

10.1.3



PO Box 1749
Halifax, Nova Scotia
B3J 3A5 Canada

Western Region Community Council
June 26, 2006

TO: Chair and Members of Western Region Community Council

SUBMITTED BY: 
Cathie O'Toole, CGA - A/Director, Financial Services

DATE: June 14, 2006

SUBJECT: **Revision of Boundary for Westwood Hills Residents Association Area Rate**

ORIGIN

Council approval of area rate for Westwood Hills Residents Association on February 4, 2003.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Western Region Community Council approve :

- 1. That the boundary for the Westwood Hills Residents Association area rate be revised to include the properties identified in Appendix B of this report effective with the 2006-07 fiscal year.**
- 2. The 2006-07 Business Plan and Operating Budget for the Westwood Hills Residents Association attached to this report (Appendix E).**
- 3. That the area rate for the 2006-07 fiscal year be set at \$50 per property within the mapped area depicted in Appendix B of this report.**

BACKGROUND

An area rate of \$50 per property was approved by Council on February 4, 2003 to be applied against the properties within the mapped area depicted in Appendix A of this report. The purpose of the area rate was to provide revenue to the Westwood Hills Residents Association (WWHRA) to develop parkland and a trails system, and for maintenance of the current playgrounds and toboggan hill, as well as for other projects which would benefit all residents of the Westwood Hills subdivision. The WWHRA was formed in August 2002 and registered under the Societies Act with the Registry of Joint Stock Companies.

Since the time the area rate was approved, Westwood Hills has expanded into several new phases outside the original area rate catchment area approved by Council. This has necessitated a review of the catchment area to determine if the later phases of the subdivision should be included for purposes of paying the area rate.

DISCUSSION

The current status of this area rate in terms of the Interim Area Rate Guidelines is as follows:

- 1. Area rates can only be used for the provision of services within the municipal mandate; services traditionally provided by the municipality.***

Section 65 (ag) of the Municipal Government Act states that "Council may expend money required by the municipality for playgrounds, trails, bicycle paths, swimming pools, ice arenas and other recreational facilities." The Halifax Regional Municipality and its predecessor municipal units have traditionally funded, either entirely or partially through partnerships, the construction and ongoing operating costs of recreation facilities.

- 2. Area rates are not to be used to provide different levels of a municipal service within urban and suburban areas where said service is covered by the general tax rate.***

The community to which the area rate would be applied is entirely outside the urban and suburban areas of HRM. Further, the WWHRA is not duplicating any services provided directly by HRM to the community of Westwood Hills.

- 3. In order for a proposed new area rate to move to the process as outlined in #4 below, it must have the support of the area's Councillor(s).***

The catchment area for this area rate falls entirely within District 23. Councillor Meade was advised by staff that the developer, ECL General Partnership IV Limited, had written to advise that they wished to pay the area rate on all properties they owned within all phases of the Westwood Hills development. A copy of the letter is attached as Appendix C to this report. Since the developer owns 110 out of the 128 properties in the Westwood Hills subdivision which are outside the current

area rate catchment area, the Councillor indicated his support for expanding the boundary to include these properties.

4. *Proposals for new area rates must be advertised publicly, clearly identifying affected areas, the purpose for the rate, rate information and the duration the rate is expected to be charged. A public meeting will be held and those attending the meeting will be informed of the rationale for the rate and consulted on its appropriateness.*

ECL General Partnership IV Limited own 86% of the properties in the Westwood Hills subdivision which are outside the current area rate catchment area. Since they have indicated in writing that they support paying the area rate for these properties, with the agreement of the Councillor, no further balloting was done. Instead, a letter was mailed from the Councillor to the owners of the other 18 properties not owned by ECL to advise them of the purpose of the area rate, the amount, and when it would commence. In lieu of a public meeting, letter recipients were advised to contact the Councillor with any questions or comments. A copy of the letter is included as Appendix D to this report.

