presented to Council for consideration. The next step includes Council reviewing financial options for project implementation.

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

- ▶ The concept design for the redevelopment of the Elmsdale Village Core has been completed. It outlines a vision for a vibrant business and community district anchored around a transit-friendly pedestrian and active transportation streetscape.
- ▶ Applications for project funding to support the Elmsdale Village Core submitted.

### **Plan for and develop future industrial and business park land.**

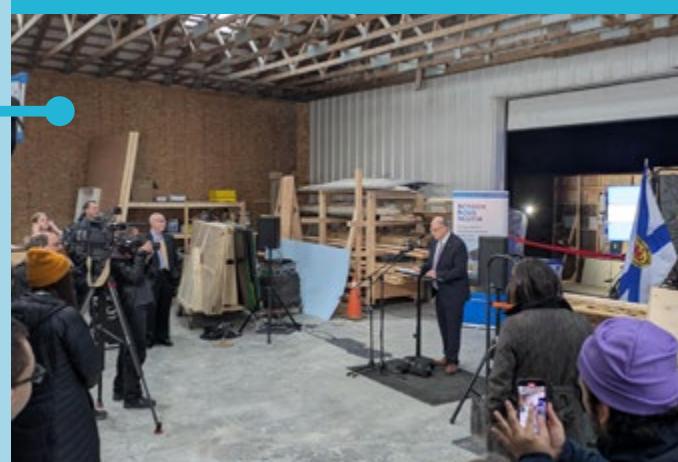
- ▶ The concept design for Phase 7 of the Elmsdale Business Park was completed. The property site work for Phase 7 has started.

## Attract and retain business investment.

- ▶ East Hants welcomed 10 new businesses in 2024, representing a combined investment of \$12.9 million in commercial development and the creation of 105 new jobs.
- ▶ In partnership with the Centre for Entrepreneurship, Education and Development, the Business Technical Assistance Program provided start-up and business planning support to 10 local entrepreneurs.
- ▶ The Mass Timber Company announced plans to build a \$215 million industrial plant in the Elmsdale Business Park. This new venture—a collaboration between Elmsdale Lumber, Ledwidge Lumber, We'koqma'q L'nue'Kati, and other First Nations partners—will become the first fully integrated mass timber manufacturer in Atlantic Canada, supporting offsite construction and increasing housing supply in Nova Scotia.
- ▶ Staff supported 46 local businesses with challenges and opportunities, including five businesses exploring expansion.
- ▶ Screen Nova Scotia joined the East Hants business community with a new film and television soundstage in Mount Uniacke, boosting the province's growing screen industry.

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

- ▶ Initiated secondary planning strategies for the fast growing communities in Mount Uniacke and Lantz to guide future growth in these areas. Secondary planning strategies provide guidance on how growing communities can develop, use land and where services may be needed.





# 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.

In 2024/2025, Council approved expansion of the Cross Connection Control Program through a rebate program to better protect the water system from contamination.

### Lead & Copper Sampling Program

In 2024/2025, 14 water samples were collected from the Regional Water System and 10 from Shubenacadie. All samples were below the maximum acceptable concentration amounts for lead and copper, as outlined by Health Canada for drinking water.



1.2 billion litres of drinking water produced



1.7 billion litres of wastewater treated

## Waste Management Centre

The Waste Management Centre (WMC) is open six days a week and welcomed over 13,918 residential vehicles in 2024/2025 (over a 1000 more than the previous year) to dispose of garbage, recycling and organics.

The WMC managed 2,173 tonnes of organics this year. The majority of the material comes from our curbside green cart program. The material is transported from the WMC to the GFL Guysborough composting facility.

Recycling is collected curbside and transferred from the WMC by 53' transport trailers to the Municipality of Colchester's processing facility in Kemptown. This year over 1,103 tonnes were managed alongside 361 tonnes of recycled metal, which is sold to help offset operational costs.

Similar to recycling, our waste is collected curbside and taken to the WMC where it is transported to the West Hants 2nd generation landfill owned/operated by GFL. Only construction and demolition debris is permitted to be disposed of at the WMC, of which we managed 2,733 tonnes in 2024/2025.



