



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

Information Item No. 2
Halifax Regional Council
July 17, 2018

TO: Mayor Savage and Members of Halifax Regional Council

SUBMITTED BY: **Original Signed**

Mayor Savage, Chair and Members of the Executive Standing Committee

DATE: July 7, 2018

SUBJECT: Progress to Date on Accessibility Framework

INFORMATION REPORT

ORIGIN

Motion from the June 25, 2018 Executive Standing Committee meeting.

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

Section 9 of the Terms of Reference of the Executive Standing Committee which indicates that the Committee “shall have strategic oversight of progress on HRM’s Corporate Performance Objectives and priority areas of the Council”

BACKGROUND

The Executive Standing Committee received the Progress to Date on Accessibility Framework information report and a presentation at the June 25, 2018 meeting of the Committee.

DISCUSSION

The Committee received a presentation and discussed the work being done and findings to date. The Committee endorsed the initiatives and subsequently approved a motion to forward the May 10, 2018 Progress to Date on Accessibility Framework report and presentation to Council for information.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications associated with this report.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The Executive Standing Committee is comprised of seven duly elected officials. Meetings are held in public unless otherwise indicated and the agenda and materials are posted to the HRM website. In addition, the Executive Standing Committee meeting is webcasted, and a meeting video is posted to the committee webpage after the meeting.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: Information report dated May 10, 2018

Attachment 2: Presentation – Progress to Date on Accessibility Framework

A copy of this report can be obtained online at halifax.ca or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 902.490.4210.

Report Prepared by: Sharon Chase, Legislative Assistant, 902-490-6519



P.O. Box 1749
Halifax, Nova Scotia
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Information Item No. 1
Executive Standing Committee
June 25, 2018

TO: Chair and Members of Executive Standing Committee

SUBMITTED BY: **Original Signed**

Catherine Mullally, Director, Human Resources/Office of Diversity & Inclusion

Original Signed

Jacques Dubé, Chief Administrative Officer

DATE: May 10, 2018

SUBJECT: **Progress To Date on Accessibility Framework**

INFORMATION REPORT

ORIGIN

Motion of Regional Council October 31, 2017:

THAT Halifax Regional Council:

1. The Walk 'n Roll proposal for funding, as submitted, be refused on the grounds that that \$90,000 has already been allocated in the 2017/2018 budget to support the delivery of accessibility related initiatives across the municipality;
2. The Chief Administrative Officer (CAO), through the Diversity and Inclusion office, continue work on HRM's framework and reporting model for Halifax's Inclusive and Accessible initiatives with consultation and input from Walk 'n Roll Halifax, the Accessibility Advisory Committee, and other community organizations and individuals, with the framework to be in alignment with the Council Priority Areas of Healthy, Liveable Communities (Recreation & Leisure), Social Development (Accessible Community), and Transportation (Interconnected & Strategic Growth; A Safe & Accessible Transportation Network); and
3. That the CAO prepare a report outlining progress to date on the accessibility framework.

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

Halifax Regional Municipality Charter sections:

- 11 (2) In the general exercise of its powers, the Council shall take into account the principle of accessibility for its citizens with disabilities.

34 (1) The Chief Administrative Officer is the head of the administrative branch of the government of the Municipality and is responsible to the Council for the proper administration of the affairs of the Municipality in accordance with the by-laws of the Municipality and the policies adopted by the Council.

BACKGROUND

On April 11, 2017, Regional Council adopted the 2017/2018 Operating and Capital Budget which included \$90,000 of additional funding to “support organized and effective delivery of accessibility related initiatives across the municipality”, ensuring community involvement in the development of the municipality’s accessibility framework.

There has also been establishment of the new accessibility legislation (Nova Scotia Accessibility Act) which will provide guidance for municipalities on implementing future regulations. The municipality is awaiting guidance from the province on regulations and their implementation with respect to the Act.

For the purpose of this report, accessibility refers to the design of products, devices, services, or environments for people with disabilities. Similarly, inclusion refers to community actions meant to eliminate barriers so all members can fully participate and contribute. Inclusion means being supported and valued within the community and organization.

DISCUSSION

To develop an Accessibility Framework for the municipality, it was determined that phase one would include a community consultation process. The planning of the engagement began early January 2018 with the first consultation held at the end of February 2018. The Office of Diversity and Inclusion worked with an experienced facilitator to develop an engagement process which allowed community members to offer feedback in a variety of forms.

Twelve Accessibility Framework community consultations were conducted across the municipality. It was an opportunity to hear about the barriers faced by the community of persons with disabilities living in Halifax Regional Municipality.

The consultation locations were as follows:

Sackville Sports Stadium on February 28, 2018
Alderney Gate Library on March 1, 2018
Central Public Library on March 5, 2018
Tantallon Public Library on March 7, 2018
Gordon Snow Community Centre on March 22, 2018
Captain William Spry on March 26, 2018

An afternoon (2:00pm-4:00pm) and evening (6:00pm-8:00pm) session was offered at each location, to ensure that residents had a variety of times to participate. Session times were chosen to accommodate for things such as personal care workers, child care, employment commitments, and transit scheduling. Additionally, the sessions were kept to a two-hour maximum to guarantee participants could participate fully and be confident about their transportation scheduling.

In preparation for the consultations, the office of Diversity and Inclusion worked closely with Communications to ensure the invitation could reach as many citizens as possible.

To ensure consultation process was accessible, the following was included for every session: large print, braille, sign language interpretation, live captioning, sighted guides and several specific accommodation requests were met. HRM's Accessibility Advisory Committee member, Johanna Stork, from CNIB Halifax, was able to provide staff from the Office of Diversity and Inclusion with sighted guide training and best practices to be used during the consultation sessions.

A total of 130 community members were present for one or more consultation.

	Afternoon Session 2pm-4pm	Evening Session 6pm-8pm
Sackville Sports Stadium February 28, 2018	30 Participants	10 Participants
Alderney Gate Library March 1, 2018	20 Participants	6 Participants
Central Public Library March 5, 2018	41 Participants	20 Participants
Tantallon Public Library March 7, 2018	1 Participant	0 Participants
Gordon Snow Community Centre March 22, 2018	1 Participant	1 Participant
Captain Willian Spry March 26, 2018	12 Participants	8 Participants

It should be noted that March 22, 2018 was inclement weather, and although staff were present, the community turnout in Fall River was likely affected.

The consultations were attended by persons with disabilities, caregivers, professionals in health care and social justice fields, and concerned community members. One able-bodied participant noted:

“Anything can convert any one of us from an able-bodied person to a person with a disability. We need to view accessibility as an insurance.”

This comment was applauded by community members. Many caregivers and professionals agreed that this was indeed the way HRM needed to view accessibility stating,

“Accessibility needs to be a leading thought, not an after thought.”

Throughout the consultation process, there were several themes that emerged. The following recommendations were those that were most strongly supported by community members present at the consultations:

Transportation

- Improve accessible transportation to increase its usage (look at booking regulations, timing and number of Access-a-Busses).
- Treat sidewalks like roads (e.g. year-round obstruction clearing, consistent curb cuts, barrier free access from parking to sidewalk).

Recreation

- Ensure everyone can access nature, parks, playgrounds and facilities independently.
- Build on strength by expanding recreation programming and its reach (e.g. build upon current recreation offerings, subsidies for persons with disabilities, and provide trained staff).
- Promote accessible programs and facilities to create awareness.
- Improve existing recreation facilities to meet minimum building code standards.

Buildings

- Enforce and ensure buildings exceed minimum standards (e.g. quality and condition of accessible washrooms, and enforcement of building codes).
- Develop an auditing, tracking and reporting system for repairs. There were examples of out of service accessible features that had not been repaired, such as an accessible shower, wet wheelchairs, and power operated doors.

While hosting the engagement sessions, it became evident that maintaining barrier free access to all HRM facilities is a must. During the consultation process, we encountered several accessibility features which did not work (e.g. power door operators, wheelchairs, and washrooms) ultimately creating barriers. In addition, staff heard from community members they were unable to attend due to not being able to access transportation (e.g. Access-a-Bus) and inclement weather.

Additionally, we heard from the community the importance of their being able to live spontaneously. HRM currently requires the community to book transportation, and other accessibility features a week in advance. As a result, participants noted it is often difficult to participate in leisure activities without having to make plans well in advance.

It is noteworthy that we received feedback from professionals working with the community of persons with disabilities suggesting they did not feel they should speak over / about the community at our engagement sessions. As a result, there will be an additional session for professionals and service providers. There will also be an additional session at the Nova Scotia Rehab as those staff expressed they would be unable to transport a large majority of the inpatients to a community session. These added sessions, at the request of the community, will help to provide more community voice on the development of the framework.

A survey, in line with the discussion topics at the public consultations, was posted to Halifax's Shape Your City webpage. The survey opened at the beginning of March and will remain open until June 2018 at which time the data will be analyzed and compiled into a report with the results from the community engagement.

Feedback with respect to barriers that our process created was also given. The Office of Diversity and Inclusion received phone calls and emails with concerns such as:

- Community members being unable to secure an Access-a-Bus booking for the event.
- Engagement locations not being in every district.
- The engagement was too long to use a bus transfer, thus costing participants two fares.
- Newspaper and radio referred to a website rather than outlining dates.
- Chosen locations were not always sensory friendly (e.g. florescent lighting).
- There was no option to phone in and provide feedback.

A number of these were barriers had financial implications on the community's ability to participate. As we continue to work with the community on the development of the framework, staff will work to remove, if possible, the barriers identified.

Next steps:

- Additional consultations will be held in May 2018
- Consultation findings will be rolled out to Accessibility Advisory Committee for feedback in June.
- Based on the feedback, the Diversity and Inclusion team will develop the corporate Accessibility Framework, projected completion Q4.
- The Diversity and Inclusion team will continue to work with the Province around the Provincial Accessibility Act and future regulations with respect to their impact and implementation in HRM.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Costs for this project were covered by the 2017/2018 Operating Budget.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Several community organizations were consulted prior to the engagement process beginning. This information allowed the Office of Diversity and Inclusion to better understand how to reach diverse groups of citizens. Additionally, the Accessibility Advisory Committee was kept informed on the progress of the consultation and will also review and comment on the findings.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 - Facilitators Report
Attachment 2 - Agenda
Attachment 3 - Poster

A copy of this report can be obtained online at halifax.ca or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 902.490.4210.

Report Prepared by: Tracey Jones-Grant, Managing Director Diversity & Inclusion, 902.490.3677
Kayla Douglas, Accessibility Intern, 902.789.5348

WWW.GROUPATWORK.ORG

HRM PUBLIC CONSULTATION: ACCESSIBILITY & INCLUSION

Attachment 1

SUMMARY REPORT
SUBMITTED
APRIL, 2018



PREPARED BY
ALISON MCEACHERN & CATHY CASWELL

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Introduction and Acknowledgements

In February and March, 2018, the Halifax Regional Municipality Office of Diversity and Inclusion scheduled 12 public consultation sessions to identify priority accessibility needs for persons with disabilities, and to help the municipality develop a corporate accessibility framework. We would like to express our gratitude to the 130 citizens of HRM who turned out for the focus group sessions across the region during the chilly days and evenings of late winter to share their experiences and insights. What we encountered in the overflow crowds in Halifax and the small reflective groups in Fall River and Spryfield - in every meeting room where we assembled across HRM - was one, great visionary voice. It is the voice of people who are deeply committed to enhancing the quality of life for their children, parents, friends, neighbours, themselves, you and I.

Specifically, participants shared their suggestions about how to make HRM’s transportation services, programs, parks, services, buildings, roads and recreation centres more accessible and inclusive for all citizens.

The following summarizes the number of participants who attended each session.

Session Time	Consultation Date	Consultation Location	Number of Participants
6:00 - 8:00	February 28, 2018	Sackville Sports Stadium, Sackville, NS	10
6:00 - 8:00	March 1, 2018	Alderney Gate, Dartmouth, NS	6

6:00 - 8:00	March 5, 2018	Halifax Public Library, Halifax, NS	20
6:00 - 8:00	March 7, 2018	Tantallon Library, Tantallon, NS	0
6:00 - 8:00	March 22, 2018	Gordon Snow Rec Centre, Fall River, NS	1
6:00 - 8:00	March 26, 2018	Captain Spry Center, Spryfield, NS	8

Consultation Process

The focus groups were designed and conducted by an external consulting firm contracted by HRM to carry out the public review. Participants shared their views in a series of two-hour group discussions to define what they believe is needed to make HRM a more accessible and inclusive place to live. Specifically, participants were invited to respond to questions related to 4 areas impacting accessibility and inclusion: Buses, Streets and Roads; Parks, Recreation and Programs; Buildings; and HRM Services such as Fire, Garbage Collection, 311, etc.

Consultation Agenda

The same series of questions were posed to participants during each two-hour focus group session exploring the themes noted above. The goals and purpose of each round of discussion were reviewed before people were invited to offer their comments. The specific questions employed in the focus groups are listed below.

DISCUSSION ONE: TRANSPORTATION

The question asked was:

- ▶ Based on your experience, what input can you offer to help HRM make our regular bus and Access-A-Bus service more accessible and inclusive? And, what input can you offer to help HRM make our streets, roads and sidewalks more accessible and inclusive?

DISCUSSION TWO: RINKS, PLAYGROUNDS, INFRASTRUCTURE FOR PARKS AND LEISURE

The question asked was:

- ▶ Based on your experiences, what input can you offer to help HRM ensure that our new and existing rinks, playgrounds, and infrastructure for parks and leisure are more accessible and inclusive? And, what input can you offer to help HRM ensure that our new and existing recreation programs are more accessible and inclusive?

DISCUSSION THREE: HRM BUILDINGS

The question asked was:

- ▶ Based on your experiences, what input can you offer to help HRM ensure that our new and existing buildings are more accessible and inclusive?

DISCUSSION FOUR: HRM SERVICES

The question asked was:

- ▶ Based on your experiences, what input can you offer to help HRM ensure that the way we communicate with our citizens is more accessible and inclusive? The specific aspects of our communication that we would like you to consider are: Mail-outs; website and social media; 311; press releases and ads; services such as fire and garbage collection; and employment.

Prioritization Process

At the end of each public session, people were asked to consider the entire set of recommendations shared and to identify the ones that they believed would most positively impact accessibility and inclusivity in HRM. Participants indicated their priorities using a multi-voting technique.

How the Report is Organized

- Pages 11 - 26 of this report elaborate upon the recommendations and corresponding pieces of advice that received the highest number of votes
- Appendix A presents the verbatim transcript and voting results of each session organized by location and discussion topic
- Appendix B presents the steps that were taken to create an accessible and inclusive consultation process

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

The result of the multi-voting process gives the Office of Diversity and Inclusion insight into which recommendations were supported most deeply by most people. They give HRM insight into where to start.

In total, eight recommendations and 26 related pieces of advice received the highest numbers of votes throughout the 11 consultation sessions (the evening Tantallon session had no participants reducing the total number of consultations from 12 scheduled to 11 conducted).

The recommendations and related pieces of advice are summarized on pages 7 - 10. It is important to note that the recommendations are numbered to make discussing and referencing them easier for the reader. The numbering system does not denote importance since **all** eight recommendations and the accompanying pieces of advice were identified as important by consultation participants.

TRANSPORTATION RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Improve accessible transportation to increase usage.
2. Treat sidewalks like roads.