5. *With the concurrence of the Councillor, the request is forwarded to the Community Council for review and a recommendation to Halifax Regional Council. Where a Community Council does not exist, the request will go directly to Halifax Regional Council.*

The purpose of this report is to provide the Western Region Community Council with the necessary information required to consider making a recommendation to Halifax Regional Council for continuing this area rate within a revised catchment area. The implications to the Municipality are identified under the Budget Implications section which follows.

6. *Any proposed new area rates recommended by a Community Council (or, in the absence of a Community Council, the Councillor for the area) will be submitted to Halifax Regional Council through a staff report with a recommendation from the Chief Administrative Officer. The staff report will identify the implications to the Municipality along with the results of any public meeting.*
7. *Halifax Regional Council is responsible for approving all area rates.*

Completion of steps 6 and 7 are contingent on the Western Region Community Council approving the Recommendation contained in this report.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

As all funding is from the area rate, there is no impact on the HRM General Operating Budget.

There is, however, a significant impact on the budget of the WWHRA. If the catchment area

boundary is not expanded to include the other 128 properties in the subdivision, total area rate revenue will be reduced by \$6,400 from \$24,550 to \$18,150. Such a reduction in revenue would reduce the capacity of the WWHRA to fund the initiatives referred to in their Proposed 2006-07 Business Plan and Budget (Appendix E).

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT POLICIES / BUSINESS PLAN

This report complies with the Municipality's Multi-Year Financial Strategy, the approved Operating, Capital and Reserve budgets, policies and procedures regarding withdrawals from the utilization of Capital and Operating reserves, as well as any relevant legislation.

ALTERNATIVES

Community Council could choose not to change the existing boundary. This is not recommended as it is the intention of the developer to pay the area rate for all properties they own within all phases of Westwood Hills.

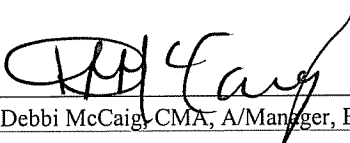
ATTACHMENTS

- Appendix A: Catchment Area Map approved by Council on February 4, 2003
- Appendix B: Recommended Catchment Area Map
- Appendix C: Letter received from ECL General Partnership IV Limited dated June 11, 2006
- Appendix D: Letter mailed to other property owners that would begin paying the area rate
- Appendix E: Proposed Business Plan and Budget for Westwood Hills Residents Association

A copy of this report can be obtained online at <http://www.halifax.ca/council/agendasc/cagenda.html> then choose the appropriate meeting date, or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 490-4210, or Fax 490-4208.