2,100+ tonnes of organics



1,100+ tonnes of recycling



2,700+ tonnes of construction debris

# Solid Waste Program

East Hants remains a strong leader in waste diversion, thanks to the ongoing efforts of the solid waste team and community. Each year, we share helpful tips and resources to make waste sorting and curbside collection easier for everyone. When we all do our part to recycle and compost, it adds up to a cleaner, greener East Hants!

The Province is transitioning to Extended Producer Responsibility for printed and paper packaging by December 2025. This will change how recycling is sorted and collected across Nova Scotia. East Hants is preparing for the shift, focusing on community change management to ensure a smooth transition.

In 2024, the Solid Waste team shared educational materials and hosted community events including the Household Hazardous Waste Drop-off and Paper Shred Day and the annual Compost Giveaway. We also partnered with C.O.A.T. for the Winter Warmer coat drive, helping over 1,000 people with donated winter clothing. Additionally, staff cleaned up 57 illegal dumpsites, removing household waste and construction debris from properties across East Hants.

## Costume Fix n Swap Event

East Hants hosted a fix and swap event as part of Waste Reduction week where residents could swap old costumes or pick one up if needed for Halloween. Anyone was welcome to donate old costumes and staff members were at the event to fix and sew costumes that needed extra attention.

## Education & Outreach in the Community

In 2024, the solid waste team focused on community education and outreach to promote responsible waste practices. Efforts included 12 exit ramp litter clean-up challenges, school presentations for Grades 5–8, and community talks at seniors' workshops and Futureworx events. The team also hosted the annual compost giveaway, set up educational booths at local grocery stores and distributed litter kits through libraries and tourism sites across East Hants.



# Planning & Development

In 2024/2025, the Municipality made strides in shaping future communities through a range of impactful planning initiatives.

- ▶ Three significant planning projects were started in 2024: a Municipal Housing Strategy, a Secondary Planning Strategy for Mount Uniacke and a Secondary Planning Strategy for the Lantz Growth Reserve Area. These plans focus on areas where big changes are expected and set out rules and policies for how land can be used.
- ▶ The 2025 Triennial East Hants Design Awards were held, recognizing excellence in design and those who have invested in making East Hants a more beautiful place to live.
- ▶ A redesignation and rezoning application was approved in Shubenacadie to extend Havenwood Drive and allow for the building of duplexes.
- ▶ 10 applications were reviewed and 8 were approved:
  - Some of the approvals included an amendment to a development agreement for a childcare facility which will enable more childcare spaces and a rezoning of a property in Mount Uniacke to enable more commercial floor area.
- ▶ Council also approved several updates aimed at improving housing options:
  - Exempting building permit fees for accessory dwelling units.
  - Permitting small mini homes be used as accessory dwelling units.
  - Updating the Civic Addressing Bylaw.





#### **Community Building by the Numbers**

- ▶ 408 new dwelling units created.
- ▶ 74 final subdivision plans approved, creating 102 new lots.
- ▶ 519 civic addresses issued as part of the building permit process for new development, vacant or existing lots with secondary units. Civic addresses can also be issued to landowners with vacant land/campers in the un-zoned area for emergency response purposes.
- ▶ 10 new road listings (1 new municipal, 7 new private roads/named driveways and 2 extensions of private roads).

# Parks, Recreation & Culture

## Parks

The Municipality maintains an inventory of parks each year that includes 13 playground parks, 2 tourism locations, 2 skate parks, 5 water access points, 40 acres of park land and 5,000 meters of walkways and trails.

Activities of note in 2024/2025 include:

- ▶ Construction of the Centre Rawdon Community Park, including a playground with accessible features (pictured right, top insert).
- ▶ The dock was replaced at Jorphie Drive in East Uniacke (pictured right, middle insert).
- ▶ Construction of the East Uniacke Community Park, including a playground with accessible features and a fire department theme (pictured right, bottom insert).
- ▶ Extensive repairs were completed at the Meek Road water access point following flood damage from heavy rainfall.

