

## Request for Proposals (RFPs)

A number of Requests for Proposals (RFPs) were issued to help the Co-ordinating Committee design and build the new Regional Municipality. *Human Resources* – awarded to Gerald Walsh and Associates, *Executive CAO Search* – awarded to Organizational Consulting Ltd., *Communications* – awarded to Prime Creative, *Asset Management* – to be awarded in April 2019, *Fire Services* – to be issued in April 2019

### STAY UPDATED, GET ENGAGED, HELP SHAPE OUR NEW REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY!

Visit [StrongerRegion.ca](http://StrongerRegion.ca) for regular updates. Contact our Communications Coordinator Chrystal at [cremme@westhants.ca](mailto:cremme@westhants.ca) or call 902-798-8391, Ext. 109 for questions about the newsletter.

### CONSOLIDATION TIMELINE



### Communication and Consolidation Updates

Our region is very large. We are fortunate that many of our districts have reliable Internet, postal service, and cell service but the reality is that some still do not. We continue to strive to discover the best mix of delivery methods that guarantees the message is always delivered.

We are using the website [StrongerRegion.ca](http://StrongerRegion.ca) along with our municipal sites, Facebook and Twitter to share information. There have been and will continue to be public meetings in our communities to provide the opportunity for residents to help shape the new Regional Municipality. We have begun an outreach effort to get to the most remote parts of our region.

If you still feel as though you are not hearing information you can always contact your Warden, Mayor or Councillor at any time. They have been elected by you to serve you and would be more than happy to answer any questions or talk about matters that are important to you.

# STRONGER REGION

## OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER ON THE CREATION OF THE NEW WINDSOR-WEST HANTS REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY

APRIL 2019

### WHY CONSOLIDATION

Municipalities across Nova Scotia are exploring new, more innovative ways of working together to face the numerous challenges before them. The Town of Windsor and the Municipality of the District of West Hants made a decision to ensure the future strength and viability of our communities.

Through collaboration and the creation of a new, unified regional government, we will be able to leverage our collective resources and respond to opportunities in our residents' best interests. Together, we will be stronger, and our citizens will benefit from more effective decision-making in many areas including land use, regional planning, infrastructure and economic development.

Provincial legislation (Bill 55) was passed on October 11, 2018 to allow the consolidation of West Hants and Windsor by April 1, 2020. The purpose of the legislation is to allow the creation of a regional government structure that can respond efficiently and effectively to the needs of the citizens and businesses it serves.

We have the opportunity now to create the future we want for our communities – the future our citizens deserve. Much has happened to move this forward since October 2018. In this newsletter you will find an overview of the work that has taken place and what is still to come.

We know how important it is to our community members that we get this right. That's why we are taking a number of steps in fulfilling our responsibilities, including many opportunities for public engagement.

Here you will find a summary about the consolidation of our communities and be sure to visit [StrongerRegion.ca](http://StrongerRegion.ca) for the most up-to-date information.

### WHAT'S INSIDE

- Meet the Co-ordinating Committee Members
- Guiding Principles
- Public Engagement
- Working Together
- Stay Updated
- RFPs
- Consolidation & Taxes
- Timeline

### Did You Know That the Co-ordinating Committee Meetings are public?

Residents are invited to attend the meetings in person or watch the meetings that are livestreamed on Windsor and West Hants Facebook pages.

The Co-ordinating Committee meets on the first and third Mondays every month alternating locations between the Sanford Chambers and the Town of Windsor Council Chambers.

Copies of the minutes can be found at [StrongerRegion.ca](http://StrongerRegion.ca), contact Chrystal at [cremme@westhants.ca](mailto:cremme@westhants.ca) to request a copy.

## Meet the Co-ordinating Committee

The Consolidation Co-ordinating Committee was put in place to guide the transition of the new regional municipality. They are responsible for designing and implementing the administrative structure of our new Regional Municipality.

Kevin Latimer, Co-ordinator and Committee Chair  
 Anna Allen, Mayor of Windsor  
 Abraham Zebian, Warden of West Hants  
 Laurie Murley, Deputy Mayor of Windsor  
 Paul Morton, Deputy Warden of West Hants



## Guiding Principles

The guiding principles were developed at a joint council workshop between the Town and the Municipality on October 29th, 2018. The intent of these Guiding Principles is to provide the Co-ordinating Committee with broad values to consider when making decisions concerning the consolidation of the two communities.