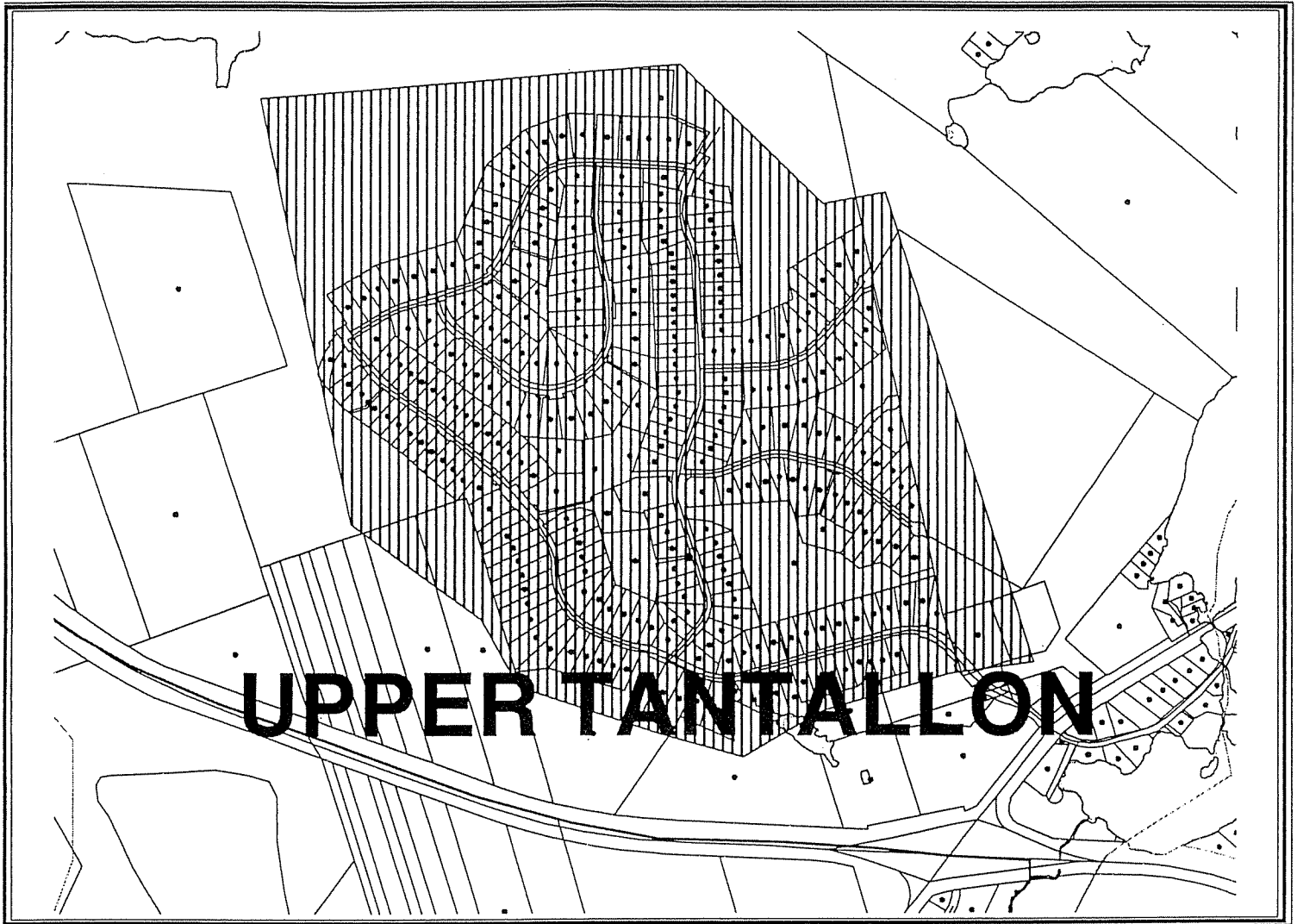
Report Prepared by: Gordon Roussel, Financial Consultant 490-6468

Report Approved by:








