

Item 9.1.1



**HALIFAX**

# **HRM Draft Updated Accessibility Strategy**

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July 15, 2024

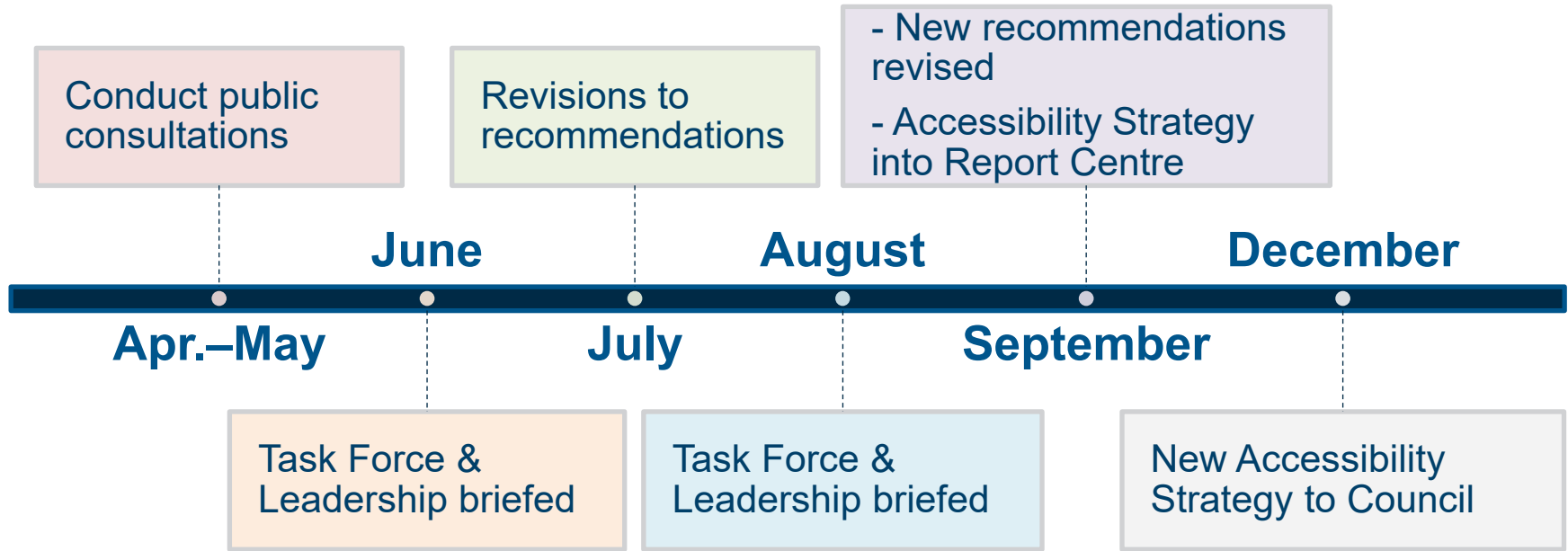
2024-07-12

# Background

- HRM approved the Accessibility Strategy in May 2021
- The Accessibility strategy is reviewed every 3 years, in accordance with the Provincial Accessibility Act
- We completed internal and external consultations
  - Fall 2023: internal with staff (surveys and open house)
  - Spring 2024: 10 public consultations
- We are currently awaiting feedback from senior leadership



# 2024 Accessibility Strategy Update: Timeline



# Draft Accessibility Strategy Recommendations



# Transportation

## & Transportation Infrastructure



1. Procure and implement an online system for booking Access-A-Bus within the Halifax region.
2. Develop a passenger survey regarding accessible services to measure success.
3. **NEW:** Increase public awareness of accessible parking spaces within HRM.
4. **NEW:** Increase targeted public awareness about snow removal for the disability community.



# Transportation

## & Transportation Infrastructure



5. **NEW:** Review the eligibility criteria for using Access-A-Bus. **NEW:** Audit accessibility of all transit shelters to determine recommendations to remove physical obstructions.
6. **NEW:** Develop a newcomers and immigrants Access-A-Bus education campaign that focuses on how to apply for, book, and use Access-A-Bus.
7. **NEW:** Create an awareness campaign for the public on the use of e-scooters, including where to park and rider safety.



# Transportation & Transportation Infrastructure



8. **NEW:** Create an awareness campaign for the public on the use of e-scooters, including where to park and rider safety.
9. **NEW:** Update the Municipal Design Guidelines for accessibility in the built environment.
10. **NEW:** Update HRM policy/standards documentation (the HRM Temporary Workplace Traffic Control Manual Supplement, HRM transportation capital works tender specifications and the Construction Site Management Administrative Order) for temporary pedestrian paths during construction.



# Built Environment



11. Apply CSA B651-23 standards for future municipal infrastructure to the greatest extent possible.
12. Apply CSA B651-18 standards for major renewal to current municipal infrastructure to the greatest extent possible.
13. Audit up to 100 buildings, public facilities, recreational parks/playgrounds, and trails to assess when repairs or upgrades are needed to maintain accessibility





# Built Environment



14. Ensure that park walkways and equipment for parks (playgrounds, beaches, sport courts, playing fields, etc.) and recreational facilities are accessible for individuals with disabilities to the greatest extent possible.
15. **NEW:** Continue to work with other levels of government and industry experts to identify best practices for signage and other warning devices that would best inform all road users of temporary sidewalk disruptions.



# Built Environment

**16. NEW:** Upgrade up to 30 bus stops within the urban transit service boundary to ensure they follow accessible standards where the ramp can be deployed, the bus stop has a concrete landing pad (minimum size 1.5 m x 2.5 m) with access to a sidewalk.



## Information & Communication

17. Increase training for municipal staff on how to serve/accommodate persons with disabilities.
18. Develop guide for municipal promotional materials which make them accessible to individuals with disabilities.
19. Make the municipal internet and intranet websites and web content conform to the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.2 format (Minimum Level AA).

## Information & Communication

20. Ensure plain language and formatting in compliance with (WCAG) 2.2 format for all municipal communications.
- 21. NEW:** Conduct research and implement alternative channels such as live chat or artificial intelligence (AI) to enhance digital accessibility with 311 service.

## Goods & Services



**22. NEW:** Increase the amount of accessible gym equipment by 3% over three years, either by purchasing new equipment or replacing existing equipment. Create internal guidelines regarding accessible gym equipment in HRM operated recreation facilities to support this recommendation.



## Goods & Services

23. **NEW:** Increase the capacity by 5% per year for 3 years in summer recreation inclusion programs.
24. Increase the number of available inclusion support staff for fall/winter/spring programs by 5% per year for 3 years.



# Employment

25. **NEW:** Collect data on the number of candidates who self-identify as having a disability vs the number of candidates hired with a disability.
26. Establish hiring procedures which requires defining accommodations for individuals with disabilities on job postings within the municipality, including accommodations available through the interview process (e.g., if a scribe is needed).

# Employment

- 27. NEW:** Develop and promote a process so that all employees would be able to request an accommodation.
- 28. NEW:** Develop corporate training which educates hiring managers about the (Workplace) Accommodation Policy.
- 29. NEW:** Develop a process within Human Resources to encourage students with disabilities to apply for work placements.



# Employment

- 30. NEW:** Establish guidelines/process to ensure job descriptions and job postings are reviewed from an accessibility perspective. (e.g. relevance of license or functional requirements of a position).
- 31. NEW:** Complete up to nine engagements with groups who support individuals with disabilities seeking employment.

# Questions?

