

Accessibility Advisory Committee Town Hall 2023

D&I/ANSAIO – Accessibility Advisor Updates

In 2021, the HRM Accessibility Strategy was approved by Regional Council. The Strategy and associated internal Accessibility Strategy Task Force have been underway for two years and HRM continues to action initiatives to improve accessibility in our municipality. Our strategy was built around the following pillars:

- Public Transportation & Transportation Infrastructure
- Built Environment
- Goods & Services
- Information & Communication
- Employment

The Accessibility Strategy Task Force is comprised of various business units that are pulled together to work on the action items. A lot of work achievements were made with accessibility improvements over the past year. I am excited for my colleagues to share those updates with you.

As the Accessibility Advisor for HRM, I'd like to highlight a few achievements made in the past year:

- This year, I gave presentations about the Accessibility Strategy in various department Management meetings. These presentations brought awareness to the value and importance of the Accessibility Strategy.
- We've been doing a lot of work to develop accessible communications internally. For example, I've worked with the Clerk's office to release a more accessible PowerPoint template for business units to utilize when drafting presentations. This template includes features such as larger text and widescreen setting to increase the visibility of closed captioning during presentations to Regional Council.

- Since April, 128 HRM employees took ‘*Going from Support to Inclusion: Accessibility Training*’. Additionally, we delivered our first accessibility training to HRP Cadets and had 26 participants.
- Four Accessibility Strategy recommendations are complete.
- Currently, we are engaging with 19 of the 30 Action Items outlined in the Strategy.

Next year will be a big year for HRM’s Accessibility Strategy. As prescribed by the Accessibility Act, the Accessibility Strategy needs to be reviewed and updated every three years. Therefore, HRM is currently undergoing the process of internal consultations to receive feedback on the Accessibility Strategy. In 2024, there will be consultations with the public to receive feedback, which will contribute to updates made to the Accessibility Strategy by December 2024. I encourage folks to watch for future updates on these consultation sessions.

Under my leadership, the municipality continues to identify ways to improve accessibility and inclusion both internally as we work with BUs and externally as we work with, and in, community.

Thank you!