

Harold MacNeil

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

29 September 2025

All East Hants Municipal Councillors/CAO
15 Commerce Court
Elmsdale, Nova Scotia B2S 3K5

**TAXPAYER PROPOSED ACTIONS BY
EAST HANTS MUNICIPAL (EHM) COUNCIL**

I have taken the time as a concerned taxpayer and community member to forward the attached correspondence that discusses and provides my thoughts on issues that I feel would improve the East Hants community and overall governance.

Enclosed is correspondence that address the following issues:

- EHM – Community Meetingss with District Councillors
- EHM – Community Recreation Committee
- EHM – Community Connectivity and Safety
- EHM – Road/Sidewalk Extension Shaw Drive to Towerview Drive
- EHM – District Councillors – Term(s) Lengths
- EHM – Mayor

I submit so that EHM Council can make decisions on the subjects put forward with an aim to improve some aspects of East Hants. The correspondence is forwarded with the expectation that each issue presented will be discussed and decisions put forward for the way ahead.

Thank you,



Harold MacNeil

EHM – Community Meetings with District Councillors

Reasons: The EH Community has no regular input into community priorities as a result of no regular discussions with District Councillors

Background: I have resided since 2002 in Lantz, and there has not been meetings with District Councillors so that community has direct input into what the community/taxpayer would like to see in our living areas. I have raised the issue on previous occasions.

Outcome: An involved District Councillor with the community who elected her/him to the position so that the Councillor is fully aware of what the community wants to happen in their neighbourhood.

Recommendation: That the East Hants District Councillors be required to have two and a minimum of one meetings between 1 April and 30 March of each year in office.

DISCUSSION

I would go out on a limb to say I know that Community Meetings will significantly improve the community. The councillors should be present in the community on a regular schedule. The relationship between EHM Council and the community would vastly improve and an understanding of both sides would lead to better acceptance of decisions and indeed more inclusive decisions would be forthcoming. I am sure you are all aware of the following:

What should I expect as a Municipal Councillor? As a Council member you are expected to be in-tune with your community's needs and seen as a representative who makes decisions in the best interest of all of East Hants. You will be an important point of contact by members of your community who will have issues and opinions to share on how the community should be run/changed. You will bring ideas to Council to consider. In many cases your role will be to share information about Provincial programs and regulations or to provide contact information for other agencies.

The lack of regular two way communications I believe is a detractor from progress in the municipality and thus Community Meetings need to be implemented. There is a lack of volunteers, connection with voters/taxpayers and Councillors need to be in contact with the greater community to know priorities. Councillors need to reply to emails, telephone calls as communications is well below acceptable standards.

Community meetings are essential to progress.

Submitted by: Harold MacNeil, [REDACTED]

29 September 2025

EHM – Community Recreation Committee

Reasons: Community members have no regular process for input into community priorities that affect infrastructure, physical and mental health.

Background: There is no regular mechanism for the community to address needs or deficiencies to District Councillors in regards to the ever changing recreation needs of living areas. There is no central process/office or area that manages the regular needs of the community as a whole. There is no community wide recreation list that can be a blueprint for change and new opportunities.

Outcome: The Community Recreation Committee would provide to EHM Council a regular updated priority list for the East Hants Municipality.

Recommendation: The EHM Community Recreation Committee should be part of the growing East Hants Community and thus should be put in place within six months: by 30 March 2026.

DISCUSSION

There is a need for a Community Recreation Committee that meets and presents taxpayer priorities to the EHM Council. EHM Council via its District Councillors are not connected to the community in a meaningful way in regards to recreation needs and maintenance. The District Councillors and thus EHM Council are not doing what the community desires, but is doing what Council thinks is needed. There has been little or no substantive input from the community as a whole: the last being the Needs Assessment of 2012 that was partially acted on and there were some glaring omissions that the community felt were very much overlooked. There are many groups providing volunteer services to the EH Community and I use the term: **divide and achieve less** to describe the output and metrics of the groups. Too much work on a small volunteer base and the administrative burdens are immense.