**1. Boundaries**  
 When looking at boundaries, ensure equitable representation for both urban and rural communities for the new council. It is essential that the culture and identities of both the urban and rural communities are

retained in the new consolidated community.  
**2. Taxation**  
 When developing a taxation model for the consolidated community, the existing tax system should serve as a base. Business as usual, services as usual. The electoral boundaries should not impact taxation.

**3. Debt**  
 When addressing debt from the former communities, area rates should be used to ensure the repayment of the debt is paid in the spirit it was incurred. By way of example, if the debt was incurred for the benefit of the taxpayers in Windsor, the debt should be

area rated to the taxpayers of Windsor.  
**4. Administrative Structure**  
 When developing the blended administrative structure of the consolidated community, all efforts should be taken to ensure there is no job loss as a result of the consolidation. Any planned efficiencies should strive to be achieved through attrition and maintaining corporate knowledge should be prioritized.

**5. Regional Service Strategy**  
 An overall strategy for regional service delivery and regional infrastructure prioritization should be informed by an

inventory of existing assets.  
**6. Regional Planning**  
 Regional planning should be a priority for the consolidated community to ensure that the strengths of the urban and rural communities are being leveraged appropriately.

**7. Public Engagement**  
 A Public Engagement Plan should focus on transparency and provide diverse ways to inform and engage the public and stakeholders.

**8. Decisions**  
 All pertinent decisions should be reviewed with the lens of looking for economic development growth and opportunities.



StrongerRegion.ca keeps a running list of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs). Do you have a question and don't see it on the website? Contact our Communications Coordinator, Chrystal at 902-798-8391 ext. 109 or at [cremme@westhants.ca](mailto:cremme@westhants.ca) to ask your question.

## Public Engagement

Making sure that residents have the opportunity for input throughout this process is one of the core Guiding Principles.

As part of this commitment, your feedback was an important component of the recent Governance Review done by Stantec Consulting Ltd.

We received input from about 740 residents through the five public

## Consolidation & Taxes

We've been getting a lot of questions about whether the consolidation will have any impact on taxes. The answer is no, the consolidation will not impact taxes.



## Working Together

Many of our staff already work together in areas such as recreation, communications and tourism. Just recently, Windsor and West Hants signed a service exchange involving building

meetings and the on-line and paper surveys on the size of the new Regional Council.

Stantec delivered its report to the Committee on February 25 and scenarios for 9 and 11 districts will be considered. The news release can be found at [StrongerRegion.ca](http://StrongerRegion.ca) under Updates.

The second phase of this Governance Study considers boundaries

Tax rates are set each year by Council and are based on services that residents receive. The consolidation process will not increase the tax rate.

Currently residents pay a residential tax rate based on their property assessment.

Included in the residential tax rate are costs

inspection, development officers, and planning services.

Our fire chiefs are also engaged in very productive talks surrounding service and fire protection for

and polling districts. The boundaries, which have no impact on taxes or services, will determine how many councillors will represent in the new Regional Municipality along with the Mayor.

The final report on boundaries and polling districts will be presented to the Co-ordinating Committee in April and posted to [StrongerRegion.ca](http://StrongerRegion.ca).

for services such as, sidewalks, street lighting, snow removal, streets and roads maintenance, policing, fire services, schools and education system, library services, corrections, solid waste management including composting and recycling, and recreation services.

the region. The departments are sharing training facilities and are arriving at mutual aid and automatic aid agreements.

We've started holding joint staff

There will be additional opportunities for residents to help shape the new Regional Municipality throughout the process.

Visit [StrongerRegion.ca](http://StrongerRegion.ca) for upcoming public engagement opportunities and remember to like and follow the Windsor and West Hants Facebook pages!



In some communities an area rate is added to the residential tax rate. An area rate includes costs that are associated specifically to that community.

There are also associated costs for residents who use town/municipal water and sewer. Only residents who receive these services pay for them.

meetings to share information and to get to know one another. These staff meetings will be held monthly and will lay the groundwork for a seamless transition to a new, stronger region.