## Open Space

In 2024/2025, the Municipality continued to enhance local open space through developer contributions and land acquisitions. A total of \$241,000 in cash-in-lieu contributions was collected from new developments, which will be used for future park, playground and trail development. The Municipality also took ownership of a former Provincial open space parcel at the corner of Belnan Avenue and Withrow Drive in Belnan, supporting future recreation opportunities in the area.

## Buildings

The Walton Lighthouse is one of the few remaining original lighthouses in Nova Scotia. In order to preserve the lighthouse, the Municipality worked with the Walton Area Development Association to move the building (pictured right), protecting it from future coastal erosion.



# Recreation

East Hants Recreation staff had a full and prosperous 2024/2025. In addition to the re-opening of the Aquatic Centre and transition to municipally managing the East Hants Sportsplex (detailed below), there were several exciting initiatives accomplished during the past year.

As a result of the 2023 Mount Uniacke Recreation Strategy, Council hired an additional Recreation Program Coordinator in March 2025 to support development of more rural recreation programming, as well as creating more programs for youth and seniors.

Staff laid the groundwork for the Recreation Facilities Master Plan and began the process of public consultation with the Places & Spaces Survey, seeking feedback from residents across all of East Hants about the future of recreation infrastructure. Staff also began holding engagement sessions with not-for-profit groups that own, maintain and/or use recreational infrastructure to discuss community needs.

## Aquatics

The East Hants Aquatic Centre successfully reopened on July 10, 2024, after damage from excessive rainfall in July 2023. In preparation for this, 54 staff were re-certified to ensure a safe and efficient launch. Since reopening, the facility has certified 22 new lifeguards, 16 assistant lifeguards and 20 swim instructors. The Lifesaving Society of Nova Scotia recognized our Aquatic Centre's strong focus on training and safety with the 2024 Regional Affiliate Award for the Hants, Chignecto and North Shore Region (pictured right, middle insert).

Swimming lessons had a successful return, with 618 participants in the fall session and 751 registrants in spring 2025. With staffing levels steadily improving, the Aquatic Centre was able to resume key partnerships with Hants Kids Action, Youth Links, the East Hants Stingrays and the East Hants Family Resource Centre.

## East Hants Sportsplex

On May 15, 2024, the Municipality officially took over management of the East Hants Sportsplex, marking a new chapter in the facility's operation. Since then, new procedures and booking processes have been put in place to improve day-to-day operations. To help revitalize the space, several key maintenance projects were completed, including lighting and flooring replacements, upgrades to the ice plant equipment and a fresh coat of paint throughout the facility.

Other highlights of the facility's first year under East Hants management included:

- ▶ Adding drop-in programs including shinny hockey, softball, fitness classes and senior-focused activities.
- ▶ Offering free Turf Times and free Public Skates to increase community access to recreation.
- ▶ Hosting the facility's first Garba Festival in October, welcoming over 1,500 attendees to this vibrant cultural event.
- ▶ Welcoming approximately 600 visitors per day during Tide Fest in July, one of the region's largest community celebrations.



# Community Development

Our work with community groups continues to grow as East Hants is committed to helping local volunteer groups reach their fullest potential. We work with community groups to connect them with grant opportunities, share educational resources and provide ongoing support. Some 2024/2025 Community Development highlights include:

- District Recreation Fund Grant allotments were their highest to date - over \$240,000 - with a record number of recipients. These grants support the maintenance and enhancement of community organizations. See Page 87 for the complete breakdown of projects.
- For the first time since the COVID-19 Pandemic, Community Grant allocation was maximized, with over 40 groups receiving support. Please see Page 85 for the complete list of recipients.
- 2024/2025 was the second year for Council's Not-For-Profit Insurance Grant. We provided 23 organizations with up to \$1,500 each to help cover the cost of insurance.
- We provided assistance to more than 25 community groups by helping them with funding applications, making valuable community connections and offering guidance on bylaws and governance.
- East Hants publishes a quarterly community development e-newsletters for volunteers and local organizations. These newsletters were packed with information, resources and opportunities to support their initiatives.