The Community Recreation Committee should be co-chaired by East Hants Municipal Recreation Director and a member of the community who represents a current recreation activity. The Community Recreation Committee will provide EHM Council with a list of needs and desires that District Councillors and indeed the Municipal Recreation Director would be fully aware of and present with the co-chairperson the needs of the community. The input by community groups should be as members who represent the particular sport that provides that service to East Hants residents. This would also be an opportunity for District Councillors to attend the meetings and listen to the needs of taxpayers.

Halifax has four community councils that meet and make recommendations to council:

The four Community Councils, each consisting of five to six districts, consider local matters, make recommendations to Regional Council, and provide opportunities for public input.

Halifax and West Community Council

Harbour East – Marine Drive Community Council

North West Community Council

Regional Centre Community Council

Submitted by: Harold MacNeil, [REDACTED]

29 September 2025

EHM - Community Connectivity and Safety

Reasons: Safety where no sidewalks exist and community connectivity between Trevors Lane and Karla Dawn Avenue.

Background: Community was very actively using the connecting pathway to get to sidewalks for a safer family outing.

Outcome: Connectivity in the Maplewood Sub-Division and connection to Osprey Landing where sidewalks are present for walkers and family safety.

Recommendation: That the Municipal owned drainage/easement be converted to a sidewalk. There is a similar walkway off Ashford Drive to Hwy 2 in Lantz, Trans Canada Trail, and it is not fenced and is an excellent example of community connectivity.

DISCUSSION

The Karla Dawn Avenue connection to Trevor's Lane was being used for many years as a walk way and was very well used by many, many people in the neighbourhood and now that Osprey Landing is open the area is used by more and more walkers/bikers/joggers/mothers/fathers walking with strollers/baby and dogs. This was a well used connector corridor in the neighbourhood.

There was a home built at 41 Karla Dawn Avenue in 2025 that has a long driveway and access to the long used pathway has been eliminated, but there is room for a walkway/sidewalk by filling in the ditch/easement and putting a sidewalk along the two property lines.

EHM should install a walkway between the homes that is similar to the Trans Canada Trail between Ashford Place and Hwy 2. Osprey Landing has sidewalks and the remainder of the sub-division does not so for safety reasons people gravitate to the area and as the area expands community members will feel safer walking in the Osprey Landing area until one day there are sidewalks all through the subdivision. Connectivity and safety of neighbourhood would be significantly enhanced by this walkway addition.

This is about safety and connectivity and the extension of the Trevor's Lane sidewalk to connect with Karla Dawn Avenue will be very much appreciated and utilized by the neighbourhood.

This proposal also poses the question of: Is there a plan to install sidewalks in the Maple Wood Subdivision? Poplar Drive has become an extremely busy street for accessing Osprey Landing and walking or bicycling is not a comfortable activity with no sidewalk and the speed of vehicles.

Submitted by: Harold MacNeil, [REDACTED]
29 September 2025

EHM – Road/Sidewalk Extension Shaw Drive to Towerview Drive

Reasons: The Kiln Creek area is progressing very well and the connectivity to the area that has wide sidewalks and presently a gravel walkway to the river. The sidewalks and pathways enhance safety and has increased outdoor activity for physical and mental health.

Background: The roundabout connection of Shaw Drive to Towerview Drive is in place, a dead end street with no name, off Towerview Drive already exists that leads to Shaw Drive.

Outcome: Connectivity of the Maplewood Sub-Division, Osprey Landing and Kiln Creek where sidewalks are present for walkers and family safety will allow for safer walking, biking and numerous general outdoor activities by families. Increased access to the Kiln Creek playground will be an added bonus. The connectivity will also be in place when the commercial component is completed.

Recommendation: That the road/sidewalk extension at Shaw Drive to Towerview Drive be completed no later than 2025/2026.

DISCUSSION

The connection between the areas would be extensively used by walkers, bikers, joggers, mothers with strollers, dog walking and families: basically all neighbourhood residents and increase connectivity with people from the three areas. The Kiln Creek's wide sidewalks and new playground should be well used by many in the immediate and adjacent neighbourhoods. The area will promote active living and provide different/new places to foster more outside activity for all who live in the immediate area. The future is scheduled to bring commercial activity to the immediate area and the road/sidewalk extension is a natural connector and should be accessible now as very soon the Kiln Creek area will be accessible and connected for walking and physical activity by all who live in the area.

