

# GET IN TOUCH WITH YOUR COUNCIL



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**West Hants**  
 something inspiring awaits

**INSPIRED**  
 July 2023

## Message from the Mayor

### Happy Summer West Hants!

When we reflect on what's been happening in Nova Scotia with wildfires, we recognize our good fortune to live in a safe, welcoming, and inclusive community that INSPIRES individual thought and creativity. Personally, I can think of no better place to work, play, and raise my own family. I'd like to thank all of our emergency service providers for their committed, dedicated, and unwavering support for our safety. There are no words that could ever express our truest of thanks to you and your families for your sacrifices. THANK YOU!

Regional Council has approved the budget for the 2023/2024 year. A HISTORIC budget that saw residential tax decreases region-wide! The communities of West Hants

will see an overall tax decrease of \$0.04/100, Windsor a decrease of \$0.21/100, and Hantsport a decrease of \$0.28/100 of assessed value. This was accomplished through general-rating all road maintenance in the region.

This budget year was one in which Council wanted to "give back" to its residents and support the growth and future sustainability of the community. Municipal reserves are healthy, municipal capital investments (excluding water utilities) will equal \$18 million this year, and the municipality's long-term debt and debt ratio both decreased. Council also agreed to participate in a J-Class road improvement program that will help address some roads in our region that are desperately in need of attention.

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## Municipal Climate Change Action Plan Update

Provincially, all municipalities must prepare a municipal climate change action plan (MCCAP) to meet their obligations under a funding agreement for gas tax.

- WHRM is applying for funding for feasibility studies investigating energy efficiency retrofits and solar energy on vacant Municipal lands.
- WHRM has declared the first full week of May as International Compost Awareness Week to recognize and raise awareness of the benefits of composting. More information can be found at: [www.compost.org/compost\\_week/](http://www.compost.org/compost_week/)
- Council sent a letter to the Provincial Government expressing concern about the indefinite delay of implementing the Coastal Protection Act Regulations.

Tune in to MCCAP Committee meetings on the Municipal Facebook page [www.facebook.com/RM Windsor West Hants/](http://www.facebook.com/RM Windsor West Hants/)

Meeting agendas and minutes at: [www.westhants.ca/municipal-climate-change-action-plan-committee](http://www.westhants.ca/municipal-climate-change-action-plan-committee)

**HURRICANE SEASON AHEAD**

- Be informed - radio, website, TV
- Stock up on water, ready-to-eat food, heating fuel, batteries
- Do NOT go down to water to watch the storm
- When the eye passes over, there will be a lull in the wind for a few minutes. STAY in a safe place as winds will return from the opposite direction with possibly even greater force

[getprepared.gc.ca/cnt/hzd/hrrcns-en.aspx](http://getprepared.gc.ca/cnt/hzd/hrrcns-en.aspx)

### West Hants Phone Tree

Who doesn't love a shortcut?  
 Here is a quick reference if you need to call us!

**West Hants Municipal Offices 902-798-8391**

General Inquiries	Ext. 201	Public Works inquiries	Ext. 125
Water Inquiries	Ext. 107	Waste Services Specialist	Ext. 128
Property Tax Inquiries	Ext. 106	Community Development	Ext. 124
Administration Inquiries	Ext. 134	Economic Development	Ext. 213
Planning Inquiries	Ext. 115	Community Centre	Ext. 215
By-law Enforcement	Ext. 112	West Hants Sports Complex	Ext. 217



- Facebook**
- West Hants Regional Municipality
  - West Hants Parks and Rec
  - West Hants EMO
  - Inspire West Hants

- Website** - [www.westhants.ca](http://www.westhants.ca)  
**Twitter** @RegMunWWH  
**Instagram** @whrm\_ns  
**YouTube** - West Hants Regional Municipality

**WEST HANTS REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY**  
 76 Morison Drive, PO Box 3000, Windsor NS B0N 2T0  
 Phone: 902-798-8391 Fax: 902-798-8553  
[www.westhants.ca](http://www.westhants.ca)



The West Hants Regional Municipality is inspired by the accomplishments of hockey trailblazer, John Paris Jr. On June 9, family, friends, and community joined together at the dedication of the John Paris Jr. Rink to recognize his many achievements on and off the ice. To learn more about John's incredible story and to see pictures of the day, visit [www.westhants.ca](http://www.westhants.ca).

## WHRM 2023-2024 Budget

West Hants Regional Municipal Council approved the 2023-2024 budget on April 25, 2023. Through this budget, Council accomplished the following:

- Reducing residential tax rates across the region.
- Increasing investment in municipal reserves, continuing to meet the healthy financial levels as determined by the Province.
- Reducing long-term borrowing.