RECREATION RECOMMENDATIONS

3. Ensure everyone can access nature, parks and facilities.
4. Build on strength by expanding recreation programming and its reach.
5. Promote accessible programs and facilities.
6. Improve existing recreation facilities.

BUILDINGS RECOMMENDATIONS

7. Enforce and ensure buildings exceed minimum standards.
8. Develop an auditing, tracking and reporting system for repairs.

Transportation Recommendations

The multi-voting process yielded the following as important recommendations for improving transportation services.

1.0 Improve accessible transportation to increase rider usage

1.1 Redesign the Access-A-Bus service (page 11)
1.2 Provide a one-stop transportation booking option (page 12)
1.3 Change the current Access-A-Bus booking criteria (page 12)
1.4 Make accessible taxis more widely available (page 12)
1.5 Train regular bus drivers how to accommodate persons with disabilities (page 13)
1.6 Ensure bus stops are clear of any and all obstructions (page 14)
1.7 Improve bus routes and service (page 14)
2.0 Treat sidewalks like roads
2.1 Clear obstructions from sidewalks in Winter, Spring, Summer and Fall (page 15)
2.2 Commit to and implement a consistent curb cut standard (page 15)
2.3 Ensure accessible parking spots are barrier free (page 15)

Recreation Recommendations

Participants offered the following as important recommendations for improving recreation services.

3.0 Ensure everyone can access nature, parks and facilities
3.1 Extend transit routes to beaches, parks, trails and recreation centers (page 16)
3.2 Make beaches, parks and trails fully accessible (page 16)
4.0 Build Upon a Strength by Expanding Recreation Programming and its Reach
4.1 Increase current levels and types of recreation programming (page 17)
4.2 Offer subsidies to persons with disabilities (page 18)

4.3 Increase numbers of and train recreation staff to accommodate persons with disabilities (page 18)

5.0 Promote Accessible Programs and Facilities

5.1 Promote accessible programs and features more clearly on HRM website and in HRM materials (page 18)

5.2 Improve trail and park signage (page 19)

6.0 Improve Existing Recreation Facilities

6.1 Improve washroom facilities (page 19)

6.2 Install flooring that accommodates para sports (page 19)

6.3 Install, maintain and train staff in using pool lifts (page 19)

6.4 Increase numbers of and support use of ice surfaces (page 20)

Building Recommendations

Participants offered the following as important recommendations for improving building services.

7.0 Enforce Existing Building Codes and Ensure They Exceed Minimal Standards

7.1 Ensure HRM buildings exceed minimum accessible requirements (page 21)

7.2 Enforce existing building codes (page 22)

7.3 Improve the quality and conditions of accessible public washrooms (page 22)

8.0 Develop an Auditing, Tracking and Reporting System for Repairs

8.1 Track and publicize building and equipment (i.e. showers, pool lifts, etc.) repair status (page 22)

8.2 Partner early and often with persons with disabilities to perform audits (page 22)

HRM Services Recommendations

Towards the end of each consultation, participants were given an opportunity to consider a variety of HRM Services - from fire service to HRM's website. We anticipated that some participants would have a lot to say about one or two of these variables and, perhaps, no strong opinions regarding the rest. As a result, we chose to give individuals the chance to work on their own for this task. They either recorded their own suggestions or participated in one-on-one interviews with HRM staff who recorded suggestions for them. All suggestions were transcribed and the common themes are presented on the following pages.

Employment, Website and Social Media, Mail-Outs, 311, Police, Garbage Collection, Fire, Press Releases and Ads, Other
Employment (page 24)
Website and Social Media (page 24)
Mail-Outs and Signage (page 24)
311 (page 24)
Police (page 25)
Garbage Collection (page 25)
Fire Services (page 25)
Press Releases and Ads (page 25)
Other (page 26)

TRANSPORTATION RECOMMENDATIONS

“Bus passes are incredibly expensive. There should be options for subsidies especially if you don't have a job.”

“You need to book Access-A-Bus seven days in advance. It takes all spontaneity out of life.”

“HRM sidewalks are like an obstacle course. In the summer there’s patios in the way and in the winter there’s snow.”

Transit: What Participants Said

1.0 Improve Accessible Transportation to Increase Usage

1.1 Redesign Access-A-Bus in Consultation with Users

- **Booking Lead Time:** Participants asked HRM to redesign the Access-ABus system to provide greater scheduling flexibility and shorter booking lead times with same-day booking offered as the ideal. Participants described the impact that having to book transportation 7 days in advance had on their ability to do what most people take for granted: spontaneously participate in work, medical, family and social opportunities as they arise. For example, one participant noted that if a friend asked him to go see a movie in two days time, he would have to say no because he would not be able to book Access-A-Bus. He described the isolating effect this has on his life, one that others who do not rely on Access-A-Bus would have difficulty imagining.
- **Rider Consultation:** Participants also noted that routes, seating capacity and service dependability need to be examined in consultation with people who rely on the service in order to improve it. HRM should collaborate with Access-A-Bus users and would-be users to design a system that works.
- **Broader Consultation:** The overwhelming theme regarding transit was that citizens need better transportation alternatives than the ones currently being offered. These alternatives will need to be developed in **collaboration** with key stakeholders: the Taxi Commission, Access-ABus, Regular Bus, Citizens. Several participants suggested that identifying ways of supporting and/or subsidizing taxi drivers to help them provide service for persons with disabilities will make the collaboration less adversarial.

1.2 Provide a One-Stop Transportation Booking Option

- **One-Stop Booking:** HRM needs to provide users with more transportation options as part of its booking system to create a more seamless interface between Access-A-Bus and regular bus and taxi service. Many participants suggested that if, for example, Access-A-Bus was not available when needed

then HRM should find a suitable regular bus route or an accessible taxi that is available.

1.3 Evaluate the Current Access-A-Bus Booking Criteria

- **Booking Criteria:** HRM should review Access-A-Bus’s current booking prioritization requirements. Participants noted that the current prioritization process seems to place appointments related to employment ahead of medical appointments. This prioritization system has left some community members unable to make important medical appointments.

1.4 Make Accessible Taxis More Widely Available

- **Accessible Taxis:** Participants noted that the current accessible taxi system is not working as intended - there are not enough accessible taxis and those that say they are accessible will often prioritize other paying customers over persons with disabilities. One participant noted that there seems to be only two accessible taxis available at any one time and that those taxis typically do not prioritize people using wheelchairs or seeing eye dogs. Participants felt that there should be a minimum requirement for accessible taxis with one person offering New York City as a model to consider. The following excerpt taken from the New York Times (Riders Outside Manhattan Can Now Hail Accessible Taxis, Too, January 24, 2018) illustrates New York City’s new approach. (<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/01/24/nyregion/accessible-taxisdisabled-nyc.html>)

“Through the dispatch program, riders can arrange to be picked up by a wheelchair accessible taxicab by calling 311, using a mobile app or a website or calling or texting a dispatcher. They would not be charged anything beyond the metered fare for the pickup.”

- **Enforce Policy:** Participants also noted that many accessible taxis will not accept passengers with guide dogs. They report that their repeated calls to 311 have not addressed this situation.
- **Transit Subsidies:** Many participants also recommended that HRM offer discounts on public transit to persons with disabilities.

1.5 Train Regular Bus Drivers how to Accommodate Persons with Disabilities

- **Training:** HRM should train bus drivers to fully utilize accessible bus features (tie-down straps, for example) in order to take some pressure off Access-A-Bus. Many participants noted that if drivers in the regular bus system were better trained on how to assist persons with disabilities in using public transit, then many persons with physical and intellectual disabilities would begin to rely on the regular bus system instead of relying solely on Access-A-Bus. One participant noted that drivers need to have a better understanding of both the challenges persons with physical and intellectual disabilities face and how integral the bus driver’s role is in making them feel welcome. Examples of content to incorporate in the training include: handling wheelchairs, using tie-down straps, best practices for helping passengers board, best practices/ timing for departing (some drivers leave before passengers are safely seated or secured). “Some drivers are great and some are not.” The level of service provided needs to be trained and then monitored carefully.
- **Awareness:** Several participants noted how challenging bus travel can be for people with autism. Drivers (and passengers) need to do a better job of accommodating and welcoming people who may experience distress and, as a result, display behaviours that fall outside rigid societal norms. Several people described seeing passengers refused entry or who were forced off the bus because of behaviours associated with Tourette’s or autism.
- **Other Transit Users:** Participants extended the same advice to regular bus passengers who sometimes seem impatient or annoyed when persons with disabilities require more time to board and disembark. Some participants suggested that a promotional campaign would help in reminding fellow passengers that we all might need some extra accommodation at some point in our future lives and that creating an inclusive and welcoming environment starts with each one of us and may someday benefit each one of us.
- **Strollers Versus Walkers:** Participants also noted a perceived contradiction in regular bus policy, one which allows for a seemingly unlimited number of baby strollers but a limited number of walkers, etc.

1.6 Ensure Bus Stops are Clear of Any and All Obstructions

- **Obstructions:** Require contractors responsible for snow removal, to clear snow from sidewalks in a way that does NOT obstruct people’s ability to get on or off the bus.

1.7 Improve Bus Routes and Service

- **Bus Connections:** From the lost bus connection in Bedford Commons to the ‘connectionless’ 80 and 87 routes, to name but a few examples, the current bus routes need to be ‘knit together’ in a more effective manner, one which considers ease of transfers and the needs of persons with disabilities.
- **Routes:** Participants also commented on how many areas within HRM have no bus service at all. This poses a significant problem for aging and low income populations outside the downtown core. Another significant problem people noted is that scheduling is not often accurate. If Wi-Fi were provided on buses, this would help people adjust their schedules accordingly.
- **Bus Stops:** Increase the number of stops in high employment areas to help persons with disabilities because multiple stops/transfers are especially difficult for persons with disabilities.

Sidewalks and Roads: What Participants Said

2.0 Treat Sidewalks Like Roads

2.1 Clear Obstructions from Sidewalks and Parking Spaces in Winter, Spring, Summer and Fall

- **Seasonal Obstructions:** HRM should keep sidewalks clear of obstructions throughout the year. Participants commented on the everchanging seasonal challenges associated with travelling on city sidewalks; from outdoor patios and construction barriers in the summer to snow banks in the winter, they described an ever-changing gauntlet of dangerous obstacles. Many people noted that on snowy mornings, roads are cleared for cars but sidewalks are not. Sidewalks are to wheelchair commuters as roads are to drivers. Drivers, for example, would not tolerate sandwich boards featuring daily specials or outdoor patios in the middle of their roads.
- **Snow:** The ideal winter sidewalk snow clearance would keep snowbanks at crosswalks low enough for a person using a wheel chair to see over and banks cleared at every direction so people don’t need to travel two blocks out of the way to cross the street. HRM needs to monitor how its snow removal contractors are clearing sidewalks more closely and enforce standards consistently.

2.2 Commit to and Implement a Consistent Curb Cut Standard

- **Curb Cuts:** Participants noted how inconsistent curb cuts were throughout HRM making it difficult, and dangerous, for people to anticipate how to enter or step off of a sidewalk. Many participants commented that standardizing curb cuts within HRM would assist everyone - mothers with strollers, senior citizens with walkers, people with visual impairments and people using wheelchairs.

2.3 Ensure Accessible Parking Spots are Barrier Free

- **Enforcement:** Participants shared many examples of accessible parking spaces that are not accessible. Some are too narrow, some have obstructions like parking meters or curbs with no curb cuts. HRM needs to ensure that its accessible parking spaces are, in fact, accessible.

RECREATION RECOMMENDATIONS

“Accessibility needs to be a leading thought, not an after thought.”

“Understand that persons with disabilities face a lot of extra barriers.”

“Anything can convert any one of us from an able-bodied person to a person with a disability. We need to view accessibility as an insurance.”

Access to Nature, Parks and Facilities: What Participants Said

3.0 Ensure Everyone can Access Nature, Parks and Facilities

3.1 Extend Transit Routes to Beaches, Parks, Trails and Rec Centers

- **Transit:** Transit routes should facilitate access to beaches, parks, trails and recreation centers. Many participants noted that we live in one of the most beautiful Municipalities in Canada. We’re surrounded by beautiful beaches and trails, yet for persons with disabilities, they cannot either get to them because current public transportation routes do not go there.

3.2 Make Beaches, Parks and Trails Fully Accessible

- **Access Beyond Parking Lot:** Getting to HRM’s trails, beaches and parks is only half the battle. Once a person with a disability arrives, they often find that they cannot access the beach or trail beyond the parking lot. Several people noted that if they can get to a beach, they can often only travel as far as the end of the wheel chair ramp which often ends where they beach begins. Mobimats were offered as an example of something that HRM could install in more beach and lake areas which also are accessible on public transit and Access-A-Bus routes. This would allow persons with disabilities to join their children, family and friends in an activity that many of us take for granted. The addition of benches, placed generously along trails, would also accommodate people who may need to stop and rest frequently.
- **Fitness:** Some participants offered the Metropolitan Track in Sackville as an example of a HRM facility that helps maintain their fitness and prolong their independence. They cited this track as an example of how maintaining an outdoor facility year-round could support people in maintaining their health and quality of life year-round.
- **Playgrounds:** Accessible principles should be a “leading thought”, not an “after thought” in designing and building playgrounds. The Hawthorne School Playground was offered as a model of accessibility. Playgrounds should also be designed for a variety of needs. APSEA’s playground was also offered as an ideal.
- **Nature and Gardening:** Access to nature also included gardens. Community gardens should be accessible to HRM citizens for three reasons: health promotion, community building and food security.

Recreation Programming: What Participants Said

4.0 Build Upon a Strength by Extending Recreation’s Reach

4.1 Increase Current Levels and Types of Recreation Programming

- **Increase Funding:** HRM should expand the recreation programs it currently offers by increasing funding and staffing levels. Many participants noted the profound and positive impact that HRM’s current recreation programming has had on their lives and/or their children’s lives. Parents noted the psychological and physical benefits of swim lessons and summer camp for their children. Other participants noted that HRM’s recreation facilities (pools, gyms, etc.)

allowed them to maintain muscle mass and fitness levels all essential factors in maintaining their ability to live independently - something that both the individual and HRM would surely support. Ultimately, participants reminded HRM that investing in recreation facilities, programs and parks is a long term investment that pays significant dividends years from now.

- **Variety in Programming:** Parents of children with autism also noted how stressful recreation programming can be for people with autism. They suggested providing quiet spaces, times and/or smaller classes so that these individuals can enjoy the programs and services that HRM has to offer without feeling overwhelmed by the hustle, bustle and noise that often accompany these programs and services.

4.2 Offer Subsidies to Persons with Disabilities

- **Subsidies:** Many Nova Scotian children and adults with disabilities rely on income assistance. There are innovative ways to support Recreation for those who can't afford it because it is an important contributor to health. HRM should subsidize services and programs so they can better accommodate persons with disabilities.

4.3 Increase Numbers of and Train Recreation Staff to Accommodate Persons with Disabilities

- **Staff Training:** HRM staff need to possess the appropriate skills, knowledge and attitudes in order to accommodate many needs. Amputees, for example, need specialized assistance from staff to help them get from the change room to the pool.
- **ASL:** HRM should offer interpreting services in its programs to accommodate people who are deaf or hard of hearing.
- **More Inclusion Coordinators:** Increase the number of Inclusion Coordinators to help make Programs accessible.