## Volunteer Fair

In 2024, this event brought together 10 local organizations and welcomed approximately 100 attendees. The event successfully fostered new volunteer sign-ups, facilitated connections among community groups and enhanced public awareness of available services and programs. The event encouraged people to volunteer, introduced groups that may work well together and spread the word about local organizations.





## Volunteer Awards

Each year, East Hants recognizes and celebrates very important resources in our communities – our volunteers. They have voluntarily chosen to undertake a service or duty, making a difference for our communities. Whether it is providing a beautiful community to live in, keeping our culture and history alive, providing safety and protection or supporting kids in sports, they have made a difference. The 2024 East Hants Volunteer Awards took place at the Enfield Fire Hall on April 19.

The 2024 Volunteer Award recipients (pictured above, back row to front row, left to right) were: Christian Miller, John Canning, Peter Giffen, Wade Redden, Jaime Callaghan, Zach Brown, Lynne Smith, Karen Levy, Janice Lockyer, Brad Hodgins, Angela Callaghan, Tonette McPhee, Betty-Lou Snook, Mary Bond, Marion Miller, Margie Neuman and Betty Miller. Non-pictured recipients: Evelyn Ekstrom, Ken MacLeod, Karen Raisbeck, Troy Robinson, Robert Seary and Judy Yetman.



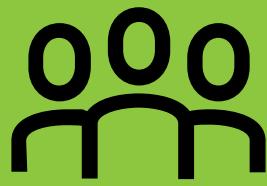
### Model Volunteer of the Year

The Model Volunteer Award is presented to an individual who exemplifies extraordinary caring and commitment through volunteering their time and expertise to help make their community a better place in which to live.

The 2024 recipient was Margie Neuman, for her longtime support of many organizations in her community, including the Royal Canadian Legion Branch 166, the Noel Ladies Fire Auxiliary and the Rising Tides New Horizons Group - for whom she's also the President. Margie often puts over 40 hours a week into her volunteer duties!



**Fundy Tidal Interpretive Centre**

 **15,301**  
**visitors**

Tidal Bore interpretive talks had  
20-40 participants per day

# Tourism

East Hants continues to support the tourism sector by funding non-profit tourism groups and operators. Tourism brings outside spending, creates local jobs and builds community pride. In 2024, grants supported the operation of sites such as the Walton Lighthouse, Gallery 215, Beyond the Wharf Artisans, Lower Selma Museum, CHArt Society's High Tides Art Centre, the Shubenacadie Tinsmith Museum and Gore Trails.

The Municipality owns and operates Burntcoat Head Park and the Fundy Tidal Interpretive Centre, which welcomed over 80,000 visitors in 2024. Both sites saw strong growth, including visits from bus tours and cruise ship excursions, helping offset operational costs and introducing East Hants to international travelers.

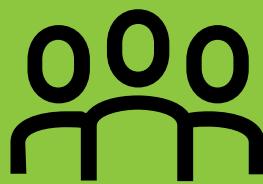
Special events at these sites engaged both locals and tourists, including World Oceans Week (in partnership with the Confederacy of Mainland Mi'kmaq), Canada Parks Day, Wetland Appreciation Day and Explore Your Own Backyard.

In 2024, the Municipality of East Hants partnered with the Provincial and Federal governments to support and grow tourism. East Hants took part in tourism planning and leadership workshops led by the Tourism Industry Association of Nova Scotia and Tourism Nova Scotia, contributing to a new provincial tourism strategy and advancing knowledge in inclusion, diversity, equity and accessibility.

Through the Habitat Stewardship Program, East Hants received \$22,000 from Fisheries and Oceans Canada to support eco-tourism and protect habitat for the Atlantic Mud-Piddock, a species at risk.

East Hants also participated in the Voice of the Visitor research program to better understand visitor preferences and guide future marketing. Ongoing Provincial funding supported the Community Visitor Information Centre, a storage project at Burntcoat Head Park and new interpretive signage at both major tourism sites.

