



October 6, 2025

Mayor Andy Fillmore and Halifax Regional Councillors,

The nine business improvement districts (BIDS) in HRM are fully in support of Councillor Morse's motion presented to Council, on October 6, which reads as follows:

"That Halifax Regional Council direct the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) to write a letter to be signed by the Mayor requesting the Province of Nova Scotia enable HRM to establish a mitigation fund for small businesses impacted by necessary road construction projects of more than 90 days duration."

The BIDS, as well as organizations such as the Canadian Federation of Independent Business (CFIB), have been calling for such a fund for many years. As necessary municipal, or other, work occurs, it can temporarily negatively impact businesses whose customers suddenly have decreased access. Progress causes disruption, and including some mitigation funding to alleviate this, makes sense. No one wants businesses to close because of construction. Similar programs exist in other municipalities.

In fact, HRM asked for this legislative authority in 2020. In June 2024, the Halifax BIDS wrote a letter to Minister John Lohr, asking that this legislative change be made. **See Appendix A.**

We urge HRM Council to reiterate your request to the provincial government. Halifax BIDS, representing over 4,000 businesses across the municipality, stand ready to support.

Sincerely,

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



Appendix A

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

June 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 on small businesses.

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

Sincerely,

Downtown Dartmouth Business Commission
Downtown Halifax Business Commission
North End Business Association
Porters Lake Business Association
Quinpool Road Main Street Business Association
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