

2023-001-00655



**West Hants**  
something inspiring awaits

March 23, 2023

The Honourable Joyce Murray  
Federal Minister of Fisheries Oceans and Canadian Coast Guard

Sent electronically to: [Joyce.Murray@parl.gc.ca](mailto:Joyce.Murray@parl.gc.ca)

Dear Honourable Minister Murray,

RE: Reimagine Lake Pisiquid, Windsor Nova Scotia

Please accept the following letter on behalf of the West Hants Regional Municipal Council regarding Lake Pisiquid and the waterfront area of both Windsor and Falmouth impacted by the current Highway 101 Twinning Project.

As your government is aware, our community has lost the presence of standing freshwater in Lake Pisiquid due to an ongoing Ministerial Order issued by the Federal Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard (DFO). This ongoing order has resulted in a significant change in our community's landscape leaving the Windsor and Falmouth waterfront areas without the historic presence of freshwater or the presence of a natural tidal flow. These conditions are primarily influenced by the existing tidal gate operations which align with the Ministerial Order. In short, we have been left with a waterfront area that essentially lacks the presence of fresh or salt water in a manner that supports strategic growth, ongoing community development and the community's needs.

The rationale for the ongoing order has been explained to our Council and we understand the importance of improving fish passage at the existing causeway. However, the order and ongoing review of the Province's construction plans have deeply changed the landscape of our region; specifically, the downtown waterfront area of Windsor and Falmouth.

In addition to the known contributing factors influencing the waterfront, the approval of the design of the new aboiteau, timing associated with its construction and its operational parameters remain unknown. As a result, the future presence of tidal or freshwater conditions are unknown.

Over the past three years our Council and residents have observed as Federal and Provincial representatives discussed varying options and strategies to move this project forward. As a community we are accustomed to the presence of freshwater and have planned and developed the area influenced

by these conditions. It is a current day reality that those conditions may not return to the community pending the outcome of the twinning project. This has been expressed to us by both federal and provincial representatives through ongoing dialogue. As expressed above we have a level of familiarity and preparedness should freshwater return to our community, we do not have a plan or strategy for a long-term presence of water through tidal influences in the waterfront area. What will it look like, what opportunities will exist for growth, will land allocation grow or be reduced, what activities and special events can occur in the area, how will the business community be impacted, etc?

Through this letter I hope to express the desire of this Council to participate in a "Reimagine" strategic planning exercise for the waterfront area. This is needed now so that we can prepare for the potential redevelopment of this very important public space in our community. This area directly impacts the conditions influencing the local economy, social connectivity, development opportunities, recreation and the overall wellbeing of our community.

The position of the municipality is relayed through the following motion approved by Council at the February 28, 2023 Council meeting:

*"THAT COUNCIL SEND A LETTER TO THE PREMIER OF NOVA SCOTIA, THE NOVA SCOTIA MINISTER OF PUBLIC WORKS KIM MASLAND, NOVA SCOTIA MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT TIM HALMAN, NOVA SCOTIA MINISTER OF FISHERIES STEVE CRAIG, FEDERAL MINISTER OF FISHERIES OCEANS AND CANADIAN COAST GUARD JOYCE MURRAY, MINISTER OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SUSAN CORKUM-GREEK, MP BLOIS, MLA SHEEHY-RICHARD EXPRESSING COUNCIL'S INTEREST IN A REIMAGINATION OF THE WINDSOR WATERFRONT AND SURROUNDING AREA TO ALIGN WITH THE NEW OPERATING SCENARIO OF THE WINDSOR ABOITEAU"*

It is imperative that we look at this area and its potential redevelopment now. "West Hants, Something Inspiring Awaits", is not only our brand, but also a movement that fosters a vibrant, welcoming community, where rural and urban living is embraced, and everyone feels connected. We are a community that is growing at an unprecedented rate with momentum and the current condition of Lake Pisiquid is far from inspiring. It has divided our community and left many newcomers asking, "what's going on with the lake and waterfront area?". Waiting for what could be another five (5) to seven (7) years for a final determination on what the waterfront will be is not acceptable.

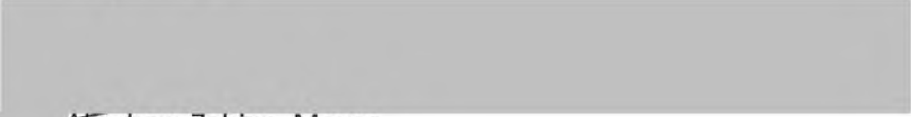

In an effort to address our concerns and provide an appropriate response to the residents who live and work within West Hants, the WHRM Council requests an opportunity to sit and discuss the future of our Windsor and Falmouth waterfront area. Let's start with a conversation, please.

We hope you share in the need to explore a new vision for our waterfront area. Help us reimagine the Windsor and Falmouth waterfront area. Help us reimagine our downtown core. We ask that our provincial and federal departments help prepare for an inspiring new landscape for our waterfront and for our Region.

We welcome the opportunity to discuss this matter in further detail and look forward to your response.

**s.19(1)**

Respectfully,

Abraham Zebian, Mayor

ds/az

CC: West Hants Regional Municipal Council  
Mark Phillips, Chief Administrative Officer