



HALIFAX

Accessibility Strategy Annual Update 2023

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Background

- The Accessibility Strategy was approved by Regional Council on **May 18th, 2021**.
- The Strategy contains **30 action items** with a completion goal of 2030.
- 20 action items initiated since May 2021.
- An Internal **Accessibility Strategy Task Force** was formed to oversee the Strategy's implementation.



Image Description: The cover of the Condensed Accessibility Strategy

Accessibility Strategy Task Force

- The **Task Force** is comprised of **19 HRM staff** from various business units and the Accessibility Advisor.
- There are currently 3 subcommittees:
 - **Interior** Built Environment Subcommittee
 - **Exterior** Built Environment Subcommittee
 - **Employment** Subcommittee

Action Item Progress - Highlights

Use Rick Hansen gold certification and CSA B651-18 standards for future infrastructure in the Halifax region (e.g. curb cuts, public washrooms, and accessible parking spaces) – 2030 deadline

- Accessible washrooms constructed in Fort Needham Memorial Park.



Image description: The newly constructed Fort Needham Memorial Park accessible washrooms. The building sits on a concrete barrier-free pad and has windows spanning the front side. Solar panels sit on the roof.

Action Item Progress - Highlights

- Traffic Services installed **thirteen accessible traffic signals** with another two planned before April 2023.
- **Sixty per cent** of approved 2022/23 capital playground projects will have inclusive play elements.

Action Item Progress - Highlights

Adopt Rick Hansen gold certification and CSA B651-18 standards for current infrastructure, including street infrastructure, owned by HRM - 2030 deadline

- The playground at the George Dixon Community Centre was replaced with a new all-inclusive JumpStart playground.



Image description: The JumpStart inclusive playground at the George Dixon Community Centre. The playground is fully accessible and is coloured grey and red. Accessible elements displayed include a ramp, swings, a We-Saw, We-Go-Around and rubber surfacing.

Action Item Progress - Highlights

- The **Woodside Ferry Terminal** reopened in fall 2023. The terminal now has accessible universal washrooms.
- Infrastructure, Maintenance & Operations and Design & Construction Services collectively designed, tendered and installed more than 3000 TWSIs in over 560 pedestrian ramps.

Action Item Progress - Highlights

Develop review system to audit buildings, public facilities, recreational parks/playgrounds, and trails to assess when repairs or upgrades are needed to maintain accessibility – *2024 deadline*

- An **Accessibility Auditor** was hired to conduct audits on current municipal facilities and assist with Park audits. Regular audits are now being conducted.

Action Item Progress - Highlights

Increase public awareness, to the disability community, around snow removal – *2028 deadline*

- One-page information sheet created to educate the public on expectations for snow removal based on geographical area, weather conditions and timeframe.

Image Description: HRM Snow Removal Guideline Sheet

Roads and On-street Bikeways

Priority Level	Type of Road	Service Standard for clearing (starts after end of event)	Minimum Accumulation	What roadways should look like
1	Main arterial roads, emergency routes, Halifax Transit routes and roads with steep grades	12 hours	2 cm of snowfall	Bare
2	Residential streets, gravel roads and private lanes	24 hours	10 cm of snowfall	Snow covered but passable

Sidewalks and Protected Bike Lanes

Priority Level	Priority Level Location/type of sidewalk or bike lane	Service Standard for clearing (starts after end of event)	Minimum Accumulation	What roadways should look like
1	Downtown Halifax and Dartmouth	12 hours	5 cm of snowfall	Bare
1	Main arterials and school drop-off zones	12 hours	15 cm of snowfall	Bare
2	Halifax Transit routes	18 hours	15 cm of snowfall	Mostly bare with salt for traction
3	Residential streets and walkways	36 hours	15 cm of snowfall	Mostly bare with salt for traction

When to contact 311
 Once the service timelines have expired, you can report any snow or ice removal issues on municipal streets, sidewalks or bike lanes by emailing ContactUs@311.halifax.ca or by calling 311.

Please note, clearing timelines may be exceeded during exceptional weather conditions.

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Action Item Progress - Highlights

Develop a Workplace Accommodation Policy which outlines a formal process for providing accommodations to job candidates and employees with disabilities – 2022 deadline

- Workplace accommodations policy, job candidate accommodations policy and supplementary documents are underway but not yet finalized.
- **Draft policy** will be complete by end of **June 2023**.

Action Item Progress - Highlights

Implement Mobile Data Computer Software, online booking, and automatic fare systems to improve Access-A-bus booking service – *2022 deadline*

- The Mobile Data Terminal project is now **complete**. A mobile app for fare payment is expected to be implemented in spring 2023.
- The online booking system is a longer-term project.

Action Item Progress - Highlights

Increase number of accessible taxis and/or have an alternative provider for accessible cabs in the Halifax region – *2030 deadline*

- **Extra Care Taxi**, the new accessible taxi service, was introduced in July 2022.
- Currently: fleet of **10 accessible taxis** in the Halifax region.
- Steady growth in bookings and ridership during the first six months of the service.

Action Item Progress - Highlights

Increase training for municipal staff (e.g. recreation, fire, police, librarians) on how to serve/accommodate persons with disabilities – 2026 deadline

- **75 employees** participated in '*Going from Support to Inclusion: Accessibility Training*' from May 2022-March 2023.
- This training is now offered **monthly** in Spring and Fall 2023.
- In June 2023, the Accessibility Advisor will offer a condensed accessibility training to **Halifax Regional Police cadets**.

Thank you



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