## Burntcoat Head Park

 65,792 visitors

947 visitors took part in guided tours



# Public Safety

## Emergency Management Operations

Emergency Management Operations (EMO) in East Hants are coordinated by the EMO Planning Committee, which includes partners from the Municipality, Red Cross, East Hants Fire Service, RCMP, Community Services, Chignecto Central Regional Centre for Education, Nova Scotia Public Works, East Hants Ground Search & Rescue, Natural Resources & Renewables and EMO Nova Scotia. The committee meets quarterly to review recent events, address concerns raised by staff and partner agencies, and evaluate the overall Emergency Management Plan.

In 2024, the Municipality hired a new Manager of Protective Services (Calvin Byard, pictured right) to help support our volunteer fire departments, improve oversight of the East Hants police contract, strengthen Emergency Management Operations and develop senior safety programming.

In November 2024, East Hants participated in REX2, a full-scale regional emergency exercise that simulated an event requiring the activation of the Emergency Communications Plan, coordination with response partners and a community evacuation. Leading up to the event, a virtual planning meeting was held in June to review objectives. Staff also took part in the Nova Scotia Hurricane Preparedness 2024 webinar to further strengthen local readiness for weather-related emergencies.



## Animal Control

- ▶ 382 tags issued for 2024.
- ▶ 2 kennel licenses issued.
- ▶ 11% of East Hants dogs are registered.

The SPCA held the 2024/2025 contract for Dog Control Services:

- ▶ A total of 30 online complaints.
- ▶ As of November 2024, there were 22 complaints investigated by the SPCA.



## Building & Fire Inspection

The following were completed between April 1, 2024 and March 31, 2025.

- ▶ 406 Building Permits issued, totaling \$173,255,557 in estimated construction value.
- ▶ 1,986 Building Inspections completed.
- ▶ 290 Fire Inspections.



## Bylaw Enforcement

- ▶ 82 complaints investigated.
- ▶ 65 cases closed.
- ▶ 17 cases remain active.



# East Hants Fire Service

Residents of East Hants receive fire and emergency response service from East Hants Fire Service (EHFS) - an independently registered association that works in collaboration with the Municipality. EHFS departments responded to approximately 1,900 calls in 2024/2025. The Municipality supports all departments with risk management through a dedicated advisor and provides independent bookkeeping services to 11 of the 13 departments.



## Fire Services Funding

Each year, the Municipality administers 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 \$0.14 (0.134 Uniacke) to \$0.17 per \$100 of assessment. For rural departments that have significantly less assessment to draw from, the rates are \$0.21 per \$100 of assessment, with the exception of Rawdon Fire with the rate of \$0.22/\$100 to fund much-needed infrastructure and equipment. The Fire Department Funding Policy pays operating grants to the rural departments (Maitland, Noel, Walton, Gore, Kennetcook and Rawdon) totaling \$138,374 in 2024/2025. Funding for fiscal 2024/2025 is summarized below:

Fire Department/Type of Grant	Fire Levy Collected & Disbursed	Annual/Other Grants/Support	Total
Enfield	\$832,616		\$832,616
Elmsdale	550,956		550,956
Lantz	395,548		395,548
Milford	197,356		197,356
Shubenacadie	280,073		280,073
Maitland	137,531	\$21,853	159,384
Noel	148,687	22,540	171,237
Walton	46,716	17,785	64,501
Gore	98,962	20,502	119,469
Kennetcook	112,511	21,143	133,654
Nine Mile River	248,330		248,330
Rawdon	180,087	23,627	203,714
Mount Uniacke	767,237		767,237
Brooklyn	79,041	3,924	82,965
Fire Service Risk Management		19,553	19,553
Promotion		4,693	4,693
Training Facility in Noel		51,425	51,425
WCB Premiums		19,719	19,719
Rural Fire Capital Fund Grant		300,000	300,000
Gore VFD – Fire Truck		20,000	20,000
Gore VFD - Well Install		22,493	22,493
Fire Area Rate Review		42,527	42,527
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$4,075,661</b>	<b>\$611,784</b>	<b>\$4,687,445</b>



2024 Fire Fighter Long Service Award recipients (pictured above, back row to front row, left to right): William McCulloch, Brian Supple, Kevin Goodman, David Barkhouse, Norval Mitchell, Mac Noble, Keith Rhyno and Kevin Jodrey.

