

HALIFAX

P.O. Box 1749
Halifax, Nova Scotia
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Item No. 2
Halifax Regional Council
January 12, 2016

TO: Mayor Savage and Members of Halifax Regional Council

SUBMITTED BY: Original Signed

Councillor Wayne Mason, Chair, Community Planning and Economic
Development Standing Committee

DATE: December 18, 2015

SUBJECT: Welcoming Newcomers Action Plan

INFORMATION REPORT

ORIGIN

Motion passed at the Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee meeting on December 17, 2015

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

Section 4(c) of the Committee's Terms of Reference – 'The Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee shall oversee the Municipality's Economic Plan, Economic Prosperity Indicators and Immigration Action Plan by overseeing the progress of the Municipality's Immigration Action Plan and related initiatives.'

BACKGROUND

A staff report was provided to the Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee at the Committee's December 17, 2015 meeting.

DISCUSSION

The Committee considered the report and passed a motion to send this report to Regional Council as an information item.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Financial implications are addressed in the attached staff report.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Community engagement is addressed in the attached staff report.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 'A' - Staff report dated December 7, 2015

A copy of this report can be obtained online at <http://www.halifax.ca/council/agendasc/cagenda.php> then choose the appropriate meeting date, or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 902.490.4210, or Fax 902.490.4208.

Report Prepared by: Sheilagh Edmonds, Legislative Assistant, (902) 490-6520



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Item No.
Community Planning and Economic Development
17 December 2015

TO: Chair and Members of Community Planning and Economic Development

Original Signed

SUBMITTED BY:

Maggie MacDonald, Managing Director, Government Relations and External
Affairs

DATE: December 7, 2015

SUBJECT: Welcoming Newcomers Action Plan

ORIGIN

May 10, 2005 Halifax Regional Council adopted a vision for immigration.

October 18, 2005 Halifax Regional Council was provided an Information Report and accompanying HRM Immigration Action Plan.

April 30, 2013 Halifax Regional Council directed staff to provide a report outlining the benefits and costs of having HRM negotiate a funding agreement with Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) for 3-year funding, to house the Local Immigration Partnership (LIP) Coordinator.

June 25, 2013 Halifax Regional Council:

1. Approved the updated Welcoming Newcomers Action Plan
2. Authorized staff to seek funding in the amount of \$160,473 from Citizenship and Immigration Canada for 3 year funding, to administer the part time Local Immigration Partnership Coordinator.

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

The Council may expend money required by the Municipality for promotion and attraction of institutions, industries and businesses, the stabilization and expansion of employment opportunities and the economic development of the Municipality.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the CPED forward the Welcoming Newcomers Action Plan update to Regional Council

BACKGROUND

Halifax Regional Municipality's first Immigration Action Plan was endorsed by Regional Council in 2005 along with a vision which states:

"Halifax Regional Municipality is a welcoming community where immigration is supported and encouraged. Halifax Regional Municipality will work with other levels of government and community partners to increase our collective cultural, social and economic diversity by welcoming immigrants to our community".

The plan was updated in June of 2013, and initiatives were identified which continue to move the Municipality towards being a more welcoming community to newcomers and residents alike. This Council approved updated plan was renamed "HRM's Welcoming Newcomers Action Plan.

Regional Council authorized staff to seek funding from CIC for 3 years, to administer a part time Local Immigration Partnership Coordinator. This update will also reflect LIP work up to September 2015.

The LIP Coordinator is a part time position funded by CIC to work on the following initiatives over the next 3 years (September 2013 – March 31, 2016):

- Develop a multi-sectorial partnership at the local community level, ensuring newcomer needs are integrated into the community planning process, identify community-specific strategic priorities, and implement action plans to improve newcomer outcomes;
- Provide coordination to the partnership;
- Develop indicators and report back on progress;
- Research best practices;
- Leverage partnerships within the community;
- Facilitate HRM staff meetings and organize community forum(s); and
- Take lead on education & promotion around the welcoming community initiative.

Local Immigration Partnership funding is meant to complement existing activities and assist to integrate and optimize programs and services to newcomers. In addition, the LIP initiative focusses on current successes in the community, working with what is already in place, and support organizations as they develop services to best meet the needs of newcomers to Halifax. Staff have submitted an application to the federal government for renewal of Local Immigration Partnership funding for the next three years.

DISCUSSION

Welcoming Newcomer Plan

The purpose of the Welcoming Newcomers Action Plan is to identify the outcomes and measures needed to achieve success in integrating and retaining newcomers and creating a welcoming and friendly community for all. The plan identifies five key outcomes for Business Units to track over a five year period.

HRM's Community Planning & Economic Development Standing Committee Terms of Reference, section 3.2.3 states the purpose of the Committee includes the oversight of the progress of HRM's Immigration Action Plan and related initiatives. Therefore, staff committed to providing regular updates to the committee on progress while implementing the updated five year plan. This report serves as an update on the above mentioned initiatives from June 2014 to September 2015.

The following will highlight some of the more recent activities that support the Welcoming Newcomers Plan. A full update of activities is attached.

Welcoming Newcomers Outcome 1: HRM communications tools are developed to serve and represent diverse groups:

Welcoming Newcomers Guide

Online Newcomers guide is completed and will be updated on a regular basis. Working with the LIP Advisory committee for ongoing evaluation of the guide to ensure it is meeting the needs of newcomers looking for information on municipal and community information. See http://www.halifax.ca/newcomers/index.php?output=xml_no_dtd&site=NSMUN_HRM&client=NSMUN_HRM&proxystylesheet=NSMUN_HRM&q=Newcomers

Rack Cards:

Welcoming Newcomer Rack Cards have now been translated into Nepali, Farsi, Mandarin and Arabic. These cards need to be printed and when done they will be made available at the airport, ISANS, Libraries and community centers and other locations where newcomers have easy access. English versions of the rack cards have been distributed.