Debbi McCaig, CMA, A/Manager, Budget & Financial Analysis 490-7203

Halifax Regional Municipality

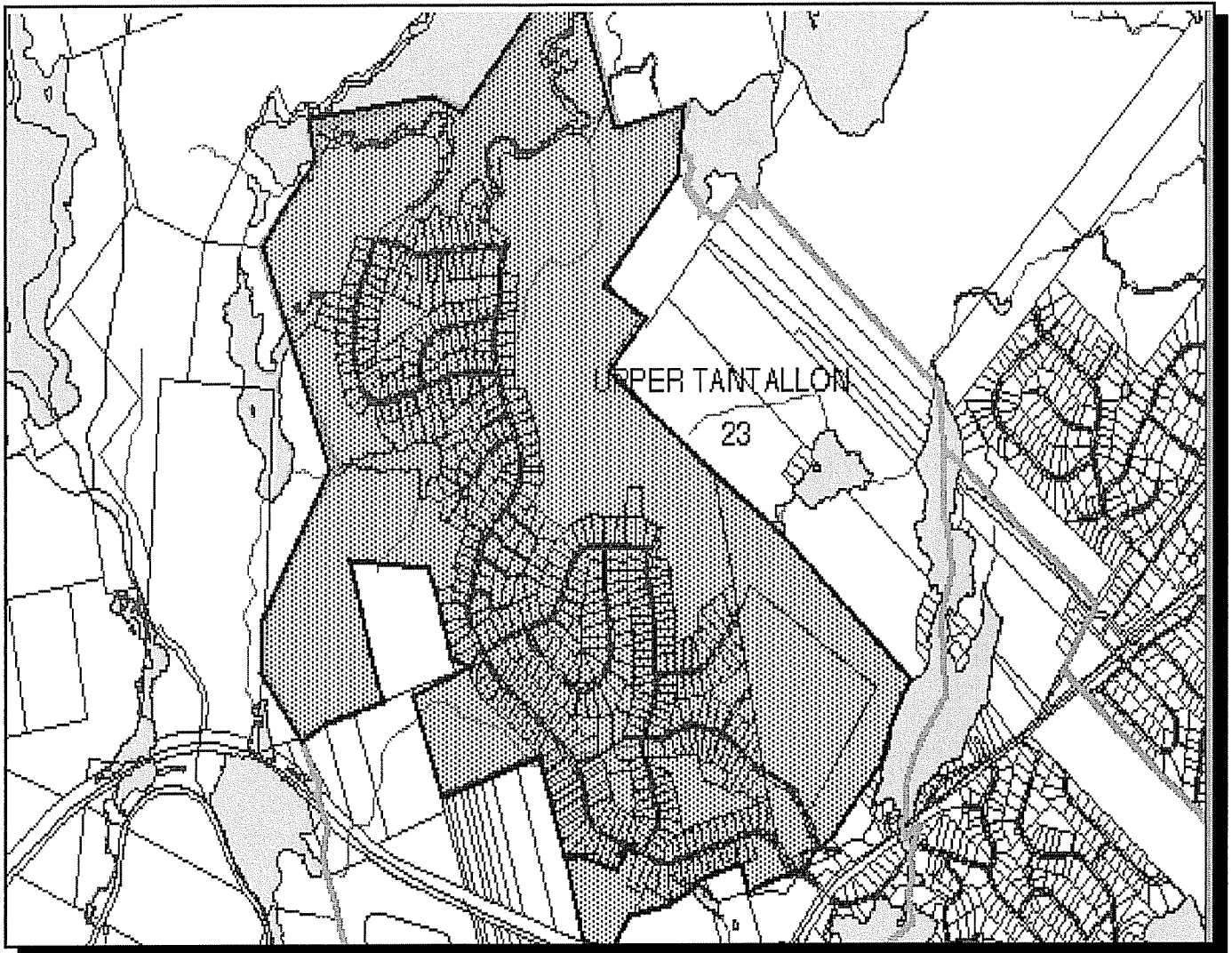


APPENDIX A WESTWOOD HILLS SUBDIVISION

-  Westwood hills.shp
-  GSA Boundary
-  Ritchee Information points
-  Districts
-  Street

Appendix B:

Recommended Catchment Area Map



Appendix C



246 Westwood Boulevard, Upper Tantallon, NS B3Z 1N1

Tel.: 902-826-3090 • Fax.: 902-826-3091 • Email: virginia.bonn@sobeys.com • www.westwoodhills.ca

June 11, 2006

Faxed

Halifax Regional Municipality
P.O. Box 1749
Halifax, Nova Scotia
B3J 3A5

ATTENTION: Mr. Gordon Roussel

Dear Mr. Roussel:

**RE: Lot No. 01 - PID 41049289
Area Rate
Westwood Hills Residents' Association
Westwood Hills, Upper Tantallon, NS**

Thank you for your facsimile of June 8, 2006. We have reviewed the map and list of properties which were excluded from the area rate that was to be applied to all lands subdivided from the original parcel Lot No. 01 - PID No. 41049289 as shown on the map Council approved on February 4, 2003.

