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**HRM Accessibility &
Inclusion Strategy**



Nova Scotia Accessibility Act


- In 2015, NS government public consultations on the creation of a Nova Scotia Persons with Disabilities Act
- In 2017, the legislation passed becoming the Accessibility Act
- Two prescriptions:
 1. Creation of an Accessibility Advisory Committee
 2. Accessibility plan per city/municipality



Built Environment



Employment



Public Transportation & Infrastructure



Information & Communication



Goods & Services



Education

2018 HRM Accessibility Public Consultations



Transportation

- Improve accessible transportation
- Clear obstructions from sidewalks and parking spaces during all seasons
- Commit/implement a consistent curb cut standard
- Ensure accessible parking spots are truly accessible



Recreation

- Expand recreation programming and offer subsidises
- Increase number of staff and train them on accommodating persons with disabilities
- Promote and improve accessible recreation facilities to ensure access for everyone



Buildings

- Improve housing conditions, ensure that new housing is accessible, and that it meets building codes
- Develop an auditing and reporting system for repairs
- Control housing costs for immigrants



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HRM Business Unit Accessibility Questionnaire

- 21 divisions participated
- 4 general questions regarding their unit to gauge overall accessibility:
 1. Does your division work internally or externally within HRM?
 2. Does your unit/division provide accessible services?
 3. Do you believe your services are currently meeting the needs of individuals with disabilities within HRM?
 4. Does your division plan to implement or improve their accessibility services?

HRM Business Unit Accessibility Questionnaire



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Diversity & Inclusion Framework

- The [Diversity & Inclusion Framework](#) outlines what diversity and inclusion means to the Halifax Regional Municipality.
- The Framework is a roadmap designed to assist business units in actioning diversity and inclusion initiatives
- The Accessibility & Inclusion Strategy was modeled on the 5 main goals of the framework and was developed from consultations with the public and the HRM Business Units



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Accessibility Strategic Objectives

1	Inclusive public service	To ensure that individuals with disabilities can easily access inclusive and equitable municipal services, programs, and facilities without substantial barriers.
2	Safe, respectful and inclusive work environment	To have a diverse and inclusive workplace accessible to all employees, which provides and supports the accommodations requested by employees.
3	Equitable employment	To have a skilled workforce that includes persons with disabilities in a variety of positions..
4	Meaningful partnerships	To develop positive and respectful internal and external partnerships that include disability organizations who contribute to improving accessibility in HRM.
5	Accessible information and communication	To provide accessible information, in a way that educates individuals on the accessible services that are offered and how to access these services.



Accessibility & Inclusion Strategy

- The strategy contains recommended action items from within all 5 framework goals, and were developed to align with the NS Accessibility Act
- The strategy is designed to follow the Accessibility Directorate's goal of an accessible Nova Scotia by 2030



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DRAFT RECCOMENDATIONS

Built Environment

Description

Adopt Rick Hansen gold certification for future infrastructure using the CSA accessibility standards in HRM (e.g., curb cuts, public washrooms, accessible parking spaces) [e.g. Over 10 years]

Develop a review system to audit buildings, public facilities, and recreational parks/playgrounds to assess when repairs or upgrades are needed to maintain accessibility [e.g. 2-4 years]



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DRAFT RECCOMENDATIONS

Employment

Description

Collect and maintain information from employment equity reports which indicates the number of individuals employed in HRM who self identify as having a disability [e.g. 1- 2 years]

Establish hiring procedures which requires defining specific accommodations for individuals with disabilities on job postings within HRM, including accommodations available through the interview process (e.g., if a scribe is needed, etc.) [e.g.1-2 years]

DRAFT RECCOMENDATIONS

Employment

Description

Develop corporate training which educates hiring managers about understanding workplace accessibility for employees with disabilities [e.g.2-4 years]

Establish a partnership with external partners (e.g., universities and colleges) to provide HRM work placements and internships that are available for students with disabilities [e.g.1-2 years]

Compile internal list of accommodations provided to employees with disabilities (e.g., visual, physical, neurodevelopmental, etc.) [e.g. 2-4 years]



DRAFT RECCOMENDATIONS

Employment

Description

Review current hiring practices and ensure that they are providing employment to individuals with disabilities [e.g. 2-4 years]

Develop a procedure to share municipal job postings with agencies who support individuals with disabilities seeking employment [e.g. 1-2 years]



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Goods & Services

Description

Ensure that all signage, walkways, and equipment to beaches, parks, playgrounds, and recreational facilities (e.g., proper gymnasium flooring for para sports) are accessible for individuals with disabilities [e.g. Over 10 years]

Increase the presence/frequency of transit & paratransit services to beaches, parks, and recreational facilities [e.g. 4-8 years]



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Goods & Services

Description

Improve services & operations (e.g., number of recreational support staff) to reflect the demand for accessible recreation [e.g. 2-4 years]

Increase training for recreation staff on how to accommodate persons with disabilities [e.g. 2-4 years]



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Information & Communication

Description

Facilitate relationships between business units and accessibility community stakeholders (e.g., CNIB, Autism Nova Scotia, etc.) to improve information sharing in regard to municipal services [e.g. 4-8 years]

Develop guide for HRM promotional materials which make them accessible to individuals with disabilities [e.g. 1-2 years]

Establish dialogue between Accessibility Directorate and HRM regarding accessibility in the municipality and compliance with the Provincial Accessibility Act [e.g. 4-8 years]



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DRAFT RECCOMENDATIONS

Information & Communication

Description

Align D&I Business Unit goals with the actions outlined in the Accessibility and Inclusion Strategy [e.g. 2-4 years]

Establish partnership between the accessibility advisor and business unit directors to conduct annual business unit accessibility reviews [e.g. 1-2 years]

Develop an accessibility policy and procedures for HRM in accordance with Accessibility Strategy [e.g. 2-4 years]

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Information & Communication

Description

Make the municipality's internet and intranet websites and web content conform to the WCAG 2.0 format (Minimum Level AA- including job postings on Brass Ring) [e.g. 2-4 years]

Ensure plain language and clear format, for all HRM communications [e.g. 1-2 years]

Update accessibility page on the HRM website to better provide information on accessibility in the municipality [e.g. 1-2 years]



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DRAFT RECCOMENDATIONS

Public Transportation & Transportation Infrastructure

Description

Implement Mobile Data Computer Software, online booking, and automatic fare systems to improve Access-a-bus booking service [e.g. 1-2 years]

Develop system for booking accessible transportation within HRM (i.e., accessible taxis, access-a-bus, regular bus, ferries) [e.g. 4-8 years]



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DRAFT RECCOMENDATIONS

Public Transportation & Transportation Infrastructure

Description
Develop passenger survey regarding accessible services to measure success [e.g. 1-2 years]
Ensure all bus stops follow accessible standards (e.g., well-maintained shelters) [e.g. Over 10 years]
Increase public awareness, to the disability community, around snow removal [e.g. 4-8 years]
Increase number of accessible taxis and/or have an alternative provider for accessible cabs in HRM [e.g. Over 10 years]



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