## 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 additionally long-service bars for 35, 40, 45 and 50 years of service. Thank you to all recipients for your service and all you do for our communities!

### 2024 Recipients

#### 30 Years

Kevin Goodman, Elmsdale Fire & Emergency Services  
William McCulloch, Noel & District Volunteer Fire Department

#### 35 Years

David Barkhouse, Milford & District Volunteer Fire Department  
Brian Supple, Uniacke & District Volunteer Fire Department

#### 40 Years

Kevin Jodrey, Shubenacadie Fire & Emergency Services

#### 45 Years

Norval Mitchell, Elmsdale Fire & Emergency Services  
Keith Rhyno, Maitland & District Volunteer Fire Department

#### 50 Years

Mac Noble, Elmsdale Fire & Emergency Services



# 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. This year, the East Hants District RCMP occurrences were up 9.41% over the previous year for the same time span, logging 6,416 occurrences. This is inclusive of proactive policing activities, statutory investigations, school and community presentations, traffic duties, collision investigation, preservation of peace and protection of property. This is to be expected of an area that is increasing in population density and in proximity to an urban centre, Halifax. The East Hants District RCMP remains committed to promoting public safety while fostering trust and working cooperatively with 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 our Annual Performance Plan (APP) that encompasses public safety and is shaped through engagement, transparency and collaboration. We firmly believe that building strong relationships with our community is fundamental to effective policing. It is through this engagement that East Hants Council has helped shape this year's RCMP APP Priorities. These priorities are above and beyond the core function of policing which is to keep the public safe. East Hants RCMP APP priorities are:

1. Community Engagement
2. Road Safety
3. Crime Prevention
4. Analysis of captured data to assist guiding the Municipality's decision making



The East Hants members strive to be more accessible and visible in the community, not only at calls for service, but community events. East Hants is home to many police officers from East Hants, neighboring detachments and municipal agencies. We have a number of officers who volunteer their time outside of policing to various community groups and youth sporting teams. They are part of the community on and off the job.

More formalized community engagement activities include municipal governance meetings and Town Hall style meetings. 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.

This is known as grass roots policing and something I want to utilize more from our tool box.

Annual Policing Costs	Amount
RCMP Officer Costs	\$5,807,825
RCMP DNA Case Expenses	20,459
RCMP Prosecution Expenses	11,775
RCMP Shared Services	314,720
RCMP Station (net of rent)	30,098
Rawdon/Mt Uniacke	
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$6,184,877</b>

This style of policing lends itself to two of the other priorities, Crime Prevention and Road Safety.

Aligned with this are the many public safety presentations, workshops and programs RCMP employees either deliver or help to deliver across the province for youth, seniors and ages in between. These initiatives for youth are primarily in the areas of cyber safety, anti-bullying, intimate images, human trafficking and impaired driving. For adults, we focus on frauds, scams and senior's safety.