Promoting Recreation: What Participants Said

5.0 Promote Accessible Programs and Facilities

5.1 Make Accessible Programs and Features More Visible on HRM Website

- **Improve Materials:** Participants described how difficult it was to find out about the accessible programs offered throughout HRM. They suggested revising the Recreation Catalogue and HRM website to make that information easier to find.
- **Publish Accessibility Features:** The HRM website should also clearly indicate the accessible features that each recreation centre provides: pool lifts (and their current state of repair), adult change tables, accessible playground features, etc.

5.2 Improve Trail and Park Signage

- **Better Signage:** Participants suggested including signage which clearly indicates trail routes and relevant trail information about grade, trail surface, rest stops, etc. This information should also be available on HRM’s website and at the trail head allowing citizens to set expectations and plan accordingly.

Recreation Facilities: What Participants Said

6.0 Improve Existing Recreation Facilities

6.1 Improve Washroom Facilities

- **Washrooms and Change Rooms:** Participants offered many examples of recreation facilities that lacked adult change tables, or acceptable accessible washroom/change facilities. Although a facility may claim to have an accessible washroom, for example, it does not mean that the washroom is ‘usable’. Some washrooms have doors that swing inward or are too small for a person in a wheel chair to maneuver once inside.
- **Increase Numbers:** Improving the quantity and quality of family washrooms is important for parents with adult and child dependents.

6.2 Install Flooring that Accommodates Para Sports

- **Gym Floors:** Rubber gym floors pose barriers for persons using wheelchairs. Hardwood floors are a solution to this problem.

6.3 Install, Maintain and Train Staff in using Pool Lifts

- **Pool Lifts:** The quality of pool lifts throughout HRM varies from one pool to the next. Also, maintenance and repair of this equipment seems to be slow. Swimming is viewed by many as their preferred form of exercise and the pool lift is sometimes a barrier that stands in their way. If the equipment is broken,

or if staff are busy or untrained on how to operate it then people can't access the pool.

6.4 Increase Number of and Support Use of Ice Surfaces

- **Staff Training:** Staff need to develop better skill in helping persons with disabilities use the Oval services and equipment. (Also, someone mentioned that the hand-propelled bike is out of order and needs to be repaired.)
- **Accessible Rinks:** Increase the number of accessible rinks. Currently, only 1 of 8 rinks offers sledge hockey.

BUILDING RECOMMENDATIONS

“There’s no immediate fix when accessibility features are broken whether it’s a pool lift or shower... There are two showers that have been two years in the ‘fixing’.”

“Accessibility issues are found in even new construction. The Nova Centre, for example, has video screens but no Braille and it has upper level glass fire safety doors with no button.”

“The US Accessibility Act provides insight on where we can go from a legislative standpoint.”

Building Codes: What Participants Said

7.0 Enforce and Ensure Buildings Exceed Minimal Standards

7.1 Ensure HRM Buildings Exceed Minimum Accessible Requirements

- **High Standards:** Accessibility requires more than just a ramp. As a result, HRM should build/renovate facilities beyond minimum accessibility requirements. Many participants suggested HRM implement the Rick Hansen Foundation International Standards. Many participants held up the Lacewood and Dartmouth Terminals as models of accessibility. They give due HRM credit for this and suggest that the Scotia Square and Mumford Terminals be remodelled accordingly.
- **“Before Thought”:** Accessibility needs to be built into the design or renovation plans from the outset not after-the-fact. For example, the new IWK elevators do not have Braille. Braille should have been automatically included in the design and, subsequently, installation.
- **Incentivize High Standards:** An app, for example, that allows users to input barriers they experience at businesses, parks, etc. throughout HRM would act as an incentive for businesses to provide inviting accessible spaces for persons with

disabilities. Participants suggested that HRM find additional ways of incentivizing businesses to exceed accessibility codes.

7.2 Enforce Existing Building Codes

- **Enforcement:** HRM should enforce existing building codes and hold businesses accountable for adherence to code. Participants noted that HRM has building codes in effect which are not enforced. The codes should work and, if they were enforced, many barriers would be avoided.

7.3 Improve Public Washroom Accessibility

- **Public Washrooms:** HRM should make public washroom access a top priority: inaccessible washrooms are identified as a key interior barrier. From doors that swing the wrong way to stalls that are too small to maneuver in, participants noted that there should be a standard to which all public washrooms, buildings, facilities should meet.

Auditing and Repairing: What Participants Said

8.0 Develop an Auditing, Tracking and Reporting System for Repairs

8.1 Track and Publicize Building and Equipment Repairs

- **Accountability for Repairs:** Participants noted that some pieces of broken equipment have, despite frequent calls to 311 or complaints to staff, taken many months to repair. One participant offered an example of how to address this issue: a label could be placed on the malfunctioning piece of equipment (door, pool lift, adult change tables etc.) indicating the date in which the malfunction was reported and that the label should in place until the issue is resolved. One participant noted that certain shower stalls have been broken for almost two years.

8.2 Partner Early and Often with Persons with Disabilities to Perform Audits

- **Consultants:** Many buildings in HRM are not accessible and decisions regarding accessibility are currently being made by able-bodied people. HRM should hire people from impacted communities to help with auditing (i.e. Government Accessibility Audit) and inspecting new builds and renovations. Providing members of this community with a

seat at the table when talking about buildings and planning can help HRM save a lot of money and improve inclusion at the outset.

- **Transparency:** The results of these audits should be made available to the public so they know which buildings are accessible and what, specific, accessibility features they possess.

OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS

Employment with HRM

- HRM should make a concerted effort to be more inclusive in its hiring practices. Participants felt that persons with disabilities were not represented within the current workforce and decision making roles. Programs like “Ready, Willing, Able” were cited as programs to consider adopting in order to achieve this goal.
- Participants also recommended that HRM share job postings with members of the inclusion community to ensure that individuals know about job openings and application procedures.

Website and Social Media

- HRM needs to make its website more accessible by incorporating the following suggestions: a) ensure all web pages are ‘readable’ on Screen Readers (or other technologies used by blind/visually impaired citizens); b) provide closed captioning on all videos and photos that appear on HRM website and social media (one participant illustrated how easy it was to provide close captioning on Twitter photos); c) provide language translation options for HRM’s website; d) post documents as PDF or word documents that can be read by speech reading software.

Mail-Outs and Signage

- HRM Mail-outs should comply with the following CNIB Criteria: a) minimum 12 point font (preferably larger); b) Times Roman font (no scrolls and fancy fonts); c) black on white to provide good contrast;
- HRM signs should be posted at eye level, not behind a desk or other obstruction and they should be large enough for people with visual impairment to read and have good contrast (black on white).

311

- Those that use 311 speak of it very highly. Many in our sessions, however, had never heard of 311 before. This led to participants recommending that HRM do a better job of promoting the 311 service.
 - Deaf or hard-of-hearing participants suggested incorporating text as a means of communicating with the 311 operators.
 - Participants suggested training 311 staff to ensure they were skillful in working with citizens with cognitive disabilities and more knowledgeable about Access-A-Bus routes, schedules, protocols, etc.
-

Police

- Participants said that police officers need to be better trained to work with people who have suffered trauma, brain injuries and/or who have physical and intellectual disabilities. Participants also said that police should receive regular training on working with people with autism, including strategies for rescue (car accidents and fire).
 - They also said that there should be more police officers who have ASL training.
-

Garbage Collection

- Participants said HRM should consider adopting a method of modified garbage collection for individuals with disabilities. This would require consultation with individuals with various forms of disability to understand their needs related to garbage collection. Additionally, the senior/older adult population should be consulted to have their needs assessed and addressed appropriately.
-

Fire Services

- Several participants suggested that buildings should be fitted with flashing alarms or other devices that would alert blind and/or deaf and hard of hearing citizens that there was a fire/emergency or that police were at the door.
-

Press Releases and Ads

- Press releases and ads should be available electronically in accessible format (see 'Mail-Outs and Signage on page 24).

- Ads for HRM events should use plain language and include pictures that indicate that a program or event is inclusive; the word ‘accessible’ should be very clear; and information on staffing (staff to participant ratio) should be included.
- HRM should book ASL Interpreters for HRM Events and mention this in the ad, press release, etc.
- As mentioned earlier, principles to follow include: good contrast, electronic format that can be accessed by speech reading software, and inclusive language (i.e. don’t use language like “hearing impaired”).

Other

- Most parking spots are too small for vans with a lift. HRM should ensure handicap parking spaces conform to a standard size.
- Provide more wheelchair accessible housing for low income citizens.
- Involve persons with disabilities in developing solutions. Ongoing consultation is key.
- Work with South House to collaborate on gender inclusive washrooms. ○ HRM Council Meeting on Eastlink needs to be closed captioned and include ASL interpreters for citizens who are deaf and hard of hearing.

APPENDIX A

Accessibility & Inclusion Consultation Transcripts

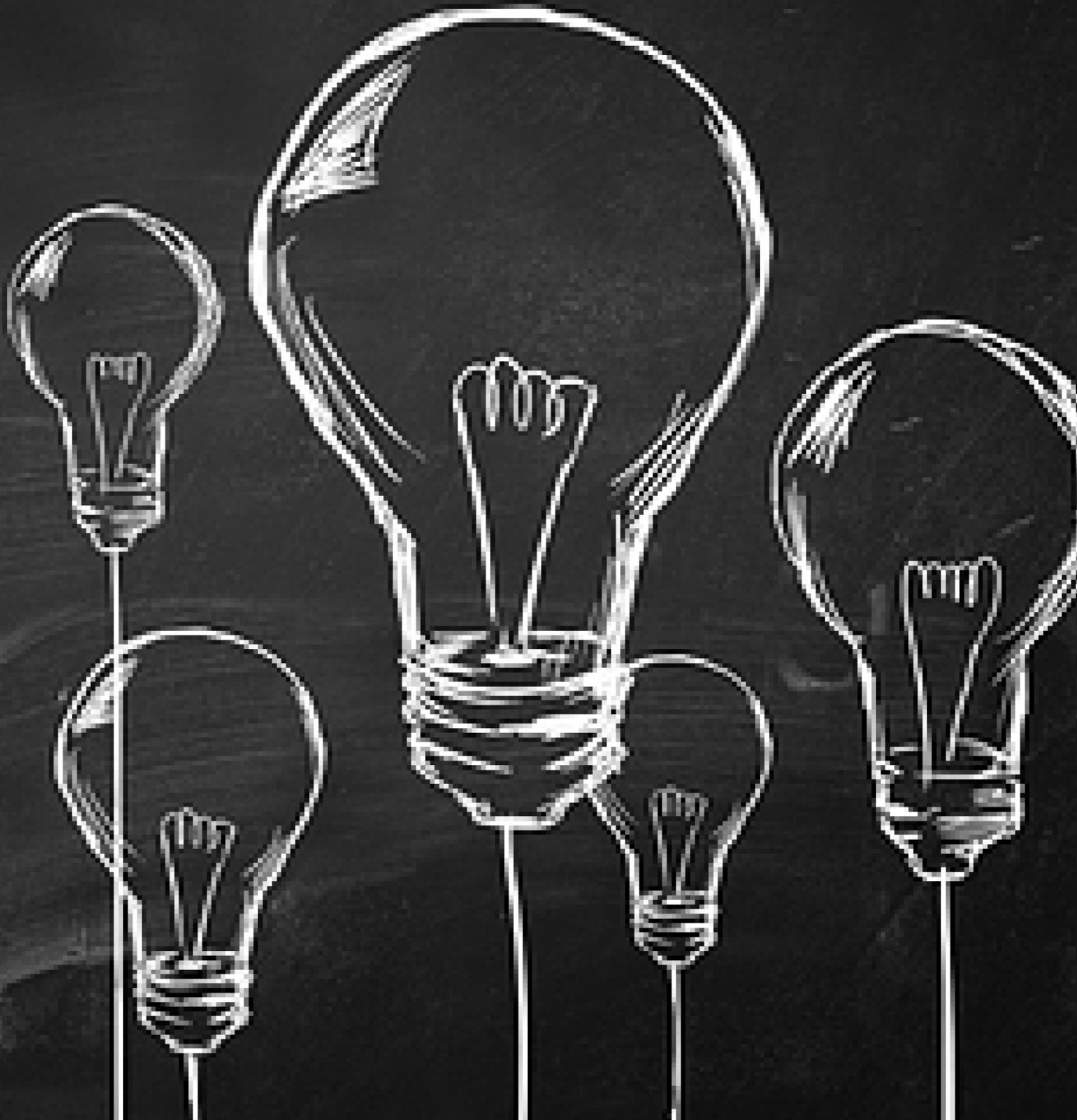


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1.0 Sackville Sessions: February 28, 2018

Attendance for 2:00 - 4:00 Session: 30 Participants

VOTES	SACKVILLE SESSION 1: TRANSPORTATION
5	Need a 'FRED': A 10-12 seat bus to link smaller areas without service / sidewalks
5	Look at existing codes. Ex ramp placements obstructed by parking / meters that are obstructing parking – and address the obvious. Apply common sense to code.
4	Regular bus - route that goes around Sackville without transferring
4	Lost bus connection with Bedford Commons and no sidewalk so need a bus here.
4	Regular bus - route that goes around Sackville without transferring
3	Put monitor on bus to assist people (tie down chairs, etc)
3	Visually impaired walkers: Snow removal esp. at bus stops a problem so remove snow in Sackville in a timely way.
3	Need better bus connections – Can't connect the 80 to 87 at Cobequid
3	Too many restrictions on Access-A-Bus – requires one week advance booking – need more Access-A-Bus'
3	No sidewalks in Lucasville. Require a greenway between Hammonds Plains Rd and Sackville Drive.
3	No service or sidewalks to Bedford Commons so difficult for businesses, staff and people in wheelchairs

3	Look at downtown link parking for wheelchair drivers – no parking available.
3	Recommended route: Cobequid Rd – Cobequid Hospital – Rocky Lake Rd – Sobeys Bedford – Hammonds Plains – Sackville Drive – Downsview Mall

Attendance for 6:00 - 8:00 Session: 10 Participants

1.1 Transportation

Based on your experience, what input can you offer to help HRM make our regular bus and Access-A-Bus service more accessible and inclusive? And what input can you offer to help HRM make our streets, roads and sidewalks more accessible and inclusive?

VOTES	SACKVILLE 2: TRANSPORTATION
4	Try to find more money in budget to keep stops free of debris, salting, keeping clear.
4	Regular buses: Scheduling is not accurate. People need to be able to trust and feel safe with the system because it is their main mode / connection
4	Sidewalks need to be clear, salted and accessible.
3	Wi-Fi for buses to access information from devices is huge benefit
3	Access-A-Bus scheduling is hindering. Find more money and a better system.

