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Item No. 13.1.1
Executive Standing Committee
May 26, 2025

TO: Chair and Members of Executive Standing Committee

FROM: Céline Vautour, Chair, Accessibility Advisory Committee

DATE: April 17, 2025

SUBJECT: **Accessibility Advisory Committee – 2024 Annual Report**

INFORMATION REPORT

ORIGIN

Initiated by the Accessibility Advisory Committee through the Legislative Assistant.

BACKGROUND

On November 26, 2019, Halifax Regional Council approved Administrative Order 2017-005-GOV, *Respecting the Advisory Committee on Accessibility in the Halifax Regional Municipality*. The Accessibility Advisory Committee reports to the Executive Standing Committee. The purpose of the Accessibility Advisory Committee is to provide advice to Regional Council on facilitating and promoting the access of all residents to their community, including municipal government, programs and services.

The current membership is available on Halifax.ca

DISCUSSION

2023 Work Plan

The Committee did not create a 2024 Work Plan and chose to continue to be guided by the three priorities outlined their 2023 Work Plan (Attachment 2). The Committee received presentations from community members, groups and organizations, Committee members, and Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM) staff to better inform the Committee on issues around these priorities.

The three priorities for learning and action were specified in the 2023 Work Plan:

Priority 1: Built Form – Accessibility standards of current and future HRM infrastructure projects, accessibility of sidewalks, and accessibility of HRM-owned infrastructure

Priority 2: AAC Engagement Throughout the Municipal Budget Planning Process

Priority 3: Accessible Parking in HRM

Summary of Activities

The Accessibility Advisory Committee's business for the period covering January 15, 2024 to November 18, 2024 included the following:

- 2 presentations from members of the public
- 3 joint presentations from staff and members of the public
- 4 Committee led discussions
- 5 staff presentations

The Committee also has a standing information report titled *Memorandum from the Legislative Assistant re: Requests to Present to the Accessibility Advisory Committee*.

The activities of the Accessibility Advisory Committee were guided by the Administrative Order 2017-005-GOV, *Respecting the Advisory Committee on Accessibility in the Halifax Regional Municipality* and by the Accessibility Advisory Committee 2023 Work Plan.

Further information on the Summary of Activities is outlined in the Attachment 1.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

No financial implications identified.

RISK CONSIDERATION

No risk consideration identified.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The Accessibility Advisory Committee is comprised of 8 citizen members and 3 Councillors. Meetings are live webcast on Halifax.ca. The agenda, reports, video, and minutes of the Committee are posted on Halifax.ca.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

No environmental implications identified.

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

Administrative Order Number 2017-005-GOV, *Respecting the Advisory Committee on Accessibility in the Halifax Regional Municipality*

Reporting

15. The Committee shall submit a written report of activities to the Executive Standing Committee during the first quarter of each year.

16. The Chair, or designate, may present the annual report to a meeting of the Executive Standing Committee.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 – Summary of Activities

Attachment 2 – Accessibility Advisory Committee 2023 Work Plan

Report Prepared by: Elizabeth Macdonald, Legislative Assistant, Municipal Clerk's Office 902.497.7548

ATTACHMENT 1

SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES

The Committee determined they needed to be better informed about priority issues identified below. Thus, the Committee received presentations from community members, groups and organizations, Committee Members, and HRM staff to better inform the Committee on issues around these priorities.

Committee led discussions and information reports before the Committee are also listed.

PRIORITY 1

Built Form – Accessibility standards of current and future HRM infrastructure projects, accessibility of sidewalks, and accessibility of HRM-owned infrastructure

Presentations:

Date	Topic	Community Presenter	HRM Staff Presenter	Committee Member
April 22	HRM Accessibility Strategy Consultation (<i>Committee provided feedback and advised on the proposed strategy</i>)		Melissa Myers, Accessibility Advisor	
June 3	Snow Removal in HRM		Steven York, Manager, Winter Operations & Training	
June 3 & August 19	Temporary Pedestrian Travel Paths Through Work Sites (<i>Committee provided feedback and advised on the proposed strategy</i>)		Crysta Cumming, Manager, Engineer Design	
June 17	Slayter Street and Connections Local Street Bikeway Project (<i>Committee provided feedback and advised on the proposed strategy</i>)	Courtney Pyne, Team Lead – Senior Traffic & Transportation Engineer, WSP Canada	Maria Jacobs, Active Transportation Planner	
July 15	Updated Accessibility Strategy: Draft Recommendations		Melissa Myers, Accessibility Advisor	
August 6	Alderney Drive Functional Plan (<i>Committee provided feedback and advised on the proposed strategy</i>)	Courtney Pyne, Team Lead – Senior Traffic & Transportation Engineer, WSP Canada & Brianna Rietzel, Transportation Engineer-in-Training, WSP Canada	Maria Jacobs, Active Transportation Planner	
August 6	Wright's Cove Transit Terminal (<i>Committee provided feedback and advised on the proposed strategy</i>)	Alana O'Halloran, Associate, Arcadis & Charlie Haong, Transit Architecture Lead, Arcadis	Matthew Glynn, Project Manager, Facility Renewal	

PRIORITY 2

AAC Engagement Throughout the Municipal Budget Planning Process.