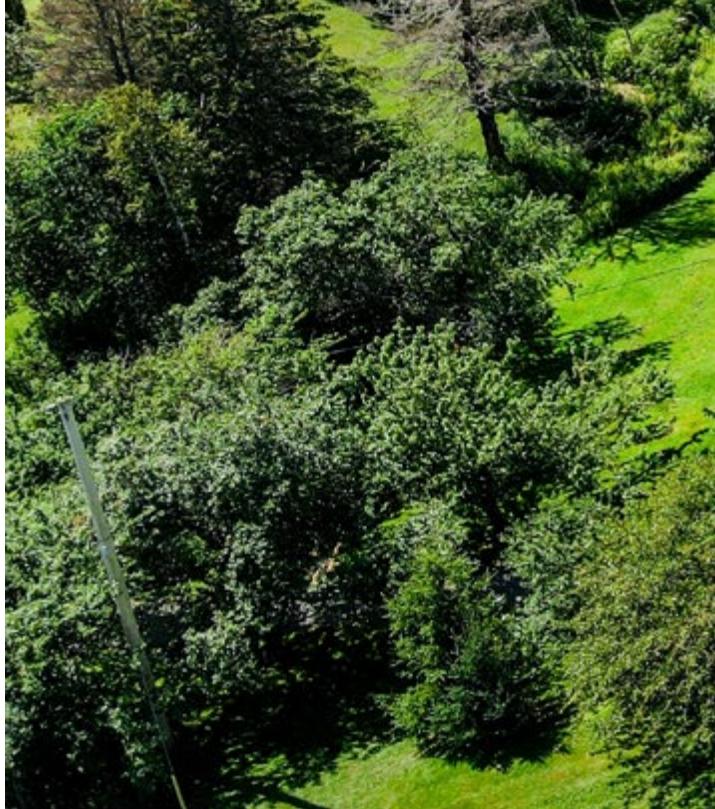
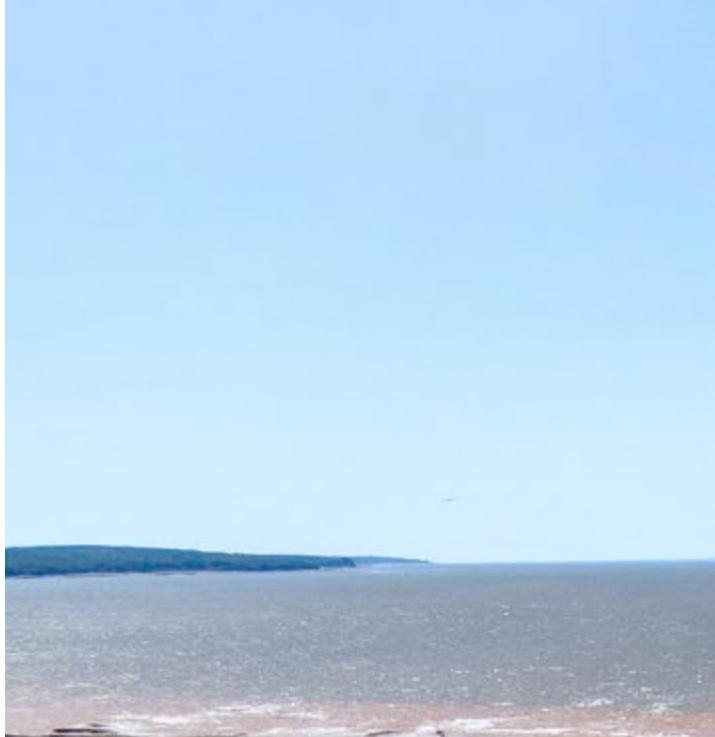
One growing concern for the residents of East Hants is road safety. The East Hants RCMP is committed to the 3 E's of Road Safety - Enforcement, Education and Engineering. Enforcement and Education are readily accessible to police. RCMP Traffic Enforcement Teams conducted targeted enforcement including speed patrols and check points for impaired drivers. These also allow an opportunity to educate the public on the financial and physical consequences of committing driving infractions. Road Safety education isn't only for people who drive cars, the East Hants Community Safety Resource Officer and School Safety Resource Officer regularly do talks with youth regarding bicycle and pedestrian safety. The third E, Engineering, involves the RCMP working collaboratively with various agencies responsible for the engineering aspects of road safety.

I want to thank East Hants Council for helping the RCMP strive for these goals. The fourth priority in the RCMP APP is to analyze data so that it may be presented to Council. It was designed for Council to know how they can assist the RCMP in our common goal of a safer East Hants. Thank you, East Hants, for supporting your local RCMP.

I firmly believe that building strong relationships with our community is fundamental to effective policing and I look forward to continuing to foster a grass roots policing model mixed with some modernization in East Hants. This is the foundation upon which we establish intelligence-led crime prevention and public safety initiatives that help make East Hants a strong and safe community.

Staff Sergeant Mike Balmaceda  
East Hants District RCMP Commander





**Cover Photo: Burntcoat Head Park**

**Photos above, top to bottom:**

**Dawson Dowell Park, Uniacke Estate Park,  
Wickwire Park**