Notwithstanding, this letter will serve to confirm ECL General Partnership IV Limited's agreement to pay the \$50.00 per property annual area rate for the properties it owns in Westwood Hills, as per the attached list, as well as all future lots that will be subdivided from Lot No. 01 - C, PID No. 41180761/AAN 09777741, Lot No. 01 - D, PID 41180779/AAN00421502, and Lot No. 01 - E, PID 41180753/AAN 09777733.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned at 826-3090. We thank you for your assistance and immediate attention in rectifying this matter.

Yours truly,

ECL GENERAL PARTNERSHIP IV LIMITED


Virginia Bonn
Development Manager

Encls. 2

cc: Joe Lavers, W.H.R.A.

Appendix D



June 13, 2006

Assessment #FIELD(Prop_num)
FIELD(LOC_DESC1)
FIELD(LOC_DESC2)

FIELD(Name)
FIELD(Address1)
FIELD(Address2)
FIELD(Address3) FIELD(Postal_cde)

Westwood Hills Residents Association

Dear Resident:

The Westwood Hills Residents Association (WWHRA) exists to represent the interests of the residents of Westwood Hills and enhance the quality of life within the subdivision. This is accomplished through neighbourhood improvement programs, recreational development, and social activities in the community. Examples include neighbourhood parties, and development of parkland for recreational activities on Hemlock Drive.

The WWHRA was formed in August 2002 and is registered under the Societies Act with the Registry of Joint Stock Companies. Since 2003, property owners in the Westwood Hills subdivision have been paying a flat fee area rate of \$50 annually through their property tax bills to fund the activities, programs, and projects of the WWHRA. As the owner of the property identified above, the \$50 charge will be included on the 2006 property tax billing to be mailed to you shortly.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me at 826-3336 or 476-4123. If you would like more information regarding the Association, please visit their website at www.wwhra.com.

Respectfully yours,

Councillor Gary Meade
District 23

Appendix E

**Westwood Hills Residents Association
Application for Provincial Funding
For Recreation Improvement Projects in Westwood Hills
Subdivision**

February 06, 2006

**Prepared by: Joe Lavers, Chairperson
Kelly Hanscom, Vice Chairperson
Chris Mosher, Treasurer
Stacey Purcell, Secretary
Pare Lindquist, Director
Peter Barrett, Member**

Executive Summary

The purpose of this application is to request funding of \$50 000.00 from the Nova Scotia Department of Health Promotion, Sport and Recreation to support community based projects in our community. The use of cooperative funding between the Province (\$50 000.00), HRM Department of Recreation and Public Works (\$50 000.00) and Westwood Hills Residence Association (\$50 000.00) will provide much needed funds to support the construction of a Multipurpose Court, Children's Play and Seating area, Lake Common area and trail, Common area Information Shelter and Lighting projects.

The Westwood Hills Residents Association (WWHRA) is a non-profit community minded group located in Upper Tantallon Nova Scotia. Our association has existed since 2001 with an area rate established in 2002. The Association consists of 400 current and 400 additionally proposed homeowners currently residing and contributing to an area ratepayers association. Collection and distribution of funds is by HRM administration department. Annual budgets are voted on and approved by the ratepayers and is submitted to HRM's administration department.

WWHRA has an executive (4 people) and board of directors (6 people) selected and voted in by our community peers. All board members are volunteers. A list of the current executive and directors is available on our website at www.wwhra.com. The board is responsible for managing all community based funds received through the rate payers, business community, local and provincial governments and for prioritizing all community based activities.

Our guiding principals are to promote a safe, healthy and cohesive community by providing, at no additional cost, the resources and activities to all parties within the community to enjoy this lifestyle. We believe the true element to success is good health and strong community involvement and therefore our goal is to encourage resident involvement, of all ages, in our decision making on projects and events that benefit our families and area neighbors. Communication is key to our success and to this, we encourage all residents participate in regularly scheduled general meetings to gain perspective and assist in the project and activity concepts and approval.

