

Hon. John Lohr
Dept. of Municipal Affairs and Housing
P.O.Box 216
Halifax, N.S.
B3J 2M4

June 25, 2024

Dear Minister Lohr,

During the December 12th, 2023, meeting of Halifax Regional Council, staff published a list of current requests the municipality has before the provincial government. Included in this list was a request made, February 25, 2020, for an amendment to the HRM Charter to enable the municipality to establish a fund to help mitigate the negative financial impact some municipal construction projects have on local businesses. Under the current charter, the municipality is unable to provide direct financial assistance to small businesses, which would be a key aspect of an effective construction mitigation program. A good example is the program currently run by the City of Montreal.

We are writing to you today to voice our support for HRM's request and ask that you provide the necessary authority to enhance their construction mitigation policy, with authority for direct compensation.

According to a survey conducted by the Canadian Federation of Independent Businesses, over the past five years, more than 2/3rds of small businesses have been negatively impacted from large construction projects, i.e., having trouble accessing their business, deliveries and shipping being impacted, and a decline in customer bases. The requested changes would help ensure that the unprecedented growth we are experiencing can continue without adverse effects to small business.

We look forward to your government's response on this issue and are happy to meet to discuss further.

Sincerely,

Downtown Halifax Business Commission
Spring Garden Area Business Association
Quinpool Road Business Association
North End Business Association
Sackville Area Business Association
Spryfield Business Association
Village on Main Association
Downtown Dartmouth Business Association