Presentations:

Date	Topic	Community Presenter	HRM Staff Presenter	Committee Member
N/A				

PRIORITY 3

Accessible Parking in the HRM

Presentations:

Date	Topic	Community Presenter	HRM Staff Presenter	Committee Member
N/A				

PLANNING AND EXECUTING ANNUAL TOWN HALL

The Office of Diversity and Inclusion, African Nova Scotian Affairs Integration Office recommended that the Accessibility Advisory Committee not proceed with a 2024 Town Hall due to the 2024 Municipal Election. This decision was in line with the Committee's previous agreement to not put forward a 2024 Work Plan.

Presentations not related to an identified priority:

Date	Topic	Community Presenter	HRM Staff Presenter	Committee Member
February 26	Invisible Disabilities Presentation	Kelsey Green, Complex Trauma Canada		
February 26	Sail Able Nova Scotia	Kevin Penny and Jamie Rygiel, Sail Able Nova Scotia		
October 7	HRM's Approach to Homelessness: Planning for Winter and Other Updates		Max Chauvin, Director, Housing and Homelessness	

COMMITTEE LED DISCUSSIONS

Date	Topic
January 15	2023 Town Hall Debrief
June 3 & June 17	Discussion of 2024 Work Plan
July 15	Work Plan Discussion
November 18	Discussion of 2025 Work Plan

INFORMATIONS REPORTS

Date	Title
Standing Item	Memorandum from the Legislative Assistant re: Requests to Present to the Accessibility Advisory Committee

Advisory Committee on Accessibility in Halifax Regional Municipality 2023 Work Plan

The duties of the Accessibility Advisory Committee are specified in sections 6-9 of Administrative Order 2017-005-GOV, *Respecting the Advisory Committee on Accessibility in the Halifax Regional Municipality*ⁱ, as written below:

Duties of the Committee

- 6. *The Committee shall advise Council, through the Executive Standing Committee, on matters related to persons with disabilities as follows:*
 - a) *review and monitor existing and proposed Municipal by-laws to promote full participation of persons with disabilities, except for Package B respecting the Regional Centre Secondary Municipal Planning Strategy, the Regional Centre Land Use By-law, and any necessary amendments to existing planning documents arising from Package B;*
 - b) *identify and advise on the accessibility of existing and proposed municipal services and facilities;*
 - c) *advise and make recommendations about strategies designed to achieve the objectives of the Committee;*
 - d) *receive and review information directed to it by Council and its committees, and to make recommendations as requested; and*
 - e) *advise Council on disability issues that may have an impact on the budget planning process through the Budget Committee of the Whole process.*
- 7. *To advise business units in responding to issues and concerns of persons with disabilities, when requested to do so by the Chief Administrative Officer.*
- 8. *To host community consultations related to accessibility in the Municipality, including an annual Town Hall Meeting, and report to the Executive Standing Committee on the issues identified through such community consultations.*
- 9. *Significant municipal matters, plans and programs having an impact on persons with disabilities and the disability community shall be referred to the Committee for its consideration and recommendations to Regional Council through the Executive Standing Committee, except for Package B respecting the Regional Centre Secondary Municipal Planning Strategy, the Regional Centre Land Use By-law, and any necessary amendments to existing planning documents arising from Package B.*

To effectively carry out the duties outlined above, members of the Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC) will gain a deeper understanding of the programs, services, and strategies relating to persons with disabilities and accessibility within the Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM), and provide advice on the impact in the community to HRM staff and the Executive Standing Committee.

The three items listed in the Subcategories/Action column listed below were identified at the July 2023 AAC meeting as priorities for 2023. The actions listed in the Performance Outcomes column indicate the AAC’s desire to convert learning objectives to action.