The information contained in this document is intended to demonstrate our successes to date and is expected to provide you with the information required to assist in your decision for granting us the funds needed to complete our viable community projects.

Needs Assessment

Westwood Hills Subdivision is a relatively new subdivision within HRM. Currently there are no such facilities in place to support the community residents in their outdoor sport activity. Most residents are required to travel to other facilities located throughout Metro to engage in such activities with no guarantee of availability.

Our projects considers all residents, neighboring and otherwise, and they're need and passion for sport in daily life. For this, we have included:

- common areas with easy access to equipment and recreation areas.
- equipment availability for all age groups
- equipment and areas available for all athletic levels
- consideration for small groups wishing to benefit from these areas.
- maintenance and cost of equipment replacement during the life of the project
- impact to the community

Community Benefits & Impact:

This project is expected to impact:

- 2000 residents directly and 500 area residents indirectly
- Residents from neighboring home within a 20-km radius.

The groups that will benefit this project are:

- seniors,
- children of all ages from all ages
- families with children from infant to teenagers
- those requiring assistance through the use of a wheel chair, walker or other walking device
- small community groups such as walking/hiking, kayaking/canoeing or tennis groups.

Social Benefits

The social benefits of this project are, but not limited to:

- the promotion of good healthy living through year round sport and activity
- community involvement
- social gathering
- family
- respect

Priority of Project within the Community

Within our community this remains the number one priority. Residents currently do not have an area, within the community, where they are able to enjoy family sport and activity. The projects are expected provide such areas for summer sports such as basketball, soccer, tennis, walking/hiking, water sport and winter sport such as ice skating, skiing and sliding.

The Residents Association is committed to promote healthy living within the community and in order to achieve this goal we must provide a vehicle for the community to enjoy such a lifestyle. This project proves to provide long-term viability as existing residents age and/or as new residents re-locate in our community.

Project Planning

Westwood Hills Resident Association is an active association with regular board. The executive facilitates the budgeting process and execution of decision that are made in our annual meetings.

Semi & annual meetings as well as committee meeting are held on a periodic basis. Within our Recreation and Development committee a five year business plan is approved to support the various projects and events. A copy of this plan is included at the end of this application.

Requested funding is to support the following construction initiatives:

- Year Round Multipurpose Court
- Play Park and Sheltered sitting/picnic area
- Common area including shelters, park benches and walking trail at Wright Lake and Anderson Lake
- Community event and communication shelter
- Dusk to Dawn lighting at play and common areas.

- Construction on all projects is expected by April 2006
- All projects will be constructed in accordance to HRM construction and safety standards.
- Work performed is through approved vendors and are expected to perform in accordance to the agreed upon terms and conditions.
- Westwood Hills Resident Executive signs off each milestone upon completion
- The site has no enclosed structure or hazards and concept have been approved by HRM's local councilor, Gary Meade and Department of Recreation & Public Works, Blair Blakney
- where possible, local business are asked to provide services/products at costs, local residents are asked to provide time and expertise at no costs
- Proposed project will be constructed and managed by the Association executive and HRM's Department of Recreation and Public Works Department,
- Priorities of activities have been set by residents and its Association executives and Directors
- Site visits performed by HRM DOR&PW, WWHRA and area HRM Councilors
- the included projects are fully endorsed by all stakeholders, HRM, Dept of Rec, Public Works, Council. Mead and Westwood Hills Association.

Past Performance

The WWHRA with most of its current executive and directors were responsible for implementing the following projects:

- installation of 2 tot parks including dusk to dawn lighting (est. cost. \$75000.00)
- placement of 2 community shelters for communication and mailboxes. Shelters are strategically located on the bus stops. (est. cost \$10 000.00)

- Installation of a fully sodded multi use field including soccer nets, gazebo and seating area. (est. cost \$100,000.00)
- various beautification projects throughout the subdivision (est. \$7500.00)

Ratepayer's Association as approved by all key stakeholders: WWHRA, HRM Department of Recreation and Public Works incurred operating and construction expenses for all past projects.