3	Crosswalks require auditory alarms. Perhaps in residential areas it is only triggered when the button is pressed.
2	All buses should be wheelchair accessible and leaning buses
2	Silver & Gold Club Sackville Community Center: Ask why they stopped the volunteer dialysis system – driver / volunteer burnout. You need 2 people on the service – A driver and a helper.
2	Cost discount for bus fares for people with CPP and disability
2	Increase transportation funding to secondary areas
2	STORY – for 40 years there was a light standard in a crosswalk – called 311 – within a year it was removed – ‘ amazing’
2	Address urban sprawl and demand that developers install sidewalks with new subdivisions.
2	Bike Lanes: Have a bike loop : Glendale – Beaverbank Rd – Sackville Drive – Cobequid
1	Story: Office at community center; Dial-A-Ride for dialysis and patient from Beaverbank needed money to access. In grey area for support.
1	Recommendation: HRM needs plan to serve Hubbards to Ecum Secum. How much are we willing to pay?
1	More parking at bus terminals.
	Is it reasonable for Access-A-Bus to walk long distances / physically assisted. Consider liability and expectations placed on people.
	No bus route on Connolly Rd – need one
	Good to see Councillors in the room – Need more decision makers in the room.

2	Infrastructure needs to accommodate: Bus lanes; why so many breakdowns
2	Space along sidewalks to provide rest areas – recommend using the bus shelters with seats.
2	Sidewalk obstruction under construction activity: Notify users early (at previous intersection); ensure at least one side is open and clear; ensure a ramp gradient to transition
1	Funding for bus pass for low income (100% funding) and care providers for free.
1	Oral and written announcements on all buses
1	Train drivers to know how to hook in wheelchairs
1	Add system to know when the bus is coming – Apps for devices
1	Recognize cultural barriers to make feel inclusive: Language; Reach out to diverse communities; Always permit Hijabs
1	Affordability: HRM Implement a system to extend transfer for the entire day rather than an hour. In Toronto, transfer is ok as long as travelling in the same direction.
1	Autism client was refused to board the bus. Need Driver training of needs and recognition of need to be inclusive of population.
1	Audio announcement of bus departures at terminals.
1	Increased numbers bus shelters equipped with benches and heaters.
1	Accessibility is bike lanes, wide sidewalks, etc for a healthy and inclusive health-promoting lifestyle. Look for more opportunity.
1	Pedestrian access from Sackville to Bedford is currently only on the trail, which is not very accessible (and sometimes flooded)
	Getting to and from bus stops is also important to keep clear.
	Access-A-Bus: A healthy life needs spontaneity and this is lost when the service is not reliable.

	Address accessibility for non-literate person: how to get to stop / where to go after the stop. Set up voice readers.
	Program to support Access-A-Bus Users to transition to Regular Bus with comfort.
	Increase and put accessible taxis in the system.
	Entirely new laying down of sidewalk surfaces.
	For crosswalks not at lights: Driver may not see and person in wheelchair may not be as visible or as able to move out of the way. Need to address crossings.

1.2 Parks, Recreation, Programs

Based on your experiences, what input can you offer to help HRM ensure that our new and existing rinks, playgrounds, and infrastructure for parks and leisure are more accessible and inclusive? And what input can you offer to help HRM ensure that our new and existing recreation programs are more accessible and inclusive?

VOTES	SACKVILLE 1: PARKS, RECREATION, PROGRAMS
5	Track on Metropolitan Ave is not accessible year round but should be.
5	Sackville Heights Community Center – We need an accessible elevator
4	All parks need wheelchair accessible swings (little platforms)
4	Need discounts for persons with disabilities
3	AT Trails – Transportation and Parks Departments conflict. Give parks money to build trails in parks. “Silo battle has to stop” HRTrails Assoc.
3	A lot of existing facilities are not accessible. Watch and see where improvements could be made. Ex. Library
3	More accessible playgrounds in general
3	Meetings like this every 6 months for an “unofficial 311”
3	Seniors can’t access this (Sackville Sports Stadium) because the grade of the road is challenging from bus stop. Path floods in rain, icy, wet

2	Library (As visually impaired, I register for programs there) - New ramp but steps not painted and then painted off-standard. Requires fixing for visually impaired.
2	Eliminate barriers for kids at HRM Summer Camps – Limited number of assistants and now can only attend for 3 weeks.
2	Kids with Autism using pool- Need more specific times set aside to access resource.
2	One pool here in community is insufficient, especially for people with disabilities and rehab needs.
2	Sackville High has only one sidewalk. Needs one at the main entrance.
1	Berry Hill is not wheelchair accessible.

1	Define reasonable access to recreation areas. HRM needs policy to guide staff
1	Look at Hantsport Railway for purchase – for trail use potentially.
VOTES	SACKVILLE 2: PARKS, RECREATION, PROGRAMS
4	‘Mobimats’ at all HRM lakes to allow access to water in wheelchairs.
3	Make sure access to washrooms, especially outdoors, year round and gender inclusive.
3	Provincial Parks have washrooms but require larger space for an enclosed privacy area.
2	Adult sized change tables.
2	Amputees like to swim but can’t get from change room to pool. Looking for trained staff to assist.
2	Family rates and other options to encourage people to come out.
2	More paved trails rather than only gravel.

1	Crystal Crescent Beach requires parking to make accessible.
1	Increase hours of operation of centers to improve accessibility and inclusivity.
	Oval in Halifax has accessible equipment and would like to see that expanded to other parks. Bathrooms are important. Wheelchair accessible important.
	Boardwalks at beaches need to be maintained and access to lakes available to access beaches.
	Affordability of HRM programs needs to be kept top-of-mind.

1.3 Buildings

VOTES	SACKVILLE 2: BUILDINGS
5	Hold businesses accountable for adhering to business code for accessibility. Help them understand it is no longer an option.
5	Halifax would benefit from an App where users could input barriers at different sites for faster feedback, more specific feedback and expectations and to encourage businesses to comply.
2	If new buildings are being built to code but still have issues, then the building code needs to be revisited for safety issues.
1	HRM has a lot of old buildings that aren't accessible. Gain input from community for new buildings.
	Accessibility issues can be found even in new construction: Nova Center has video screens but no braille; Upper level has glass fire safety door with no button.
	Availability of accessible washrooms and all gender washrooms.

	Central library is a good example of an accessible HRM building.	Based on your
	In Ottawa, businesses have simple wooden ramps to help business be more accessible.	

experiences, what input can you offer to help HRM ensure that our new and existing buildings are more accessible and inclusive?

VOTES	SACKVILLE 1: BUILDINGS
4	Need HRM Policy re Senior Citizens' facility development. Need a senior's facility here that is not an old school (as is now). Get policies in place to support this.
4	Sackville Sports Center – No immediate fix available when accessibility features are malfunctioning. Need better maintenance than what we have (ex Showers are two years out of service)
4	New building with aging and disabled in mind. Community Rec Center.
3	Sackville Heights Community Center needs to be wheelchair accessible on both floors (elevator)
3	Despite building codes, still encounter problems with accessibility – eg MacDonald ramp was in drive thru – consider safety issues.

	Require consultation with various communities. Look for innovative ways to have them part of the discussion.
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1.4 Services

Based on your experiences, what input can you offer to help HRM ensure that the way we communicate with our citizens is more accessible and inclusive? The specific aspects of our communication that we would like you to consider are: Mail-outs; website and social media; 311; press releases and ads; services such as fire and garbage collection; and employment.

	SACKVILLE 1: OTHER EMPLOYMENT PRESS RELEASES & ADS WEBSITE & SOCIAL MEDIA 311 FIRE POLICE GARBAGE
2	Wheelchair accessible housing for low income.
1	More integration of Rec Programs with other programs – Senior Programs, Health Programs, Youth Interests
1	Make handicap parking standard size as I have a handicap van with a lift and most spots are too small.
	Most parking spaces not wide enough – need a standard measure for parking space width (with ramps – side loading)
	Accountability – 6 months follow up update on how many of these ideas are implemented and introduce a report back to the community.
	Handicap stickers: Is there a way to indicate on stickers that a wider location for parking is needed.
	People Parking in disability spots when shouldn't be using space.
	Casual opportunities. If you are on CPP you can earn approx. \$5,000/year. Who is going to hire you when you have appointments, sick days, etc. If you could work some intermittently would be better than not at all.
	Empowerment: Reconsider
	MLA Office not wheelchair accessible. Building manager said to code but measured but off by 9 ft. Code is there but interpretation is off.

	We need more day programs for persons with disability
	Decrease cost of ambulance service for low income earners
	More frequent registration for programs and programs in shorter duration allowing an opportunity to try without investing in longer programs they find they can't do.

	SACKVILLE 2: OTHER EMPLOYMENT PRESS RELEASES & ADS WEBSITE & SOCIAL MEDIA 311 FIRE POLICE GARBAGE
	Bridging the gap employment programs for individuals with disabilities or from diverse backgrounds to support equitable employment – HRM Program
	Designated employment or volunteer positions for persons with a disability
	Canada Post & door-to-door delivery. Super boxes can be too far to walk to.
	Inclusivity: New comers, LGBTQ community, senior groups, etc: When thinking about buses, streets, etc – always reach out to special interest groups to get their thoughts for how to make our community welcome and inclusive. For social media, websites, etc adverts – make it representative of these populations.
	Overall comment: Intersectionality – Culture is woven in through an inclusion lens; not dividing in to a homogeneous lens.
	More offered in ASL
	User contributed Accessibility App for building information. Allow users to identify barriers or truly accessible venues

	Can be info dense. Simply explain the information with easy language.
	24 hour hospital service
	Biggest challenge until you change attitudes there won't be major improvements. Expired stickers – Enforce Rules. Promote awareness
	(Check sticky) New Subdivisions build sidewalks; We need 10 AIT
	Database for people with impairments willing to visit sites for input.
	People are trying but not enough knowledge. Make us part of solution – bring in to try before finalizing.
	Is there an app for HRM programming to more easily select your program / area/ Price / times / etc Booklet is good but a bit behind the times.
	Reduce Mail Outs – Save Paper / Get more Social Media
	Easier Access to Disability Services. More User Friendly.
	RCMP – We need 10 more officers – One for each high school. We are desperate for Community Officers
	Love App: Good up to date information which I can check for my pickups. Advertise this more.

	<p>This is a great service. I used it several times and commonly with great results. Given a ticket # for the request, these are occasional times when it seems to have disappeared into the ether.</p>
	<p>Diversify method of press releases – Print; online; Electronic media (TV/Radio)</p>
	<p>All buildings be fit with flashing alarms.</p>
	<p>ASL training for cops (visited yearly) Mental health training for situational defusion.</p>
	<p>½ sized green bins for easier curbside delivery by tenants.</p>
	<p>Return to door service for identified community members.</p>
	<p>I love the App!</p>
	<p>Hands-on to learn to sort real life stuff.</p>

2.0 Dartmouth Sessions: March 1, 2018

Attendance for 2:00 - 4:00 Session: 20 Participants

VOTES	DARTMOUTH 1: TRANSPORTATION
6	Snow Removal: Currently may work for pedestrians but not for those in wheel chairs, those with guide dogs or those with walkers.
5	Huge issue finding accessible taxis. Currently only two at any time and they don't prioritize wheel chairs. The % of accessible taxis should match the % of the population so they can better service.
5	Taxis: Clients are repeatedly refused because of guide dogs and calls to 311 are getting no results. Recommend that dispatch would record drivers that are refusing clients and penalize.
3	Buses: Better Signage because those with low vision can't see them. Bring down lower, higher contrast and larger print
3	Access-A-Bus: Currently is too difficult to get a reservation. Recommend a non-judgmental survey of users to get feedback.
2	Review and implement design principles for continuity with curb cuts and sidewalks, including consideration for young and old. Put a lot more money to fix sidewalks.
1	In downtown Dartmouth, cuts get missed or filled in again
1	Move revenue from parking ticket enforcement to enhance curb cuts.
1	Have accessible parking spots that are regular spots but regular clients pay and accessible clients are granted a parking pass.

	<p>Improve Curb Cuts: Spring Garden Road is ok but Dresden Row is not; Higher than they should be because of storm water concerns. Match all to the universal standard for curb cuts. At busy intersections they often make all one cut but not consistent – Make sure it is one big wide cut rather than two.</p>
1	
1	<p>Called 311 for parking enforcement but don't see them enforcing. Recommend that they enforce parking and more accessible parking spots.</p>

Attendance for 6:00 - 8:00 Session: 6 Participants

2.1 Transportation

Based on your experience, what input can you offer to help HRM make our regular bus and Access-A-Bus service more accessible and inclusive? And what input can you offer to help HRM make our streets, roads and sidewalks more accessible and inclusive?

	Consider us when they do snow removal
	Snow Removal: Have coordinated effort when doing tenders for a three year period so that the drivers have experience and know area
	Buses: Not all have a display, which is required for various groups. Recommend similar technology as airport screens.
	Recommend higher priority of enforcement because it is disgraceful that people are infringing on access spots.
VOTES	DARTMOUTH 2: TRANSPORTATION
4	Educate city workers to appreciate various basic challenges for general understanding of practices. If they deal with the public, they should understand both physical and intellectual disabilities.
4	Access-A-Bus will only look up several time slots and then say they are busy. Recommend providing taxis at Access-A-Bus rates (other cities do this); The lack of spontaneity is an issue; In BC, they provide a number of tags monthly for taxis. In Ottawa, if the bus is not available they are responsible to provide the user with a taxi. In New York, a free bus is offered if Access-A-Bus is not available.
3	Improved Bus Routes: Barrington St has lots of service but other areas have no service; Review to add / remove routes.
2	Increase the amount of stops because multiple stops/transfers are difficult. Increase the length of the bus and increase number of stops in high employment areas.
2	Access-A-Bus: difficult to get bus; varying schedules. Drivers are great people but accessing the service is very challenging. Have online form for application; website clarification needed; 311 operators need to know how to explain; Access-A-Bus application portion that requires doctor sign off for online applications would need coordination.
1	Crosswalk Safety: Once a week nearly hit when crossing with dog; People aren't paying attention and seems to be getting worse; Looking for better policing, better education (licence renewal) and increase funding. Not always a driver issue.
1	Training provided for bus users with accessibility issues so that people are comfortable boarding with scooters and equipment. There is a handbook.

1	Training for drivers so they can appreciate how users feel.
1	Bus Training through transit to teach users the routes. Assignment to users for their specific routes to increase comfort and decrease bad experiences.
1	Bus: Lacewood and Dartmouth terminals are great for visually impaired so look to roll out to others such as Scotia Square and Mumford to reconfigure.
1	Reopen the debate on dogs on ferries and buses. Should be able to take dog to Halifax on ferry on non high traffic times rather than having to drive. Animals should be allowed on bus for anxiety issues / panic disorders.
1	T1000 is taxi by-law and needs to change. Push was for 100% accessible but that was not feasible. Accessible Roof Lights were being handed out with no area restrictions. Recommend a number of Accessible Licenses need to cover specific areas as Accessible Drives.
1	Curbs to enter Sidewalks: Designed for wheel chairs but for low vision persons, it can easily take people on to street. Set Tactile Markers into curve. Inglis and South St. is a good example.
1	Sidewalk Signal Buttons: Make sure pavement goes to the button for cross walk signaling and make standard for low vision clients.
	CNIB Offers training for visually impaired using buses but bus drivers need to refer to the service.
	Halifax Regional Police (HRP) involved in running saliva test (Cannabinoid / THC) Pilot; Drivers are scared to take medications because the THC may register on the saliva test. Recommend HRP start talking about it and run tests and to separate recreational vs medical use.
	Sidewalks: When repairing cutouts, fix one side at a time during construction.
	Restaurant Patios: Infringement on sidewalks is a hazard for visually impaired. Fix issues: a) allow preplan a block ahead; b) need way to notify public.
	Currently lots of issues with taxis arriving but can't accommodate the client. Taxis need to be aware of the equipment guidelines / requirements.