The installation of the connector street will allow for access to the Sportsplex and Maple Ridge School in a safe manner and provide for the ability to walk to the facilities with families in a lower traffic environment and with sidewalks which are not available in the present Towerview Drive, Ashford Place, etc, etc or many other local streets.

There would also be diminished traffic on highway 2 as roadway access to the roundabout would be a quicker egress to exit 8A and entrance point to those living close to the round about.

This proposal also poses the question of: Is there a plan to install sidewalks along both side of the new exit 8A roadway from the Hwy 2 roundabout to Shaw drive so that connectivity and safety are in place when the new housing is able to be occupied and the commercial aspect of the area is realized

Submitted by: Harold MacNeil, [REDACTED]

29 September 2025

EHM – District Councillors – Term(s) Lengths

Reasons: EHM Councillors should only be able to be elected for two consecutive terms so that new ideas are put forward and the status quo does not dominate local decisions. It is not unreasonable for this process to be put in place and I believe the EH Municipality would be better represented in the future.

Background: The process of having Councillors in office for more than two terms can lead to lack of productivity, leads to stagnation and hinders new ideas. Presently there are two Councillors with 28 years, one with 17 years, two re-elected after being on council previously and the remainder with from nine (9) to one (1) year(s) as councillors.

Outcome: New councillors bring to the table new ideas, disrupt the status quo and require people to work together to put forward new decisions with a new view of the issues. The process should also lead to more candidates putting their names forward to represent their communities.

Recommendation: That EHM Councillors be limited to two (2) consecutive terms in office and be required to take a one term break before being able to run for office in the future. I request that a policy be put in place before the next EHM election.

DISCUSSION

The EHM Council could be more dynamic and increase a more diverse community representation in council than has previously been afforded taxpayers. Steady introduction of new ideas, leaders and community members is essential to balance community progress and needs.

Taxpayers feel that their councillors are holding on to decision making in their finite views for too long. The community has perceived that long term councillors reduces the council's effectiveness and hinders input from the community that would lead to a more progressive and responsive council.

This process is not to say that long term councillors are not doing a good job, but the perception is that there is a biased decision making and with changing terms lengths this understanding or feeling would be eliminated.

Taxpayers in East Hants say why bother to put their name forward because of the perception that to enter the long standing body of council they would not be able or would need to make a concerted effort to effect change. There is a long standing perception that the Councillors are not listening to the community as a whole.

This submission is a combination of personal views, after being in the Canadian Forces for 35 years and being part of and an active witness of leadership change on a very regular basis. I have lived in East Hants since 2002 and for me change has been a continuous battle and not: How can we get this done! Councillor changes should introduce new ways of leading, new ways of looking at the future and keeping up with changes and modernization within the community.

Submitted by: Harold MacNeil, [REDACTED]

29 September 2025

EHM – Mayor

Reasons: The position of East Hants Mayor will provide a means of communications to all Districts vice the present system of one Councillor one District one vote.

Background: EH community members and organizations when communicating with EHM Council has to do via one councillor that represents one District and this has not allowed the full message of the community to get before council. Councillors have not attended meetings or hold community meetings and thus the heart beat of the full community is not projected at Council. An example: Councillors, in the past, have been asked to attend meeting: declined to attend.

Outcome: A better understanding of what community taxpayers desire for our EH community.

Recommendation: That EH Municipality prepare for electing a Mayor in the next Municipal Election.

DISCUSSION

There is not too much discussion to be put forward as I feel that the present makeup of EHM Council does not allow for the council to fully represent the community because of lack of communication and participation in the community.

In the past I have often been advised: I am one councillor with one vote. The internal division of Corridor and Rural Councillors always raises its head when decisions are being made. I use as an example that the needs of the Corridor for Recreation and other progressive issues will not align with the Rural areas so taxpayers need a voice or conduit that can provide an overall view of the issues and I feel that position is a Mayor.

Submitted by: Harold MacNeil, [REDACTED]

29 September 2025