In Kind work and donations received from local business resources along with councilors Meade and Rankin.

HRM DOR&PW & WWHRA jointly maintain all existing and proposed projects

Project Plan

Project Plan FY06				
Westwood Hills Residence Association				
Project	Activity	Timeline	Budget	Comments
Construction of Multipurpose Court	Clear site adjacent greenspace	April 06	\$100 000	Work performed by Brycon Construction
	Prepare site for soil and asphalt	April 06		Work performed by Brycon Construction
	Install Asphalt	May 06		Contract to be awarded by HRM DOR & PW
	Install Perimeter fencing	June 06		Contract to be awarded by WWHRA
	Install Basketball and Tennis Nets/Posts	June 06		Contract to be awarded for purchase and installation by WWHRA or HRM DOR &PW
	Grand Opening	July 01/2006		In concert with WWHRA Canada Day event
Installation of Play area	Installation	May 06	\$20 000	All work completed by HRM DOR & PW Approved supplier
Installation of Sitting/Picnic Area	Purchase Supplies	February 06	\$7 000	Material Cost estimates completed
	Construction of Structure '16' x 20'	April 06		WWHRA currently obtaining quotes for the work
Installation of Common Area @ Wright Lake including Lake Access Trail	Clear site and set grade for area	May 06		Work performed by Crombie Development
	Complete site preparation including gravel, mulch, sodding if required	August 06		Work performed upon completion of site clearing WWHRA to obtain quotes for required work
	Complete concept design for shelter and storage shed	October 06		WWHRA to provide options for approval by residents
	Construction shelter and storage shed	April 07		WWHRA to obtain quotes for required work

	Grand Opening	June 07		
Installation of Dusk to Dawn Lights	Obtain lighting concepts from suppliers	Complete	\$15 000	Lights purchased
	Install lighting in entrance to subdivision	May 06		WWHRA to obtain pricing from industrial electrical contractors
	Install lighting at Greenspace Multipurpose court	July 06		WWHRA to obtain pricing from industrial electrical contractors
	Install lighting at Wright Lake Common Area	TBD		Concept, design and installation plan to be approved
Construction of Communication Shelter	Obtain pricing for materials	February 06	\$8 000	In Progress
	Obtain pricing for construction of shelter from approved vendors	February 06		In Progress
	Complete site preparation including ingress and egress	April 06		Ingress/egress site work at existing playground site on Westwood Blvd. Crombie provided \$1000.00 as partial payment for culverts and gravel work
	Confirm material costs and obtain materials from supplier	May 06		
	Complete construction of structure	June 06		
	Complete installation of community information board and mailboxes	July 06		Cost to install mailboxes at expense of Canada Post Site preparation costs to the account of WWHRA

5 Year Activity and Infrastructure Plan

Year 1 (2006-2007)

Serial	Item	Remarks
1001	Placement of Communication Signs	Westwood Blvd at existing Tot Park
1002	Construction of a new shelter	Westwood Blvd at existing Tot Park
1003	Annual event spending	Canada Day event, Fireworks, Holiday events and recreation events
1004	Multipurpose Area (60x140 feet)	Greenspace area Winslow/Hemlock and to consist of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basketball Court • Tennis Court • Volleyball nets
1005	Seating area in Multipurpose Area (12x16 feet)	
1006	Lighting for Entrance of the Subdivision an	At beginning of Westwood Blvd
1008	Lighting for the Multipurpose area	Installation of Dusk to Dawn Lights
1009	Construction of playground area for target ages 5-12 yrs	East side of Greenspace on Winslow Ave
1010	Culvert on Hemlock	To accommodate mailbox/communication area
1011	Picnic benches and seating area	In green space area
1012	Misc Community Support equipment	