2.2 Parks, Recreation, Programs

Based on your experiences, what input can you offer to help HRM ensure that our new and existing rinks, playgrounds, and infrastructure for parks and leisure are more accessible and inclusive? And what input can you offer to help HRM ensure that our new and existing recreation programs are more accessible and inclusive?

VOTES	DARTMOUTH 1: PARKS, RECREATION, PROGRAMS
4	Improve accessible facilities for Para Sports. Rubber floors in gyms are barriers for wheelchair sports and hardwood floors is a solution.
3	Beaches should be more accessible. Birch Cove, Lake Banook and Kearney Lake are great; others can be equipped with MobiChair; Promote which are accessible.
2	Make interpreting services for deaf available for HRM programs.
2	Improve wheelchair access to trails by a) online rating system for wheelchair accessibility and b) provide signage at trail head to indicate grade (similar to signage on ski hills)
2	School playgrounds (ex. Hawthorne): Accessibility should be a leading thought rather than an afterthought; Instill the principles.
2	Add more benches to trails for clients with walkers and canes. Example: Saltmarsh Trail only has their first bench 1km into the trail.
2	Understand that persons with disability face a lot of extra barriers and implement policies for extended terms and special consideration (such as loans and grants)
2	Train more support workers for HRM programs.
1	Require more leash free areas in HRM
1	Better support for education for persons with disabilities: A prerequisite to getting a job is proper schooling but often can't access and the cycle is discouraging; provide support and remove barriers to further education
1	Fix disconnect between schools so they know accessibility considerations.

	Ice Hockey Rinks: Ensure there are no big steps onto the ice surface to make more accessible for Sledge Hockey. BMO Rink is Sledge Hockey Friendly but Burnside Rink is not.
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VOTES	DARTMOUTH 2: PARKS, RECREATION, PROGRAMS
4	Food Security: Make community gardens accessible and promote awareness. Gardening program should be open to everyone. At NS Hospital Community Garden we asked to have our plot moved to allow easier access. Overall, need space allocated.
4	Playgrounds: Need to think multi-sensory, wheel chair accessible and other disabilities considered. More wheel chair swings and climbing apparatus' for physical disabilities, such as contrast for low vision and use metal slides due to the static issue with plastic. APSEA is a good model.
2	Parks: Offer programs such as teach-to-fish, learn-to-camp and nature walks for disabled clients. Consider offering at no charge for low-income as this is a disability in itself. Provide fishing rods at Albro Lake, etc and allow people to reserve and use the gear to better enjoy the water and parks. Bedford Learn to Fish.
2	Both National Programs and HRM Programs should be made available. Adventure Earth Center (an HRM Rec Center in Halifax) has a fantastic program to roll out to all centers. Funding is made available from the Green Child Fund which is separate from the center but should be available to all centers to provide support for accessibility funding and low income funding. Learn-to-Hike and other programs to be more accessible, especially for children.
2	Add an Inclusion Coordinator to help make programs accessible. At least one easy contact in HRM or one per each center.
2	Gardens are important for mental health. BC has medicinal type gardens and we should explore.
1	The Oval Rink is great but for low vision, require markers around the rink to mark borders; Need adult sized push supports to help skating mobility
1	Bus Routes: Add a bus on the Waverley Rd to allow access to Laurie Park

1	Enhance park accessibility, including washrooms, in the winter. Don't use non-dog friendly salt.
	Expand programs for adults
	Make write ups on Parks and Trails tactile for Low Vision and have auditory available, similar to that in museums.
	Training accessibility among landscapers for accessibility and skill development.
	Important to have benches on trails.
	Play equipment needs different textures to enhance low-vision experience. Ensure it is not all cold metal.

2.3 Buildings

Based on your experiences, what input can you offer to help HRM ensure that our new and existing buildings are more accessible and inclusive?

VOTES	DARTMOUTH 1: BUILDINGS
5	Accessible computers in Halifax Libraries: In Halifax, located under giant sunroom and should be moved; In Dartmouth, only one computer with Zoom Text and someone was using the larger screen for games. Ensure enforcement so they are available for accessibility users.
4	About 75% of HRM Buildings are not accessible. Decisions are currently being made by able-bodied persons. Recommend hiring individuals from impacted communities. Recommend implementing GAA (Government Accessibility Audit) whereby disabled persons are trained and hired to do certification.
4	US Accessibility Act provides insight on where we can go from a legislation standpoint; many types of disability to address.
3	Explore Buildings in HRM and enter audit results in a website.
3	Ensure new buildings are accessible. Example: multipurpose room on the top floor but don't have an elevator access to the top floor / not accessible.

3	Refer to American and Ontario Acts so we don't reinvent the wheel; we know what works.
2	Each apartment building should have 1 or 2 units on the ground floor for accessibility
2	Restaurants and buildings: Even new builds have issues where the restaurant is accessible but the washrooms are not; Same issues for hotels; Personnel think they are very accessible but they are not; reinforce the importance from the tourism side.
1	Renovations are not providing access in areas such as width of doors and aisles; Users should be consulted; Like the idea of an audit.
1	Apartments for Seniors: All new buildings should have a ratio of accessibility
1	Consult disabled clients because there are many more components than just width for access
1	Accessible Washrooms: The washroom may be accessible but access to get there is prohibitive, especially in provincial buildings. Items to consider: doors need to swing out , dispensers for paper towel easy to operate.

	Need funding to support equipping apartments for low income with fire alarms that provide visual as well as auditory notification to accommodate deaf individuals.
	Cafes: Address challenges of accessibility and of outdoor patios. Recommend stopgap.ca for 1 & 2 step entrances whereby 30 ramps for \$3,000 with benefit of removable, paintable, simple and impactful.
	Large print and braille menus
	Bus Stops: Revisit glass structures; should be molded plastic or larger cement
VOTES	DARTMOUTH 2: BUILDINGS
4	Education: Encourage what people can do; Abilities Week Awareness Program.
2	All buildings, not just HRM, require an accessibility by-law

2	Think accessibility at the outset, not later. Ex. New elevators at IWK don't have braille.
2	Washroom accessories need to be accessible and working properly.
1	City needs to look at buildings for low vision: a) research lighting. Glare is a huge issue. Too much or too little is an issue. Special filters and blinds are available for windows; b) floor and wall surface considerations and c) flat paint / colour considerations.
1	Sound in buildings can be a barrier to participation. Be aware and adjust
1	Provincial buildings need to be accessible. Example: Stairs at Dartmouth General by the bus stop are a barrier.
	Lighting can trigger seizures.
	CNIB has document that provides guidance for low vision: contrast black and white; eye level; raised letters; braille.
	Fix buttons on automatic doors.

2.4 Services

Based on your experiences, what input can you offer to help HRM ensure that the way we communicate with our citizens is more accessible and inclusive? The specific aspects of our communication that we would like you to consider are: Mail-outs; website and social media; 311; press releases and ads; services such as fire and garbage collection; and employment.

	DARTMOUTH 1: OTHER EMPLOYMENT PRESS RELEASES & ADS WEBSITE & SOCIAL MEDIA 311 FIRE POLICE GARBAGE
	GAA: Government Accessible Audit: Job idea created by Ryan Shay. NS government is to provide small training workshops to eligible persons with a disability in order to become a GAA. Once you become a GAA you are certified to go around the HRM and audit/log accessibility data about the business in HRM. How it will help: a) Give persons with disabilities employment opportunities; b) Help us understand accessibility; c) help with a more accessible future. Possible monthly allowance to come out job. GAC (Government Accessible Consultant): Job idea created by Ryan Shay. Same amount of training as GAA except in different category. GAC's will be hired by NS to sign off on the accessibility of all new construction projects.
	Other/Police: Provincial Legislation V Municipal Legislation April 2016

	Linguistic Barriers (*French; MicMaq): Ensure signage and promotion of accessibility services in both official languages.
	Not Accessible: Zoom Text and Screen Readers; Must be very plain text because Zoom Text often loses functions
	Garbage/Recycling in public areas is daunting for visually impaired.
	DARTMOUTH 2: OTHER EMPLOYMENT PRESS RELEASES & ADS WEBSITE & SOCIAL MEDIA 311 FIRE POLICE GARBAGE
	Equity hiring clause
	Job sharing. Fatigue is an issue for many disabled.
	We have a lot of capable folks who are under-employed in the city, but for which could effect positive change. It would be great to have a “call for submissions” type of program where citizens could propose programs / initiatives.
	Better support for local business / social enterprise would also be ideal and would reduce the burden (financial especially) on the government while promoting positive change.
	Change legislation so low vision individuals can ride bikes on sidewalks.

	There needs to be a way / card system to grant access to services to ensure the YRE(?) not taken advantage of.
	Criteria considered: Font no smaller than 12 point; Times Roman font (no scrolls and fancy fonts); black on white; use good contrast when creating documents (CNIB have a handout); signage eye level, not behind a desk or obstruction when you can't access up close.
	Ask individuals which format they would prefer: mailout, print, large print, electronically.
	available electronically in accessible format (speech readers)
	How to know if police or fire service at your door
	Public consultation and education on saliva test

	<p>Up policing / establish volunteer positions to tackle reckless driving / crosswalk safety. Better education is needed.</p>
	<p>More strict enforcement of garbage rules! Adopting more progressive waste management policies has been successful in other areas in the province (Valley Waste) and around the world.</p>
	<p>A way to let people know garbage is rejected</p>

3.0 Halifax Sessions: March 5, 2018

Attendance for 2:00 - 4:00 Session: 41 Participants

VOTES	HALIFAX 1: TRANSPORTATION
18	Access-A-Bus: Six weeks ago, a group met with Mayor around issues and recommend opening transportation to private sector bids, either through Taxi Commission or other. Should have transportation at beck-and-call. Need better alternatives.
17	Change requirement for Access-A-Bus to allow more time to accommodate work. Currently cannot use at all because change requirements are too high. Taxi fees are too high and therefore need a person to drive.
16	Halifax Transit buses should go to every recreation facility with easy access to the facility.
14	Taxis: Should be a requirement for accessibility. ie, In New York, 50% must be accessible; HRM the requirement is 0%
11	Improve tie-down system on regular buses.
9	Accessible Vans: Should be SUV Vehicle available when full. Solution is to buy a special SUV Van (ex New York City) rather than just a regular van that is retrofitted. Buy proper vehicles (Between 10 and 20 vehicles) and compel them to be available on a 24 hour basis.
8	Buildings: New builds need sidewalk from bus stop to front door. Ex. WalMart doesn't have this and you need to climb over snow banks to get to entrance. Add a by-law for large residential and commercial builds.

8	Snow Removal: Prioritize sidewalks for Vision 0 data because it affects people with disabilities more) Vision 0 includes accessibility data.
5	Bike lanes may be same height as sidewalk (Example at Almon St.): Needs to be at street level to allow access for getting out of vehicles

Attendance for 6:00 - 8:00 Session: 20 Participants

3.1 Transportation

Based on your experience, what input can you offer to help HRM make our regular bus and Access-A-Bus service more accessible and inclusive? And what input can you offer to help HRM make our streets, roads and sidewalks more accessible and inclusive?

5	Bike lane: For people with vision loss, they step down from sidewalk to road. Need the lane at street level or require tactile indicators to mark from lane to road.
4	Communication: Bus drivers don't get out of bus and visually impaired don't see bus, so poor communication leads to missed drives.
4	Make all trails accessible.
3	Regular Bus: Increase the number of accessible spots from the current two.
3	Rails to Trails: HRM Transit should be linked to trail system with bus stops close by.
2	Cannot access Regular Bus or Access-A-Bus because not less than 1,000 feet from the bus stop. Access-A-Bus needs to be separate from the regular system because they need accessibility.
2	Sidewalks: Add cutouts on side streets by accessible parking spots.
2	Bus: Thought requirement was for foldable strollers. Implement here as well.
2	Access-A-Bus: Use small companies (such as Bay Rides in Tantallon) to service outlying areas. Expand this service.
2	Accessible Vans provided by Taxi Companies: Requirement was to call the driver rather than dispatch and was not cost effective for drivers to service. Need to align transit and taxis.
1	Tie Downs on Bus: They were looking at mechanical tie-downs which would be \$20-\$30MM but was shut down and rightly so. Should involve impacted groups for input and first hand research for options that work and requests can be simple.
1	Access-A-Bus: Review document needs to be released so public can review. (Overdue)
1	Sidewalks: Red Book needs to prioritize widening sidewalks on streets under construction.

	Access-A-Bus ridership is going up while regular bus ridership is going down so require better accommodation.
	Regular Bus: Parents with strollers are taking up Wheelchair spaces on bus so need to limit the number of strollers in same manners they limit number of wheelchairs.
	Bus: Lacewood Terminal has display screens at each spot but also a big one inside. Save money and just go with one big one inside.

	Notification on Trails to guide back if lost or misdirected and link to HRM Transit.
	Regular bus that is accessible for mothers with strollers and for wheelchairs.
VOTES	HALIFAX 2: TRANSPORTATION
12	Bus Drivers need training on handling wheelchairs and straps. Better training for drivers as they sometimes leave stops before seated.
11	Access-A-Bus: Same day booking; Make it so you don't need to book 7 days in advance. Want to book as a continuous user (ie student) and currently need to book each trip.
10	Sidewalks: Mornings for pedestrians an issue. Roads are cleared but sidewalks are not. Clear sidewalks earlier for morning commute.
9	Need support or subsidy for cab drivers so they can service.
9	Snow Removal: At end of Sidewalk, plows only goes in one direction leaving mountains to climb and need to go two blocks further so cut out left and right at every direction. Also can't see over these mountains when driving so need to shave banks at corners.
8	Taxies and Access-A-Bus: Converge the two systems and provide some subsidy to taxis.
7	Bus Passes: Incredibly expensive. Should be options for subsidy, especially if you don't have a job or are low income.
5	Sidewalks: Summer St portion is up a good 3 inches and doesn't blend smoothly; should be a smooth transition.

5	Access-A-Bus: Online booking option was supposed to be available last year. Make it available.
5	Access-A-Bus: Currently name is put on waiting list and have to keep going back to confirm bookings. Increase number of buses from 16 to 32.
2	Accessible cabs need to be booked a week in advance whereas colleagues only require five minutes. Remove booking requirements.
2	Bus terminals are hazardous for low vision. Expand the model used in Dartmouth: Tactile markers, pull up/pull out system; better marked; better organized; space to stay warm. Follow Dartmouth and Lacewood Models.
2	Placement of Crosswalk buttons: Important for new installs to have consistency of placement
2	Crosswalks: White should be changed to yellow with better lights, etc to improve overall visibility of crosswalk.

1	Bus: The exit areas at the third door are not cleared. Ensure all exit areas / door levels are clear.
1	Bus: Stop indicators and announcements don't work or too close to stop. Recommend better indicator and route map on every bus.
1	Access-A-Bus: Need other booking options for improved booking options for better efficiency. Offer electronic options.
	Bus: Regular bus and drivers are fabulous but got off bus at Bayers Rd & Dublin and slipped on snow at bus stop. Need sidewalk clearing to also do bus stops.
	Bus: At Woodside, witnessed an incident where teens were running to the bus and the door closed on them and left. Requires driver sensitivity training to show respect. Shocked with incident because if teens can access, then not accessible for anyone.
	Audible and visual displays on buses are great.