Other budget highlights include:

- Increasing the qualifying household limit and maximum capped amount for the Residential Property Tax Assistance Program.
- General-rating the road maintenance expenses across the region, including approved funding for J-Class road maintenance.
- Reducing the cost of recreational programming for residents by 75%.



- Creating the West Hants Inspire Fund, a funding program that assists residents with the cost of recreation opportunities within West Hants Regional Municipality.
- Allocating close to \$300,000 in grants and contributions to assist local non-profit community organizations.

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**Mayor's message continued...**

The health and happiness of our residents is very important to Council and is always the backbone of every discussion and decision. Council felt it very important to improve upon our Residential Property Tax Assistance Program by increasing the maximum rebate amount to \$400 for qualified households and increasing the yearly household income amount to \$46,000. Everyone is encouraged to check out the Program details at [www.westhants.ca](http://www.westhants.ca) and apply if eligible.

Council is excited to announce we have subsidized all recreational programming, providing a reduction of 75% in program costs for everyone! We are hopeful this will help families and individuals take part in our recreational programs, eliminating barriers with cost! We have already seen a spike in sign-ups and are very encouraged! We have also created the INSPIRE FUND that will help residents who need financial assistance, to participate in programs within our communities, not necessarily provided by the Municipality.

With so many great initiatives launched, Council also approved over \$300,000 in grants and contributions to help our many community organizations and not-for-profits continue to serve our communities.

Our region is experiencing unprecedented growth and investment. Council has committed to continue to provide our residents with the outstanding service they expect. Development is exploding, community groups are active, and many new people are choosing West Hants! I've never been as INSPIRED as I am today! Keep it up West Hants!

~ Mayor Abraham Zebian

**Planning a Special Event in WHRM?**

A Special Event or Street Event Permit may be required to host an event, parade or walkathon in West Hants.

For information contact: VanEssa Roberts at 902-798-1708 or email: [vanessa@westhants.ca](mailto:vanessa@westhants.ca)  
[www.westhants.ca/forms-and-applications.html](http://www.westhants.ca/forms-and-applications.html)

**West Hants Provincial Volunteer**



Each year West Hants and Nova Scotia celebrate our volunteers during the month of September. Our WHRM Provincial Volunteer Nominee is Domenic Padula. Since his arrival in West Hants in 2008, Domenic has volunteered with over 12 groups and organizations that focus on food security, valuing diversity, and breaking down barriers. Domenic is driven by his passion that all people deserve good, healthy food. We are grateful to Domenic for his continued commitment and invaluable contributions to West Hants Regional Municipality.

Keep an eye on the Inspire West Hants Facebook Page as we celebrate all the amazing West Hants nominated volunteers this September.

**The Inspire Fund**

The Inspire Fund assists with the cost of recreation opportunities within the West Hants Regional Municipality.

These opportunities include structured programs or activities offered by WHRM, registered businesses, community sport organizations, or registered not-for-profit organizations operating within the West Hants Regional Municipality.

The Inspire Fund is open to all West Hants residents requiring assistance and is based on income threshold.

**For more information or to learn how to make a donation, please visit: [www.westhants.ca/inspirefund](http://www.westhants.ca/inspirefund)**



**Safe Sharps Program**

All local pharmacies participate in the Province's safe sharps program, which is administered and funded by Nova Scotia's pharmacies, sharps manufacturers and medication distributors. Through this program, Nova Scotians can access a proper container (FREE) for disposing of sharp needles in a safe manner. Once the container is full, it can be returned to the local pharmacy.

- DO NOT put them in plastic bottles or jugs.
- DO NOT put them in garbage or recycling bags.
- DO NOT flush them down the toilet.
- DO NOT burn them

Visit <https://www.dontbeaprick.org/> for more information on this campaign. This is being spearheaded by WRANS (<https://www.wrans.org/>), The most recent videos were filmed here in West Hants (Hantsport HMCC, Library, and beach).

**Have an incredible summer in West Hants!**

All of our summer community events are free! And with no pre-registration, it has never been easier to have fun. Enjoy a Community Social near you, or plan a family night at an upcoming Movie in the Park. Why not take advantage of our Free Equipment Loan Program and try out kayaks, stand-up paddleboards, canoes, and more!

**Summer and Fall Brochure Info**  
[www.westhants.ca/rec](http://www.westhants.ca/rec)

Follow us on Facebook to take advantage of even more free events this summer: West Hants Parks & Rec

Want to explore local freshwater lakes with our free equipment? Call Sara for info: 902-798-8391. Ext. 214.