Year 2 (2007 - 2008)

Serial	Item	Remarks
2001	Development of community lakefront area	This will be Phase 1 and include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion of access to lake • Purchase water sports recreation equipment • Build an equipment and maintenance shed • Construction of seating area c/w fencing
2002	Construction of skating area at multipurpose court	Purchase and install a kit as recommended by HRM DOR & PW
2003	Annual community activity spending	Canada Day event, Fireworks, Holiday events and recreation events

Year 3 (2008 - 2009)

Serial	Item	Remarks
3001	Completion of lake access.	
3002	Placement of lights at waterfront	
3003	Annual community activity spending	Canada Day event, Fireworks, Holiday events and recreation events

Year 4 (2009 - 2010)

Serial	Item	Remarks
4001	Winter hill revitalization.	Located off of Hemlock/Winslow Ave at Greenspace area. Grade land and develop into a higher level recreation area
4002	Annual community activity spending	Canada Day event, Fireworks, Holiday events and recreation events

Year 5 (2010 - 2011)

Serial	Item	Remarks
5001	Development of 30 Acre Greenspace area at Hemlock/HighTimber Dr extension (Phase 9)	Construction of WWH Community Centre Construction of field and activity area. Land currently not available for development.
5002	Annual community activity spending	Canada Day event, Fireworks, Holiday events and recreation events

Budget

Westwood Hills Residents Association Proposed 2006/2007 Budget		
Revenue Source	Amount Currently	Amount Hoping to get
Balance from FY 05/06 as of 25 Jan 06	5,436.45	
Scotia Bank Account	10,574.69	
Monies from HRM		50,000.00
Monies from Province		50,000.00
ASC Properties for shelter on Westwood	3,500.00	
Rate Payers Association Income (Based on 487 households @ \$50/household)	24,350.00	
Total Proposed Revenue	\$43,861.14	\$100,000.00
Proposed Expenses and Activities	Proposed Cost	
Association Liability Insurance	1,380.00	1,380.00
Hall Rentals for periodic meetings	400.00	336.00
Mailing and other administrative fees	200.00	106.00
Community Board/Shelter Westwood Blvd	7,700.00	0.00
Web page Management & name register	400.00	380.00
Completion of green space Hemlock and Winslow (Multi-use Court)	20,831.14	
Entrance Street lights	6,500.00	0.00
July 1st Street Party (Recreation and Development Committee)	5,500.00	3,058.32
Halloween Party /Prizes	300.00	0.00
Christmas Party/ Fireworks	850.00	850.00
Winter Skate Party (Recreation and Development Committee)	500.00	400.00
Miscellaneous	800.00	500.00
Total Proposed Expenses	\$ 45,361.14	
Net Balance (total revenue-total expenses)	-1,500.00	

Phase 9 approximatly another 200 homes total \$10,000 for 07/08 budget

Note:

Funds Available

- Rate Payers Association currently contributing \$50,000.00
- HRM DOR&PW approval to contribute \$50,000.00 for playground structure and portion of Multipurpose Court at Greenspace.

Conclusion

The Westwood Hills Residents' Association on behalf of the residents needs provincial support in the form of funding to achieve its goal of making our community the best community within HRM. Our 5-year plan will act as a corner stone and road map in the development of many recreation and fitness based activities and venues.

The construction and creation of our multipurpose court play parks and common areas are essential to promoting an environment of good healthy safe living within our community. Aligned with the Province's efforts to a healthy living strategy, the WHRA and its funders will create venues and community activities to ensure inclusiveness and the practice of a more beneficial lifestyle becomes the norm within Westwood Hills.

Building a community that values community based economic development, builds a strong community fabric that will provide immense value and act as a showcase to other communities. Achieving this goal requires support and funding from local businesses, municipal and provincial government and our residents.