Subcategories/Action	Alignment with Terms of Reference	Resources required, other service providers, Government, Funds, etc.	Time Frame	Desired Outcome	Performance Indicators: Progress Tracking
Planning and Executing Annual Town Hall	Section 8	<p>Expertise and support of staff members of HRM (Accessibility Advisor, Office of Diversity & Inclusion/ANSAIO, Parks & Recreation, Halifax Public Libraries, Customer Contact Centres, Government Relations & External Affairs, and Municipal Clerk's Office), Committee members, and external partners in the planning and execution of the Annual Town Hall.</p> <p>Annual Town Hall Budget Line of \$10,000</p>	2023	<p>Committee members will work with HRM staff and external partners to plan and execute The Annual Town Hall.</p> <p>The Annual Town Hall will serve as an opportunity for Business Units of the HRM to provide information to the community on programs, services, and strategies relating to accessibility, and for the community to provide feedback to the HRM on the impact of these programs, services, and strategies.</p>	Committee members will work with HRM staff in the planning and hosting of the 2023 Annual Town Hall and forward the report to Executive Standing Committee.
Priority 1: Built Form – Accessibility standards of current and future HRM infrastructure projects, accessibility of sidewalks, and accessibility of HRM-owned infrastructure	Sections 6 (a)-(c)	Expertise of staff members of HRM (Planning & Development, Property, Fleet & Environment, Public Works, Parks and Recreation) with knowledge about programs, services, strategies, and by-laws relating to accessibility standards for HRM infrastructure projects, accessibility of sidewalks, and accessibility of HRM-owned infrastructure.	2023	<p>Committee members will receive information about programs, services, strategies, and by-laws relating to accessibility standards for HRM infrastructure projects, accessibility of sidewalks, and accessibility of HRM-owned infrastructure through presentations and consultations at Committee meetings with emphasis on the following topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Scope and application of accessibility standards in HRM construction projects - Spring Garden Road recapitalization project 	<p>Committee members will receive presentations from Business Units regarding this priority area.</p> <p>Where data regarding these issues is lacking within the scope of the Halifax Regional Municipality, the Committee will forward motions to the Executive Standing Committee regarding collection of data for evidence-based decision making.</p>

Subcategories/Action	Alignment with Terms of Reference	Resources required, other service providers, Government, Funds, etc.	Time Frame	Desired Outcome	Performance Indicators: Progress Tracking
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Decision-making processes for placement of accessible HRM-owned infrastructure - Standardizing placements of accessible features in HRM-owned buildings - Role of the Accessibility Advisory Committee in addressing accessibility issues of infrastructure projects - Accountability measures throughout each topic <p>The Committee will provide information about issues facing persons with disabilities and relating to accessibility on these topics to HRM staff, and to Regional Council through the Executive Standing Committee.</p>	
Priority 2: AAC Engagement Throughout the Municipal Budget Planning Process	Sections 5 (d) & 6 (e)	Expertise of staff members of HRM (Finance & Asset Management, Legal and Legislative Services) with knowledge about policies, processes, and strategies relating to the HRM budget planning process.	Starting no later than the fall of 2023 – spring of 2024	<p>Committee members will receive information about policies, processes, and strategies relating to the HRM budget planning process, and work with HRM staff to determine how the Committee can advise on accessibility/disability issues throughout the budget process.</p> <p>Emphasis will be placed on the following topics:</p>	<p>Committee members will receive presentations from/participate in consultations with Business Units regarding this priority area.</p> <p>Committee members will work with Business Units to determine processes for advising Regional Council on accessibility/disability issues that may have an impact on the budget planning process through the Budget Committee of the Whole process.</p>

Subcategories/Action	Alignment with Terms of Reference	Resources required, other service providers, Government, Funds, etc.	Time Frame	Desired Outcome	Performance Indicators: Progress Tracking
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Receiving an overview of the budget planning process at large - Determining how the AAC can be engaged in the overarching budget planning process to advise on accessibility/disability issues - Determining how accessibility is prioritized or embedded within the budget planning process <p>The Committee will advise Regional Council on the outcomes of these conversations through the Executive Standing Committee.</p>	Where data regarding these issues is lacking within the scope of the Halifax Regional Municipality, the Committee will forward motions to the Executive Standing Committee regarding collection of data for evidence-based decision making.
Priority 3: Accessible Parking in the HRM	Sections 6 (b) & (c)	Expertise of staff members of HRM (Parking Services, Public Works, Planning & Development, and Property, Fleet & Environment) with knowledge about programs, services, and strategies relating to accessible parking and alignment with bylaws in the HRM.	2023	<p>Committee members will receive information about programs, services, and strategies relating to accessible parking and alignment with bylaws in the HRM through presentations at Committee meetings, with emphasis on the following topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Accessible parking space placement/process for selection of parking spaces - Monitoring of use and enforcement of accessible parking spaces in alignment with bylaws 	<p>Committee members will receive a presentations from Business Units regarding this priority area.</p> <p>Where data regarding these issues is lacking within the scope of the Halifax Regional Municipality, the Committee will forward motions to the Executive Standing Committee regarding collection of data for evidence-based decision making.</p>

Subcategories/Action	Alignment with Terms of Reference	Resources required, other service providers, Government, Funds, etc.	Time Frame	Desired Outcome	Performance Indicators: Progress Tracking
				The Committee will provide information on these topics to Regional Council through the Executive Standing Committee.	

ⁱ [Administrative Order 2017-005-GOV, Respecting the Advisory Committee on Accessibility in the Halifax Regional Municipality | Halifax.ca](#)