3.2 Parks, Recreation, Programs

Based on your experiences, what input can you offer to help HRM ensure that our new and existing rinks, playgrounds, and infrastructure for parks and leisure are more accessible and inclusive? And what input can you offer to help HRM ensure that our new and existing recreation programs are more accessible and inclusive?

VOTES	HALIFAX 1: PARKS, RECREATION, PROGRAMS
15	Beaches: Have one beach that is accessible by transit (for visually impaired and others)
12	Parks: Every new park/rink/etc should have accessibility for all
11	Family Washrooms: Important for parents with adult children. Increase the number of those available.
9	Programs: Offer access at times where noise levels are low (Autism). Better funding of programs that are currently offered so they can expand for better accessibility.
8	Oval Rink: Need help / employee training to support clients in using services and equipment.
5	Oval Rink: Hand propelled bike was out-of-order; Get spare
5	Change tables at Canada Games Center: Require change tables and support so can safely transfer adults to change table.
4	Programs: Recommend smaller classes for similar groups, such as those with autism who may have meltdowns and disturb the regular group.
3	Rink: Dartmouth/Burnside Rink is not an accessible surface. In HRM, only 1 of 8 ice surfaces is accessible for sledge hockey
3	TAB (Temporarily Able Bodied) – anything can convert any one of us to disabled so we need to view accessibility as an insurance. Recommend taking a wide ranging, default approach to make the city better. Need to recognize the benefits for a free future.
2	Parks and Rec inclusion for French. Applies to promotional material. Offer services and promote in a way so people can find you. Ex. Swim lessons are offered in French but very difficult to find in the document.

1	Ensure that programs are readable and have been reviewed by target audience. (CACL)
	Parks: Terrified of dogs so recommend one dog-free park

	Parks: Point Pleasant Park should have WiFi access to allow GPS for trigger points to allow access.
VOTES	HALIFAX 2: PARKS, RECREATION, PROGRAMS
12	Programs: Need access to people that can run the program. Issues finding volunteers (ie Paddling); grassroots programs to get involved and access to volunteers or trained.
11	Accessible and all gender washrooms at all parks.
10	Beaches: Inverness Beach Be made accessible with chairs / Mobi Chairs. Incorporate in local HRM beaches for water access.
8	Promote accessible features for parks / rec on an 'accessible' website. A lot of issues with websites (to be highlighted in website section of comments)
6	Parks: Tactile markers to indicate areas; accessible swings; various textures and contrast (Oval is very white so pylons help). Looking for skating aids for Adults too.
6	Trails: Make all trails fully accessible for participation.
4	Playground equipment in Musquodobit has been broken for the past 4 years. Maintain all equipment regularly.
3	Programs: Slowly getting more inclusive but a long way to go. More programs for various needs. Not all on one organizations.
3	Trails: Mobility devices available for persons to use to fully participate.
3	Clubs that offer Day Programs are limited with Programming because buses only accommodate up to 4 spaces.
2	Summer Picnic at Oval: HRM hosted with disability community. Support shifted due to insurance. It was one time felt inclusive so should reinstate.

2	Bylaws: Adults not allowed to bike on Sidewalks but for persons with low vision, it is not safe to bike on road (need to use it to gain access to the trails for biking). Recommend revisiting by-laws.
1	Enhanced programs between school and programs.
	Oval: Great job to ensure variety on available equipment.

3.3 Buildings

Based on your experiences, what input can you offer to help HRM ensure that our new and existing buildings are more accessible and inclusive?

VOTES	HALIFAX 1: BUILDINGS
19	Washrooms: Change tables; Need buttons to get in or it is not considered accessible. Larger size rooms beyond code to accommodate caregiver and individual using a wheelchair; Move accessible washroom to the front of the public washroom; sliding doors on washrooms.
14	Refer to Rick Hansen Foundation International Standards: Different levels based on function. HRM to look at levels: Halifax Library is a Gold Standard.
14	Provide incentive for private companies to exceed code, such as jump ahead in queue and decreases in development fees.
10	Accessible vs. Inviting: Buildings should be inviting for all vs needing to jump through hoops.
5	Standards: Make sure not (?); Need regular review, enforcements and upgrades. Maintain and enhance standards.
2	Washrooms: Not accessible for power chairs; need access to washrooms larger and fold down tables for adults.
2	Accessible vs Barrier Free: ex In order to get a power chair through a door, it required repeated backup; Standards in HRM are required so more leaning in.
2	City Hall: Side entrance is accessible but door locked daily at 4pm and intercom signage is not clear about after hours access. Add a sign for after hours access. Should be open for all.
2	Barrier Free Design: Many Buildings are visitable but not accessible. Add this category – Just because you can get in is not accessible.

1	Double Doors: Make sure enough space to get the next door open.
1	50,000 Francophones in HRM: Looking for all signage in HRM in both languages.
VOTES	HALIFAX 2: BUILDINGS
16	Hire people who are disabled to help design/build rather than only hire able bodied persons. Better understand by consulting various communities that require accessibility at outset.
11	Washrooms: Require universal standards but not male/female.

10	Curb Cuts: At Halifax Forum, the only spot to cross is at Almon & Young St. Decrease the distance so it is not so difficult to access the Forum. There is a ramp at Liverpool St but can't get to it. Many other examples in the city.
6	Sidewalk corners require repair in many areas.
6	Audits through Hansen Foundation to determine level of access in each building and then develop plan to implement improvements.
5	Elevators: Shocked at number of buildings that you can't enter. City is built vertical but can't get up.
5	Hill from Harbour to Citadel: Connect downtown core with underground tunnel (Broader than the current WTCC tunnel)
4	HRM Should be checking all buildings for access. DQ in Dartmouth Crossing doesn't have a button – force access entrance. Enforce bylaws.
2	White on black contrast and braille as universal standard for signage
1	Pedway from Scotia Square is great. Increase the scope from waterfront to other areas.
	Washrooms: Recommend using universal standards for Male/Female signage rather than other terms.
	Halifax Library: Issues with lighting in elevator and no braille.

3.4 Services

Based on your experiences, what input can you offer to help HRM ensure that the way we communicate with our citizens is more accessible and inclusive? The specific aspects of our communication that we would like you to consider are: Mail-outs; website and social media; 311; press releases and ads; services such as fire and garbage collection; and employment.

	HALIFAX 1: OTHER EMPLOYMENT PRESS RELEASES & ADS WEBSITE & SOCIAL MEDIA 311 FIRE POLICE GARBAGE
	Do not require applicants to have a driver's license
	Public Gardens employees vs concrete / Roads employees: Maybe more desirable job – all white employees.
	<p>Accessible parking: Passes should be distinguished by need and accessibility: Persons with wheelchairs / assistive devices should have closer spots to doors/ramps/buildings than for passes for ex for persons with a pass for cardiac conditions but perhaps don't need to be <u>as</u> close to the door/ramp. Also larger spots for chairs/devices than for accessible spots that don't need devices and just need to be a bit closer to a location. Example: Blue Pass for chair or device needs high assistance and very close access and wide spot; Green Pass for cardiac or health condition and needs to be close enough to location as to not be harming to condition/person at hand; Red Pass for expectant mothers etc need to be close/has a device but not disabled.</p>
	Work with South House to collaborate on gender inclusive washrooms. Inclusive language, not just a restroom for other.
	Ensure all web pages are easily read by tech for the blind.
	When talks like this take place, ask for email addresses so we can receive more information on issues that matter and especially further discussions.
	Website (events page) needs to be updated more regularly
	Pdf for rec programs is accessible but not user friendly. If organized by headings such as locations or activity to as 'Headings' then it will be easier to use.
	Use dyslexic font.
	Accessible pdf to email instead of paper mailouts (option?) ex for rec programs and tax bills.

	When you call the number, the message is too long to find out which number you need to press; provide shorter recorded message.
	More operators – many times on hold for too long.
	Plain language information; pictures that show a program to be inclusive; the word accessible very clear; information on staffing (staff to participant ratio)
	Station 2: 100 year old building doesn't need to be compliant. No community center / not really an accessibility concern. Rather see the money go elsewhere which more people will use.
	Training for police to deal with people who have brain injuries and/or intellectual disabilities
	Police to be better trained for mentally and physically challenged.
	Their ... (?) support people trust are with them.
	HALIFAX 2: OTHER EMPLOYMENT PRESS RELEASES & ADS WEBSITE & SOCIAL MEDIA 311 FIRE POLICE GARBAGE
	Inclusive Hiring
	Equity hiring clauses
	Educate public about myth about hiring individuals with disabilities
	Have to do a better job of hiring people with disabilities into management positions. Have targeted hiring, internships and mentorships.
	Keep stats on numbers by disability type, level of classification and severity of disability.
	Don't just put blurb about inclusive employment because we don't see ourselves represented in HRM or Provincially
	Disabilities are not always visually obvious so you can't always assume there is not representation
	Need to have persons with disabilities in decision making roles to affect policy

	<p>Make HRM Welcoming: We don't see ourselves reflected in the workforce so if serious about this effort, HRM should make hiring a priority as an employer that represents its community.</p>
	<p>Government to be transparent and show us the number, type and severity of disability.</p>
	<p>Not much of a cost to hire mild to moderate disability but when costs are higher we are leaving a lot of people out – People who want to and should be able to be included.</p>
	<p>Education: Require partnership with universities and colleges.</p>

	HRM Council Meeting on Eastlink needs to make the program closed captioning and have ASL interpreters for deaf and hard of hearing.
	When deaf or hard of hearing use the video relay service to call HRM, the HRM Staff should accept the call and not ask for the relay operator to sign a confidentiality form (third party)
	Bike lanes
	Physically accessible daycares, (sleltes?), doctor examination tables.
	Try to have some of the website information in ASL (Sign language) (VLOG) for deaf people.
	Videos: Make sure captions are available. Twitter: There is the ability to put captures when you post photos using a settings feature for those who are visually impaired.
	Hard to find social accounts: If you search HRM you cannot find them- it's buried if you search Halifax since they are branded HFX .. need to be publicized better.
	Pre-recorded videos should all have ASL interpretations and captions.
	All images should include image discriptions.
	All Web material should be compatible with screen readers.
	Website should use colours that are plain; clean background images.
	Font should be appropriate font size or be able to be increased in size.
	Font colours need to be plain, dark colours
	There should be guidelines established for contrast ratios on web materials.
	Compatible with screen readers
	I tweet daily and had not been able to find the HRM twitter account for a long time. @hfxgov is not publicized enough and you cannot search to find it. Halifax is not in the heading so it is impossible to find if you search Halifax or HRM
	Good contract for print material (black on white background)

	Clear simple fonts such as Times Roman- not fonts with small curvy letters.
	No water marks in background
	Offer individuals the option of medium (?) text
	Use PDFs or Word that can be read by speech reading software.
	Offer texting

	Call 311 – Can't because of smartphone should have 10 digit number for 311 to call for information..
	Book ASL Interpreters for HRM Events and Mention in Flyer or Press Release etc that interpreters or any other accessibility services are available.
	Good Contrast; electronic format that can be accessed by speech reading software, watch language that is used so it is not exclusive ex don't use language like hearing impaired.
	Should book professional interpreter, not signer due to statement or internet
	Organic bins in rural areas should be picked up each week from May to October 31 st
	Electronic system available to report to consumer why garbage has not been picked up

4.0 Tantallon Session: March 7, 2018

- Attendance for 2:00 - 4:00 Session: 1 Participants
- Attendance for 6:00 - 8:00 Session: 0 Participants

4.1 Transportation

Based on your experience, what input can you offer to help HRM make our regular bus and Access-A-Bus service more accessible and inclusive? And what input can you offer to help HRM make our streets, roads and sidewalks more accessible and inclusive?

VOTES	TANTALLON: TRANSPORTATION
1	Sidewalks: When private citizens are responsible there will be issues. Recommend in initial plan, involve people who are most drastically impacted to provide input at outset.
1	Organized voice to feed in through advisory group.
1	Transit: Not everyone has access. Many areas are not serviced. Problem especially for aging and low income populations outside downtown core.
	Buses: Level of assistance by driver is not consistent. They don't always meet client needs. Some are fabulous, others not.
	Bus: Announce stops for both vision and hearing impaired.
	Training and evaluation for drivers – need to monitor
	Need defined process to file experiences with 311 so it can be tracked and responded to. Let clients know how to because citizens deserve to know recourse when service fails them.
	Bus: Ensure drivers are supported.
	Community can provide input into specific areas to support clients that have need.

4.2 Parks, Recreation, Programs

Based on your experiences, what input can you offer to help HRM ensure that our new and existing rinks, playgrounds, and infrastructure for parks and leisure are more accessible and inclusive? And what input can you offer to help HRM ensure that our new and existing recreation programs are more accessible and inclusive?

VOTES	TANTALLON: PARKS, RECREATION, PROGRAMS
1	Western Commons Master Plan: 1 st trail is started. Trail should be accessible and barrier-free (grade no greater than 5%). This trail is not but need to recognize and promote to set expectations accurately. Understand items such as hand rails, rest spaces, surfacing and typography.
1	Build casual pool of inclusion support workers through community of support (HRM structure or not)
	Aspirational goals vs. achievable solutions: Communicate accurately which can easily be overlooked if clients not consulted at the outset.
	Swimming Instructors: Mainly youth; HRM Rec Centers have better access to support staff than non-HRM pools and centers. Provide HRM Staff to improve inclusion support.
	Voice of community that requires inclusion to open doors to make them feel invited. Feels intrusive for centers to go directly to ask individuals. Would be great to have a group that would provide input (General information available through HRM)
	Parks & Beaches: Require support to reach these places.

4.3 Buildings

Based on your experiences, what input can you offer to help HRM ensure that our new and existing

VOTES	TANTALLON: BUILDINGS
	Voice from community at table when talking about buildings, planning and codes. Can save a lot of money if planned at the outset. Adds inclusion if feel involved at outset.

buildings are more accessible and inclusive?

4.4 Services

Based on your experiences, what input can you offer to help HRM ensure that the way we communicate with our citizens is more accessible and inclusive? The specific aspects of our communication that we would like you to consider are: Mail-outs; website and social media; 311; press releases and ads; services such as fire and garbage collection; and employment.

	TANTALLON: OTHER EMPLOYMENT PRESS RELEASES & ADS WEBSITE & SOCIAL MEDIA 311 FIRE POLICE GARBAGE
	Does HRM reach out specifically to organizations that represent the accessibility community to recruit? Such as job shadow, youth interns, co-op work experience, work with employment services to find work for IA/Disabled clients of the province.
	Do their job postings / info sessions get communicated to the inclusion community?
	Is it accessible for hearing and vision impaired
	Is it promoted through inclusion organizations
	Collect data through those calls to plan for improvement broadly – not just band-aid solutions.
	Are they Braille or multi-lingual
	Citizen email list to allow us to sign up for all of the releases or categories / tags as we choose – choice directed information.

5.0 Fall River Sessions: March 22, 2018

- Attendance for 2:00 - 4:00 Session: 1 Participants
- Attendance for 6:00 - 8:00 Session: 1 Participants

5.1 Transportation

Based on your experience, what input can you offer to help HRM make our regular bus and Access-A-Bus service more accessible and inclusive? And what input can you offer to help HRM make our streets, roads and sidewalks more accessible and inclusive?

