



March 3, 2026

Mayor Fillmore and Halifax Regional Councillors,

*Halifax's Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) were all founded, and are funded, by over 4,000 businesses, landlords, and developers in our urban core and commercial main street areas. We all endeavour to attract investment, encourage development, and create positive business conditions for our members.*

*Canadian Federation of Independent Business (CFIB) is Canada's largest association of small and medium-sized businesses, representing 103,000 members nationwide, including 4,200 in Nova Scotia across all industries and regions. For many years, CFIB has actively communicated to municipal councils across the province the need for comprehensive construction mitigation measures for public works. These recommendations would also apply to work conducted under municipal permitting that affects nearby businesses. One of the cornerstones of effective construction mitigation is proactive, consistent communication with impacted businesses as highlighted in their report [Hard hats and hard times: Public construction impacts on small businesses](#).*

As you know, at times, construction and building maintenance conflict with the vibrancy of our streets and access to main street businesses. We are asking for HRM Council to direct staff to consider improvements to ease these conflicts, as was undertaken with the introduction of construction mitigation rules in 2018. Suggested improvements could include, but are not limited to, the following areas:

- Ensure that entities, such as Halifax Water, Nova Scotia Power, and HRM departments share information about any street closures with all impacted businesses as well as the local BID in a timely manner. Improved communication would lessen the impact on nearby businesses, as well as on traffic congestion.
- Ensure that commercial tenants are fully informed of significant work being undertaken in their buildings by their landlords. This could be done by HRM sending notices to all tenants within buildings that have applied for building permits, as well as stricter requirements for communication between landlords and tenants, regarding the scope and duration of work.
- Ensure that scaffolding, which is erected on public sidewalks, is not left for long periods of time, with no work being done, potentially with escalating fees and more stringent compliance.
- Consider the earmarking of encroachment fees to be disbursed to the local BID, to use for additional marketing, signage, wayfinding, etc. to mitigate the impact of construction.
- Re-engage the province to pass the enabling legislation that HRM requested in 2020, which would allow HRM to set up a business compensation program for the construction of public projects. All BIDs and the Canadian Federation of Independent Business (CFIB) are in full support of this and have sent letters to the Province.
- Review the compliance of the current Construction Site Management Administrative Order (2018-005-ADM) internally and with the BIDs and other relevant parties. As this order is six years old, a review is warranted, and improvements could be made.

Thank you for consideration of these matters. We believe that these improvements will not be an encumbrance to landlords and developers, but will ease the unintended disruption to businesses and the vibrancy of our main streets.

Sincerely,

The Business Improvement Districts of:

Downtown Dartmouth, Downtown Halifax, North End Halifax, Porter's Lake, Quinpool Road, Sackville, Spring Garden Area, Spryfield, Village on Main  
and

Canadian Federation of Independent Business