**WHRM 2023-2024 Budget** ...continued from front page

**Taxes**

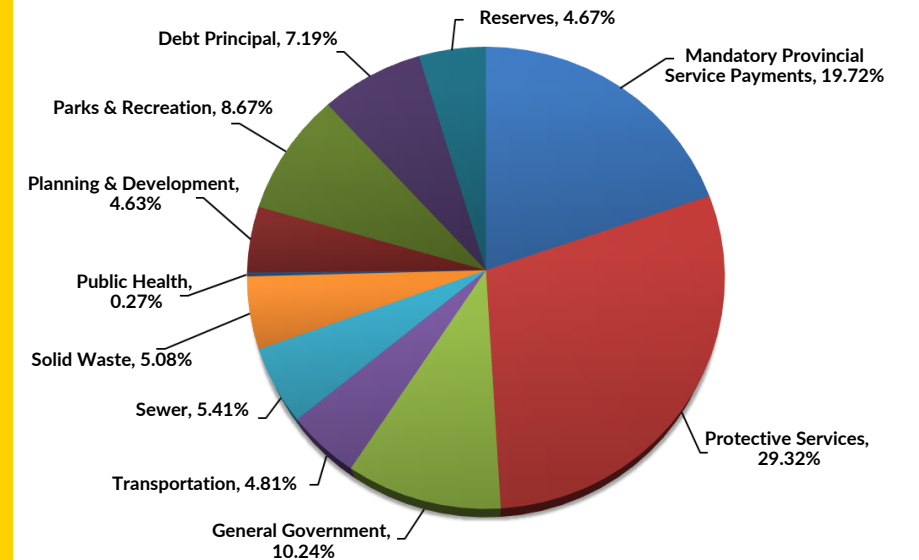
The tax year runs from April 1 to March 31. The Municipality's tax rate structure is set up to include a general rate and three area rates for the former municipal boundaries of the Town of Windsor, Municipality of West Hants, and the Town of Hantsport.

The approved budget for 2023-24 will have the following decreases on the residential tax rates: four-cent decrease for the former Municipality of West Hants, twenty-one cent decrease for the former Town of Windsor, and twenty-eight cent decrease for the former Town of Hantsport.

**TAX BILLS ARE DUE SEPTEMBER 1, 2023**

RATE SUMMARY		
<b>Commercial</b>	<b>2022-23</b>	<b>2023-24</b>
General Rate	0.98	0.98
<b>Communities Combined Area Rates*</b>		
West Hants Rate	1.78	1.78
Hantsport Rate	3.75	3.75
Windsor Rate	3.85	3.85
<b>Residential</b>	<b>2022-23</b>	<b>2023-24</b>
General Rate	0.4670	0.5314
<b>Communities Combined Area Rates*</b>		
West Hants Rate	1.0223	0.9823
Hantsport Rate	1.6500	1.3637
Windsor Rate	1.8700	1.6564
*Combined area rates means all rates applicable to that community.		

**2023-2024 Distribution of Tax Dollars**



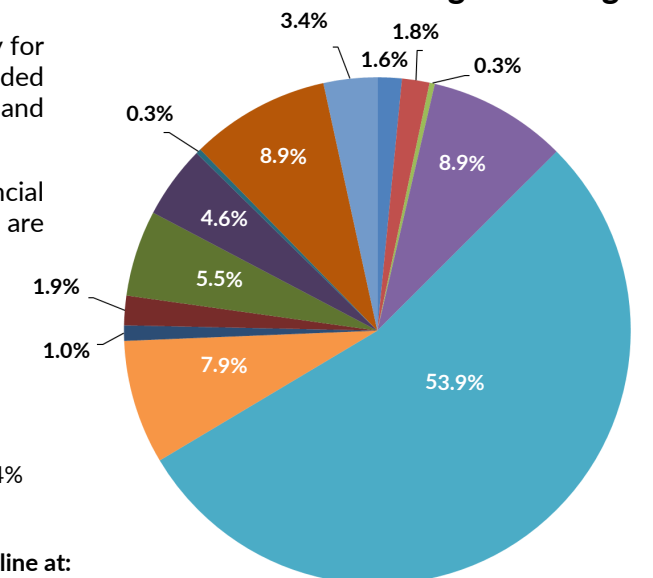
**Capital Investment**

There are several capital projects identified across the Municipality for 2023-2024, totalling a projected \$24.4 million. These are funded through Gas Tax, Reserves, General Operations, Long-Term Debt, and Provincial/Federal Funding.

Council continues to ensure the Municipality is in stable financial condition, monitoring long-term borrowing and ensuring reserves are well-funded.

- General Operations 1.6%
- Operating Reserve 1.8%
- Users .3%
- CCBF 8.9%
- Long Term Debt 53.9%
- Grant Funding 7.9%
- WH Sewer Reserve 1.0%
- WIN Sewer Reserve 1.9%
- WH Water Depreciation 5.5%
- WIN water Depreciation 4.6%
- Fire Reserves .3%
- Capital Reserves 8.9%
- Consolidation/Transition Funding 3.4%

**Funding Percentage**



A complete list of rates as well as the detailed budget can be accessed online at: <https://www.westhants.ca/municipal-finances.html>