*The participant who attended the Fall River session between 2:00 - 4:00 did not offer any suggestions regarding transportation.

VOTES	FALL RIVER 2: TRANSPORTATION

1	Transportation to After School Programs: Eliminate the need to book AccessA-Bus one week in advance.
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5.2 Parks, Recreation, Programs

Based on your experiences, what input can you offer to help HRM ensure that our new and existing rinks, playgrounds, and infrastructure for parks and leisure are more accessible and inclusive? And what input can you offer to help HRM ensure that our new and existing recreation programs are more accessible and inclusive?

VOTES	FALL RIVER 1:PARKS, RECREATION, PROGRAMS
1	Indoor Aquatics: Lifts are currently embarrassing to use as an entry to pools and those who need assistance need to introduce themselves to staff and wait, which creates an entry barrier and restricts inclusion. Everyone should be able to enter and exit with the same level of staff interaction.
1	Aquatics Centers: New facility design focuses on high usage of windows which creates a barrier because of a difference in level of undress between patrons and passerbys. A large portion of the population are uncomfortable with this and it is not currently quantified on a design checklist.

1	Poolpod is a lift that allows independent transfer so patrons can be in charge of entrance / exit without reliance on staff or requiring transfers. From a staff perspective it is far safer because safety requires a 2 year training course so it is difficult for teenage staff to properly train. The transfer happens in the acquatics change room with no extra transfers. It can be used by anyone, not just those requiring wheelchair access. Cost is approx. \$70,000
1	Provide more information about what exists at each center / location. Websites currently have fancy pictures but limited detail. Google Streetview through the building. Advertise features and recruit clients and newcomers. Don't make assumptions that people know about the facility.
1	Community Outreach based on Youth Engagement Study in 2011 and ADAM (African Diaspora Association of the Maritimes) – Removing financial barriers is huge as it can completely change a life path if youth have a safe place to hang out. Allow Staff to have autonomy to issue passes, trusting staff to be fair and not abuse.

	<p>Mobility Egress Situation: No real infrastructure on beach areas. Birch Cove and Kearney Lake are best for water access via hard surface. Recommend to have soft surface pedway to egress to beach. Parks are ok for crusher dust and hard surfaces with egress through them.</p>
1	<p>Pool: provide an outdoor or indoor pool in the Fall River Area because lakes are not contained</p>
1	<p>‘Playing and Learning Together Program’: Expand program offerings in partnership with HRM to include after school programs and expanded summer programming and promote through the Rec Program Catalogue. Current Rec Opportunities for Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) are limited and the ‘Playing and Learning Together’ After School Program is extremely expensive for parents – it is a rec program and should be encompassed in regular rec programs – shouldn’t be more expensive than regular rec programs.</p>
	<p>Community Outreach: There is a significant benefit to keeping people mobile so recommend donating a season’s pass at no charge and offer private lessons at the same cost as group rates to enhance inclusion and participation.</p>

	<p>Additional requirements for inclusion at aquatic facilities that is not currently on the design criteria: 1) Reduce the number of windows or frost them; 2) Reduce / eliminate fees for those on limited income; 3) Drainage on pool deck – eliminate bird bath drains by moving the lateral drains close to the pool deck to provide drainage and a cue for those with visual impairments; 4) Change rooms should have lateral rather than singular drains; better floor surfaces and appropriate sink heights for wheelchairs; 5) Train staff using a wheelchair exercise to enhance understanding of accessibility barriers; 6) Power change tables to adjust the height and accommodate different weights in accessible bathrooms; 7) watch pitch for wheelchair ramps into pools because of speed and lack of control.</p>
	<p>Softwalk: Use in spraypad/splashpad areas, pool floors and aquatic environments because it has a high anti-slip rating, takes abuse, has high traction and has a ‘head injury criterium score’</p>
	<p>Make access to all pools free. Community recreation should be a free service that is accessible and inclusive to everyone in the community regardless of socioeconomic status.</p>

	<p>Program registrations: Current programming system show attendance numbers, not support requirements. Recommend giving private lessons at the same price as regular lessons so it is tagged in the system, instructors can be better paired with clients, enhance results (ie parents are happier because gained ability to swim outweighs the group social environment) and more comfortable environment. Offer on a first-come/first-serve basis to manage expectations.</p>
	<p>Door handles: Use lateral handle rather than knobs (greater accessibility but difficult to contain children)</p>
	<p>Train staff about inclusive terminology: Example: Ride a wheelchair, not “in a wheelchair”</p>
	<p>Execute a public campaign for not pushing accessibility buttons on doors to reduce the wear and tear.</p>
1	<p>Top of mind awareness that allows specific expertise for specific circumstances. Enlisting advise to enhance experience prior to building and starting projects.</p>
<p>FALL RIVER 2: PARKS, RECREATION, PROGRAMS</p>	
	<p>Nature Access: Expand accessible trail systems to allow ability to be in nature because the busy roads are dangerous for people with ASD</p>
	<p>Ice Surface: provide an additional ice surface in the Fall River Area</p>
	<p>Continue the great programs in HRM such as: 1) Sledge Hockey at the Oval Rink; 2) Summer Camps for children with ASD (preferred over Autism NS Camps) and 3) Playgrounds. There is an opportunity for more programming of this nature</p>
	<p>Playgrounds: soft surfaces are great; special play equipment is beneficial for not only physically challenged but also children with motor impairment and ASD; fencing is good to have.</p>
	<p>Continue to grow infrastructure to allow all individuals to have recreational experiences.</p>
	<p>Would love to have sidewalks in subdivision of Oaken Hills</p>
	<p>Ice Surface in Fall River</p>

	<p>Rec Programming is worthwhile and shouldn't cost more for inclusive programming than other programming.</p>
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6.0 Spryfield Sessions: March 26, 2018

- Attendance for 2:00 - 4:00 Session: 12 Participants
- Attendance for 6:00 - 8:00 Session: 8 Participants

6.1 Transportation

Based on your experience, what input can you offer to help HRM make our regular bus and Access-A-Bus service more accessible and inclusive? And what input can you offer to help HRM make our streets, roads and sidewalks more accessible and inclusive?

VOTES	SPRYFIELD 1: TRANSPORTATION
12	Access-A-Bus: Currently need to try to book 1 week ahead; Bookings starts at 7am. First 10 minutes is busy and then held in queue. Recommend that need a new scheduling system to enhance flexibility (not currently accessible)
8	More Access-A-Bus services to be provided: number of seats, time of day, services.
5	Access-A-Bus: Language is a huge issue given language and literacy levels. Recommend have an interpretation service.
4	Increase the number of Accessible taxis; need a better business model for taxis.
3	Snow removal is huge for visually impaired who are reliant on regular bus. Increase commitment to snow removal; we need to do better.
3	Improve Access-A-Bus scheduling
3	Sidewalks: White tips/balls on White canes are destroyed because of poor maintenance of sidewalks.
2	Snow clearing needs to be improved for bus stops and sidewalks. Enhance plan to enhance access.
2	Accessible taxis to supplement access-a-bus.
2	Accessible Taxis: Priorities is for persons with disability but there is a need to enforce this.

1	Access-A-Bus: Given a window but they don't operate within that window of time.
1	Bus stops: Accessibility for canes and wheelchairs is difficult when the stop is on an inclined surface (ex. George St by RBC); Stops should be on a flat surface.
1	Promote 311 to report concerns (or call The Clerk's Office) to enforce plans.
1	Call back service required for persons waiting to schedule Access-A-Bus
1	New Developments: Offer complete services within community; ensure a complete community.
	Prioritize clearing of sidewalks and bus stops for active living.
	Accessible Transit: When regular stops are moved or changed, it affects Access-A-Bus and adds a barrier for those requiring service. Need to revisit stops for Access-A-Bus to capture all.
	Provide training to support accessibility and ridership on regular buses. Mentorship Training (? Status of this HRM program)
	Language barriers for Access-A-Bus need to be removed. Current scheduling system cannot support accents. Requested information needs to be more simplistic to tolerate variances in language and improve flexibility.
VOTES	SPRYFIELD 2: TRANSPORTATION
3	Summer Camps (Autism Nova Scotia): Participants use Metro Transit to teach life skills but there is a need for better education in regular transit
3	If a child with mobility issues requires a wagon or non-traditional mobility device, understand and recognize that these aids should be accommodated for enhanced inclusiveness. We need to look for ways to safely include.
3	Autism Groups experience sensory overload. We need to recognize that there could be challenges and we need to recognize in order to accommodate
3	Training is available but it requires a willingness to learn and given a priority within entity to affect long term systemic change.

2	Rural communities have limited access and we are looking for transparency on decision making to better understand why some communities have bus service and others do not.
1	Stakeholders currently need to initiate. It would be great to have HRM lead the collaboration.
	Our son is 7 and we are starting to look at programs and services available.
	Better transit system, particularly outside of city center (Waverley / Fall River)
	Interested in Integrated Mobility Plan (especially for East Preston)
	Looking for platforms for both regular bus and Access-A-Bus for better access (get on / get off)
	Need to think outside of buses to make community living more accessible.
	Lawrentown: If there is no access, how do we improve access and inclusive communication.
	Use messaging on buses to encourage all to be respectful and understanding of others.
	Independent Community transportation services: Recommend that HRM Transit provide liaison to successfully collaborate and pair client to service.

6.2 Parks, Recreation, Programs

Based on your experiences, what input can you offer to help HRM ensure that our new and existing rinks, playgrounds, and infrastructure for parks and leisure are more accessible and inclusive? And what input can you offer to help HRM ensure that our new and existing recreation programs are more accessible and inclusive?

VOTES	SPRYFIELD 1: PARKS, RECREATION, PROGRAMS
9	Tailor programs for accessibility, such as wheelchair yoga
9	Require awareness that persons with disability can speak for themselves and are experts on the topic. HRM can do a lot more to engage through organizations.

8	Refugees WHI Pass is granted for 1 st year to access transit and programs. It activates on Day 1 and it takes a few months to settle in. Recommend: Free recreation and transport for anyone who need it. (Remove the 1 year limit)
6	Look at creation of better partnerships between HRM and different organizations representing persons from different groups. Often people are speaking on behalf of marginalized groups.
6	Playgrounds: Why aren't all playgrounds accessible? Make sure all are accessible. Put accessibility lens on up front.
5	Rec Programs for adults is limited so increase emphasis on availability.
4	>60% of persons with disability rely on income assistance in Nova Scotia. There is nothing in the amount provided for recreation. Recognize that free access may not be an option but need to look at options to support.
4	Public Gardens / Point Pleasant Park: Gravel is difficult for a white cane; grass can be bumpy that makes mobility a challenge: Smooth (paved) surfaces are preferred.

VOTES	SPRYFIELD 2: PARKS, RECREATION, PROGRAMS
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3	<p>Mentioning programs available (if the dog is schip) More clarity in location accessibility. Identify accessibility and inclusive offerings; Compare Rec Guide to ensure more accessible options are available.</p>
2	
2	<p>Booking system / brochure for RecConnect could be plain language and translated for enhanced accessibility, especially for those with English as a second language. ie Kiddie Kickers is difficult to know what program is.</p>
1	<p>Affordability: RecConnect process to waive fees can be challenging; Helpful to know what programs can have fees waived up front to increase coordination between groups booking on behalf of clients.</p>
1	<p>Improve footing to access parks and trails (often too much gravel or too much salt)</p>
1	<p>Chocolate Lake Rec Center: People doing snow removal require better understanding of enforcement of details of work, with needs of persons with disabilities in mind.</p>
1	<p>Awareness and education in HRM to help better understand needs: Opportunity to engage organizations that provide services (those already up and running)</p>
1	<p>Disability partnership with executive directors: often don't directly have representations from impacted communities.</p>
1	<p>Access Card through Easter Seals (ACCESS 2 Entertainment Card): Make available to broader group and add more services. Partnership or a similar program adopted by HRM</p>
1	<p>Increase partnership between camp inclusion and allied health profession students.</p>
	<p>HRM should be at the table when researchers / groups are meeting to identify needs for marginalized groups.</p>
	<p>Beginning of any project, make sure consultations with different groups are always present at the table.</p>
	<p>Never see persons with disability that have ethnic backgrounds at the table. Need to include better representation, recognizing challenge to get participation.</p>

	Need to encourage people to participate.
	Chain of Lakes Trails is a good one because it is paved.

3	Educate staff through frontline training. If on spectrum, more variety in programs and help meet individual needs for success.
3	Playgrounds: Fenced in playgrounds important for safety. We have kept our child to play at home because don't feel safe in many open areas)
3	Pamphlets to tell parents about what is available: One spot for all information.
3	Cost effective programs with wider availability and recreation programs.
3	Make sure that children that don't have access are given priority to be included to recreate – HRM should focus on those who need it.
2	Playgrounds: Currently community fundraises for inclusive playgrounds. Municipality should fund and require that all playgrounds are available and inclusive (often not-for-profits struggle to raise necessary funds)
1	Make programs easier to find online and in programs
1	Swimming pools / beaches / rec centers to ensure calm, quiet spaces for children who are over stimulated - designated friendly spaces with aware staff (example Halifax Central Library)
	HRM Staff are doing a fantastic job and get it.
	There have more programs offered and that is great.
	Don't forget outlying areas.
	East Preston: Public access to the lake is required.
	Improve infrastructure at (outlying) public areas
	HRM has inclusion support available on programming. HRM has inclusion support but families are not always aware.
	Ensure families are encouraged to exchange information in registration process to ensure success.
	Location for inclusive playgrounds is critical and we don't accommodate to the degree needed.
	Natural playgrounds: Love nature but haven't been examined for all groups. They allow more children to learn about nature but do they work together?

	Slides built into natural landscape to avoid need for stairs (works well) however stumps may introduce barriers so require balance to be inclusive of all ages and stages to feel comfortable.
	Environmental design in new buildings but also available in other buildings – bathroom is not the best space.
	Florescent lights are not appropriate for persons with autism – if required, they need to find space for breaks. More awareness required around sensory processing requirements.
	Platform for programs: Innovative programs are being offered by organizations so make them available to broader audience. Look at what models work and toll out across the province.
	Can't be everything to everyone but if want to service, need to change approach if inclusiveness is important.

6.3 Buildings

Based on your experiences, what input can you offer to help HRM ensure that our new and existing buildings are more accessible and inclusive?

VOTES	SPRYFIELD 1: BUILDINGS
9	Consult up Front: Washroom indicators: Size of signage/Braille. In Paul O'Reagan Theater, seats are retractable; no railing to go down aisles – makes it difficult to socialize and sit with friends; Halifax Library: Had to repaint step indicator from pale grey to brighter colour; add braille to elevator buttons.
7	Needs to be change in mindset to realize accessibility is more than a ramp and a handle.
6	Provide awareness, engagement and education to increase cohesion and buy-in (non-profits, etc)
4	Better use of schools: Engagement to ensure all groups feel welcome; create space by facilitating conversations with groups to understand how best to support.
2	Location (Clayton Park / Fairview): Offer programs in the community where people are; Canada Games Center is not fiscally accessible and there are satellite facilities that could be used such as schools and churches.

