



Subject: *Rising Tide Shore Signage*
To: Parks, Recreation and Culture Committee
Date Prepared: March 4, 2025
Related Motions: C23(145)
Prepared by: Alana Tapper, Director of Parks, Recreation & Culture
Approved by: Kim Ramsay, CAO

Summary

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the Rising Tide Shore signage program. This initiative is aimed at enhancing the visitor experience, improving wayfinding and supporting economic development along the scenic Highway 215 shoreline route.

Financial Impact Statement

The project has a budget of \$100,000, as approved in the current capital plan, with an additional \$10,000 grant from the Provincial Beautification & Streetscaping program allocated for phase 1. West Hants staff have confirmed that West Hants Council has allocated \$50,000 for similar signage in their municipality.

The cost for phase 1 enhancement of Trans-Canada highway signage is estimated to be \$30,000.

Recommendation

To the CAO direction to continue work on the Rising Tide Shore signage program as outlined in this report.

Recommended Motion

Move that Parks, Recreation and Culture Committee recommends that Council gives the CAO direction to continue on the Rising Tide Shore signage program as outlined in this report.

Background

The proposed Rising Tide Shore is a scenic part of Highway 215, stretching across East and West Hants municipalities and is known for having the highest tides in the world. Currently, the signs along this route are a mix of business, municipal and provincial signs, but they lack consistency and continuity.

Municipal staff consulted with staff from West Hants and Colchester and reviewed an independent Opportunity Assessment that looked at tourism, signage and wayfinding to create a well-rounded plan for improving signage in the region.

From this, municipal staff created a draft plan that outlines a phased approach to a unified signage program to make it easier for visitors to navigate and strengthen the area's identity. This will also help boost the local economy by enhancing the visitor experience.

Discussion

The approach to implementing this signage manual will focus firstly on the highest-traffic locations, working inward to junctions along Highway 215, then toward more rural areas and specific attractions. Over time, it will be necessary to consult with local businesses and operators to find a way to include market-ready attractions on directory and wayfinding signage.

Phase 1: Trans-Canada Highway Signage

The current signs, owned by the Municipality of East Hants and maintained by NS Public Works, are 17' by 10' with a 12" bottom panel. The proposed updates include amending this panel either through replacement or the addition of another 12" panel. The estimated cost for updating two signs is \$20,000- \$30,000. While approval from West Hants is not required, collaboration on using the Rising Tide Shore logo will help align regional branding. Coordination with NS Public Works is needed for sign design approval and installation. This phase will update Burntcoat Head Park's signage to include Highway 215 and the Rising Tide Shore connection.



Phase 1: Trans-Canada Highway sign current vs proposed updated sign

Phase 2: Directory Signage at Junctions

The second phase of this project aims to further expand upon the initial community identity signage along major Trans-Canada routes 101 and 102 by installing additional directory signs at key secondary highway junctions. At least two of these junctions will be in East Hants: the junction of Highway 215 and Highway 236 in South Maitland and the junction of Highways 354 and 215 in Noel.

If West Hants is in alignment with the approach, there would be feedback gathered on preferred locations and attractions to be highlighted with proposed sites to include the junction of Highway 215 and 236 in Brooklyn, Trunk 14 and Highway 215 in Brooklyn and/or the junction of Trunk 1 and Highway 215 in Newport Corner.

The proposed timeline is 2025 into 2026 with costs dependent on competition and procurement, likely ranging from \$15,000-\$20,000 per sign. West Hants has allocated \$50,000 for the project and future discussions will address cost-sharing for signs within their jurisdiction.



Phase 2: Proposed Directory Signage

Phase 3: Individual Attraction Signage & Further Branding

The final step in the Rising Tide Shore wayfinding project is to create print and online marketing materials and to set up signs for attractions and businesses along the route. This will include updating existing attraction signs, adding privately-owned businesses to the signage and improving branding with new brochures and a refreshed website, possibly working with Tourism Nova Scotia for ideas and funding.



Phase 3: Individual Attraction Signage & Brochure

Next Steps

Spring 2025: Seek required Provincial approvals for phase 1, complete outline for phase 2.

Summer 2025: Consult on phase 2 specifications. Explore external funding options.

Fall 2025: Timeline for sign manual/guide to be completed. Meet with tourism operators to unveil sign guide, meet with West Hants, finalize signs and locations for each attraction.

Winter 2026: A new RFP for printing and installation for phase 2. Explore options for further external funding.

Spring 2026: Sign installations for phase 2.

2026 onward: Phase 3 marketing and branding: brochures, novascotia.com and municipal website. Determine ongoing budget implications.

STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

The Rising Tide Shore signage program supports the goals of the East Hants Tourism Strategy, which focuses on improving tourism infrastructure and branding.

A tourism signage program also aligns with the strong community and economic prosperity strategies in the East Hants Strategic Plan by enhancing local pride, promoting key attractions and supporting small businesses by boosting tourism revenue and guiding visitors to local services.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

The cost for phase 1 enhancement of Trans-Canada highway signage is estimated to be \$30,000 with \$10,000 of that cost coming from approved Provincial Beautification & Streetscaping grant funding.

Alternatives

That Council provide staff with alternate direction on the project.

Attachments

Rising Tide Shore Signage Manual - Draft