1	Upper Tantallon: HRM Soccer program is one of the only programs; rent space in the community to offer more programs and better utilize existing space.
	When new centers are on-boarded, don't remove existing facilities.
	Parking: Look for creative solutions. In Chocolate Lake Rec Center, accessible spot was far from main entrance. Talked to staff and they put in an additional spot.
	Wider Wheelchairs and scooter are requiring wider entrances to buildings.
	Encourage persons to take initiative to make improvements.
VOTES	SPRYFIELD 2: BUILDINGS
3	Signage: Communicate using visual aids in buildings (similar to road signs) to look at how public buildings can improve accessibility. Messaging supports all patrons and provides reminders.
2	Sensory Friendly buildings are important. IWK is not sensory friendly. Need to acknowledge that people are overwhelmed and incorporate in design.
1	If we want more accessible Nova Scotia, reinstatement of Council to look at disabilities in a more formal way.
	Front desks: Both humans and desk need to be accessible.
	Staff be able to communicate effectively with all people
	We are further ahead understanding and accomodating physical disabilities- Map out an inventory of where we are at and where we need to get to.

6.4 Services

Based on your experiences, what input can you offer to help HRM ensure that the way we communicate with our citizens is more accessible and inclusive? The specific aspects of our communication that we would like you to consider are: Mail-outs; website and social media; 311; press releases and ads; services such as fire and garbage collection; and employment.

SPRYFIELD 1: OTHER EMPLOYMENT PRESS RELEASES & ADS WEBSITE & SOCIAL MEDIA 311 FIRE POLICE GARBAGE

	<p>Youth leadership programs include more people with disabilities and newcomers, that way they will be able to find employment through HRM easier.</p>
	<p>Better reflective of community: promote jobs through disability networks, ISANS, etc in order to recruit and hire more diverse applicants.</p>
	<p>How do they accommodate visual impairments?</p>
	<p>Options for translations in different languages.</p>
	<p>I know HRM is working on the website however there are many broken links to documents.</p>

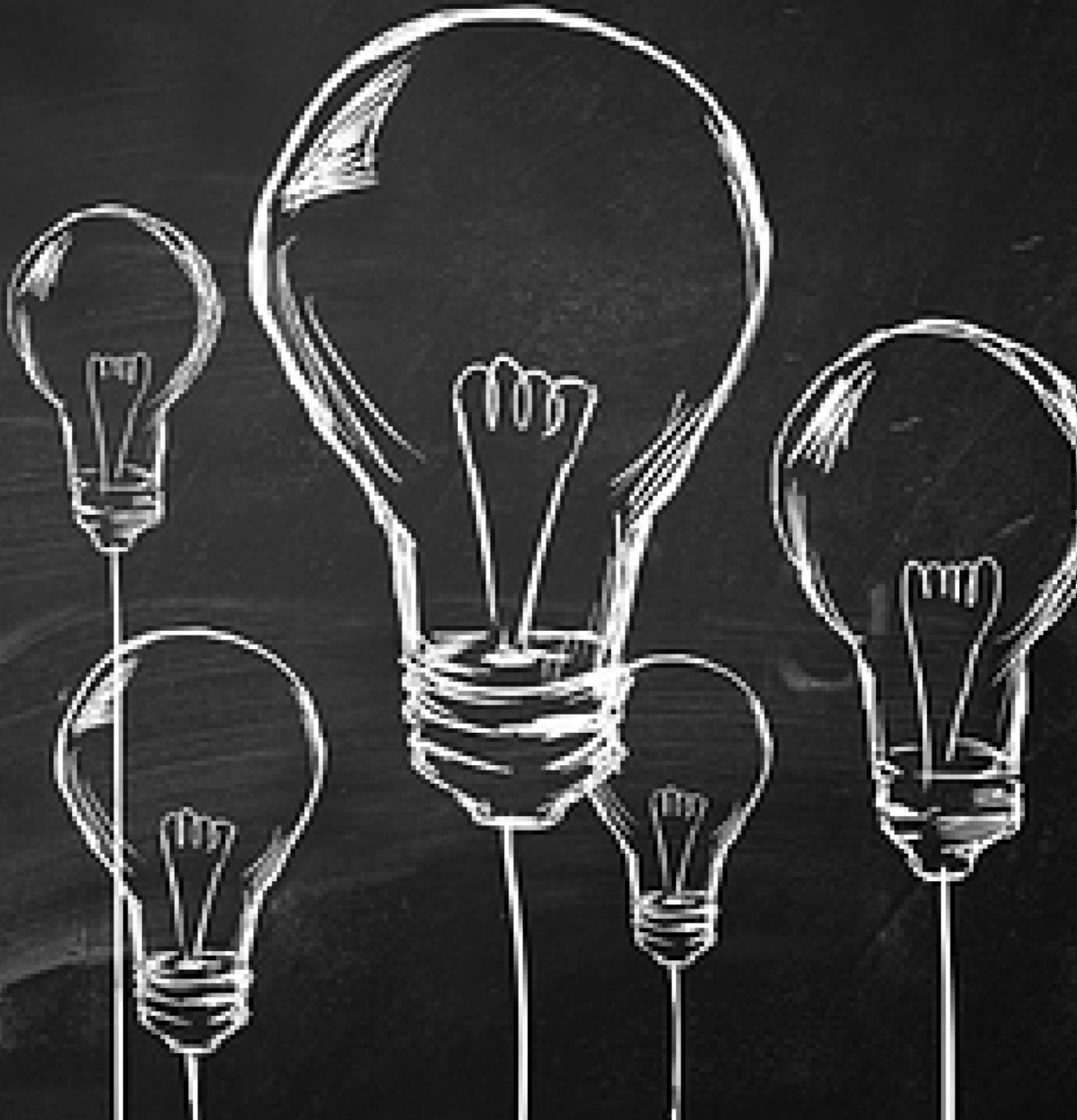
	<p>Explore a method of modified garbage collection for individuals with disabilities. This would require consultation with individuals with various forms of disability to understand their needs related to garbage collection. Additionally, the senior/older adult population would be consulted to have their needs assessed and addressed appropriately.</p>
	<p>Promote Cadet program for youth to newcomer kids in order to bring more diversity.</p>
	<p>SPRYFIELD 2: OTHER EMPLOYMENT PRESS RELEASES & ADS WEBSITE & SOCIAL MEDIA 311 FIRE POLICE GARBAGE</p>
	<p>Summer programs offer respite for families</p>
	<p>Workforce is younger.</p>
	<p>Ensure regular training of autism, including strategies for rescue (car accidents and fire)</p>
	<p>Vulnerable persons data</p>
	<p>Endure regular training and updating the ASD online training of law enforcement officers.</p>
	<p>Consider indicating disabilities on one’s identification, especially for people with invisible disabilities.</p>
	<p>Partnering with programs like ‘Ready, Willing and Able’ to ensure inclusive hiring practices.</p>

	People with disabilities want to see people with disabilities reflected in the workforce, especially in the public sector. This is currently not happening.
	Establish targets on DI for hiring practices.
	Procurement privacy favours diversity in the process.
	Important
	Access-A-Bus could be the ones to deliver to clients
	Use more visuals and less clicking.
	Be succinct in language.
	Use Plain Language.
	Watch use of language, can be offensive.
	Very difficult to read website – almost needs to be bolded (low vision)
	All websites need to be done to international standard.

	More communication on this service may be helpful
	Enhanced 311 with what'sapp / photo uploading / geocoded photos
	Two way communication for people with cognitive disabilities (ie people with Alzheimers); How to avoid confusing support communication (ie phone tree, automation)
	Having a human voice as entry and training operators
	311 Staff need to be more aware of where the buses can deploy ramps on conventional transit routes.
	See diverse ads. Not just culturally diverse. People with all disabilities (autism)
	Fully accessible, fully available
	Problematic

APPENDIX B

Accessibility & Inclusion Consultation Process



APPENDIX B:

ENSURING AN ACCESSIBLE CONSULTATION PROCESS

The public consultation process was designed to ensure that every HRM citizen who attended would be able to do so in a barrier-free, welcoming environment. We took the following steps to achieve this goal:

1. Wheel Chair Accommodation

We left at least 2 tables per session free of chairs to accommodate participants who used wheelchairs.

2. Seeing Eye Dog Consideration

We devoted one table per session for participants with Seeing Eye Dogs. The dogs could rest comfortably under the table.

3. Sign Language Interpretation

Each session provided sign language interpretation for the duration of the focus group.

4. CART

Each session provided CART transcription.

5. Multiple Text Formats

Each table was provisioned with participant information in multiple formats, including enlarged font and Braille texts.

6. Guide Assistance

HRM staff supporting the focus groups were provided with guide training to help them assist participants during the sessions.

7. Inclusive Large Group Discussion

At least 60 minutes of each session was conducted in large group format with one facilitator leading the discussion and one facilitator recording participant comments on flip chart paper. Each person's comments were verbally restated as they were captured on the flip charts.

8. Multiple Modes of Participation

Participants were given an opportunity to work on their own to develop individual input for a variety of HRM services (Fire, Garbage, Police, 311, HRM Website and others). Participants had the option of writing their comments on Post-It notes for placement on flip chart paper located throughout the room. Alternatively, participants could choose to take part in a one-on-one interview with HRM staff who recorded their comments in an interview template. The variety of participation formats gave everyone an opportunity to take part in a way that best accommodated their specific preferences.

9. Multiple Means of Voting

The final exercise of the consultation process asked participants to consider all of the input offered by all participants and identify the recommendations they believed to be most important for HRM to follow. Individuals were given an opportunity to either cast ballots on their own or to have HRM staff assist in this process.

10. Food and Networking

Each session provided catering by Stone Hearth Bakery. HRM staff served participants and ensured that coffee, tea, etc. were replenished for participants throughout the two hours.

HRM Accessibility and Inclusion Consultation Outline

Our Objectives

- 1. To gather your input about steps HRM can take to improve accessibility.**
- 2. To gather your input about steps HRM can take to be more inclusive.**

Our Agenda

Welcome and Introductions

Objectives and Agenda Review

Our Buses, Streets and Roads

Discussion Goal: Our goal is to make our bus service, streets and roads more accessible and inclusive.

- 1. Regular Bus and Access-A-Bus Service: Based on your experience, what input can you offer to help HRM make regular bus and Access-A-Bus service more accessible and inclusive?**

- 2. Streets and Roads: Based on your experience, what input can you offer to help HRM make streets and roads more accessible and inclusive?**

Our Parks, Recreation Centres and Programming

Discussion Goal: Our goal is to make our playgrounds, parks, recreation centres and recreation programming more accessible and inclusive.

- 1. Rinks, Playgrounds, Infrastructure for Parks and Leisure: Based on your experiences, what input can you offer to help HRM ensure that new and existing rinks, playgrounds, and infrastructure for parks and leisure are more accessible and inclusive?**
- 2. Recreation Programming: Based on your experiences, what input can you offer to help HRM ensure that new and existing recreation programs are more accessible and inclusive?**

Our Buildings

Discussion Goal: Our goal is to make our buildings (bus terminals, access centres, etc.) more accessible and inclusive.

- 1. HRM Buildings: Based on your experiences, what input can you offer to help HRM ensure that new and existing buildings are more accessible and inclusive?**

Our Communication

Discussion Goal: Our goal is to make the way we communicate with citizens more accessible and inclusive.

- 1. HRM Communication: Based on your experiences, what input can you offer to help HRM ensure that the way we communicate with our citizens is more accessible and inclusive? Please consider the following: mail-outs; website and social media; 311; press releases and ads; services such as fire and garbage collection; and employment.**

Transcript Review and Priorities

Goal: Our goal is to give individuals an opportunity to review the transcript and identify their priorities.

Closure and Next Steps

IMPROVING ACCESSIBILITY

The municipality is developing an **ACCESSIBILITY FRAMEWORK** to improve access to programs and services.

Join us to share your thoughts on how to remove barriers and increase access to the municipality's programs and services to help shape more inclusive communities.

Wednesday, Feb. 28, 2018

Sackville Sports Stadium Multipurpose Room

2 - 4 p.m. and 6 - 8 p.m.

Thursday, March 1, 2018

Alderney Gate

Helen Creighton Room

2 - 4 p.m. and 6 - 8 p.m.

Monday, March 5, 2018

Central Public Library

BMO Community Room

2 - 4 p.m. and 6 - 8 p.m.

Wednesday, March 7, 2018

Tantallon Public Library Program Room

2 - 4 p.m. and 6 - 8 p.m.

Thursday, March 22, 2018

Gordon Snow Community Centre Multipurpose Room

2 - 4 p.m. and 6 - 8 p.m.

Monday, March 26, 2018

Captain William Spry Multipurpose Room

2 - 4 p.m. and 6 - 8 p.m.

In the case of an unexpected change in time, date or location for any of the scheduled sessions, please visit our **Accessibility Framework Project** page at shapeyourcityhalifax.ca for the most up-to-date information.



HALIFAX

shapeyourcityhalifax.ca



HALIFAX

Accessibility Framework Development

Progress Report

Prepared by: Office of Diversity & Inclusion

June 25, 2018

What we are presenting today

1. Update on the Accessibility Consultations
2. Next steps

The Consultation Process

- Facilitated sessions were held at six locations during February & March 2018
 - Sackville Sports Stadium
 - Alderney Gate Library
 - Central Public Library
 - Tantallon Public Library
 - Gordon Snow Community Centre
 - Captain Willian Spry Centre
- Sessions were conducted in the afternoon/evening
- 130 participants



HALIFAX

HALIFAX

Inclusive Process

All facilities had to have:

- An accessible, ground level or ramp, entrance with power operated doors
- Barrier free access to the consultation room
- A large open room able to accommodate many accessibility aids
- An accessible washroom near the room the consultations were to be in
- Accessible parking
- Proximity to Halifax Transit stops



HALIFAX

HALIFAX

Inclusive Process

All sessions included:

- Communications in large print and braille
- Sign language interpretation
- Live captioning
- Sighted guides
- HRM staff to support participants in their participation in the session
- An external facilitator skilled in working with diverse communities



The Findings

- Three main themes emerged for consideration during the consultation process:
 - TRANSPORTATION
 - RECREATION
 - FACILITIES

Transportation

- Improve accessible transportation to increase its usage e.g. booking regulations, timing and number of Access-a-Busses.
- Treat sidewalks like roads e.g. year-round obstruction clearing, consistent curb cuts, barrier free access from parking to sidewalk.



Recreation

- Ensure everyone can access nature, parks, playgrounds and facilities independently.
- Build on strength by expanding recreation programming and its reach e.g. build upon current recreation offerings, subsidies for persons with disabilities, and provide trained staff.
- Promote accessible programs and facilities to create awareness.
- Improve existing recreation facilities to meet minimum building code standards.



Facilities

- Enforce and ensure buildings exceed minimum standards e.g. quality and condition of accessible washrooms, and enforcement of building codes.
- Develop an auditing, tracking and reporting system for repairs. There were examples of out of service accessible features that had not been repaired, such as an accessible shower, wet wheelchairs, and power operated doors.



Next Steps

1. Additional consultations with service providers, diversity groups, rehab patients.
2. Consultation findings will be rolled out to Accessibility Advisory Committee for feedback.
3. The Diversity and Inclusion team will develop the corporate Accessibility Framework - projected completion Q4.
4. The Diversity and Inclusion team will continue to work with the Province of Nova Scotia regarding the Provincial Accessibility Act and future regulations respecting their impact on HRM.



QUESTIONS?