Welcoming Newcomers Outcome 2: HRM programs and services support a welcoming community

Representation on municipal committees and boards:

In 2015 targeted awareness and information on HRM recruitment session were held with the African Nova Scotian and Immigrant communities. This will continue into 2016. Through a LIP event "Get to know your Municipality" workshops were held on volunteering and how municipal government works. The municipality also has done outreach with the Multicultural Association of Nova Scotia (MANS) and the Immigrant Settlement Association of Nova Scotia (ISANS) on voting for permanent residents and applying for boards and committees.

Welcoming Newcomers Outcome 3: HRM celebrates and enables a variety of cultural and creative opportunities

Event Funding:

HRM will implement 3 new streams of event grant programs for the 2015/16 fiscal. Community and Cultural programs are governed by the Regional Event Administrative Order 2014-021-GOV, and will include Community Celebrations, Establish Community Events, Significant Anniversaries and Cultural Events.

The Tourism/ Economic Grant programs are governed by the Marketing Levy Special Event Reserve (MLSER) Administrative Order 2015-020-GOV, and will include Signature Events, Tourism Events, Emerging Events and Major Hosting Events.

Both large scale and smaller community events continue to offer volunteer opportunities from agencies such as the YWCA Immigration Centre, Fusion, and the Halifax Partnership. This interaction provides an opportunity for newcomers to meet other residents that share a common arts and culture or sporting interest, and helps establish a sense of belonging in the community.

HRM is currently implementing a more proactive approach to audience attraction and retention for its civic events program. By offering more youthful and dynamic elements in event programming, universities in

Halifax are engaged with HRM to create partnerships that offer unique volunteer opportunities to the growing international student population.

Events play an important role in the development of some ethno-cultural groups – once again HRM received applications for grant funding from Jamaican, German, Caribbean, and Acadian non-profit groups whose revenues are sustained and whose profile is enhanced through their hosting or participation in a local festival. Examples include the Gaia Latina, Multicultural Festival, and the Prismatic Arts Festival. Although these groups may be small in size, these events appear to have a significant impact on the participant group and help with deepening their connection to the broader community. In addition, HRM will open the third intake in January 2016 for the professional arts grant program which increases support (\$360,000) for creative opportunities across all communities.

Welcome Barbeque:

In 2015 the Welcome Barbeque for Newcomers celebrated its 10th anniversary. This event continues to grow in attendance each year and HRM provides both financial support and facilitation services. In 2013 the volunteer event committee established themselves as a not for profit society and were eligible to apply to the Festivals and Event funding program for the event in 2015. In some cases, events become the rationale for communities to form a non-profit organization, fostering ancillary programs and services which evolve over time to serve the community. In addition, this event builds awareness within the newcomer community to the corporate sponsorship network.

Welcoming Newcomers Outcome 4: HRM maximizes opportunities for increased stakeholder alignment, awareness, engagement and newcomer retention through partner organizations

Mayor's Welcome Reception:

The Mayor's Welcoming Reception for International Students was held on September 12, 2015. More than 300 international students were welcomed by Major Mike Savage, Nova Scotia Minister of Immigration and their university and community college presidents. This event is aimed at introducing International Students to their new city including information booths from various service providers. In addition to the partners who had booths last year, new partners were approached this year, including Nova Scotia Department of Immigration and the Conseil Communautaire du Grand-Havre representing the Francophone Community in Nova Scotia.

Local Immigration Partnership:

- A new part time LIP Coordinator was hired in August 2015.
- The LIP Advisory Committee met on a regular basis and includes representatives from ISANS, YMCA, Halifax Regional School Board, Greater Halifax Partnership, NS Department of Health & Wellness and the NS Office of Immigration.
- Sub-committees have been created around four themes of 1) Social & Cultural Inclusion; 2) Economic Integration & Growth; 3) Health & Well Being; and 4) Education. Subcommittees created actions plans and have been meeting on a regular basis.
- Priorities for the project to March 31, 2015 are:
 - Design and implementation our communications strategy which will
 - Enhance communication between newcomers and service providers
 - Enhance and expedite intra-sector communication
 - Facilitate discussions and collaboration
 - Create communication channels with employers
 - Enhance the information sharing as to current and emerging needs so as to create a broader intra and inter-sector collaboration with a better capacity of response

- Implementation and evaluation of subcommittee actions.
- Publication of the Welcoming Newcomers Rack cards in Mandarin, Farsi, Arabic and Nepali (March 2016)
- Overall project evaluation (March 2016)
- The LIP coordinator has been in communication with:
 - Other LIPs across the Atlantic Region (St. John's, Newfoundland; Fredericton, New Brunswick; and Moncton, New Brunswick) to share best practices and resources.
 - Manager of Immigration Partnerships of the Rural-Urban Immigration Pilot Project for Cape Breton to share best practices and resources.
 - Communications Manager of Pathways to Prosperity Partnership, which is a Pan-Canadian alliance dedicated to primary and secondary research both at a national and regional level to help create more welcoming communities and promote the economic, social and civic integration of newcomers.
 - Communication with the coordinators of the 64 LIPs across the country through BaseCamp, with whom best practices are shared, current challenges are discussed and ideas are exchanged on a regular basis.
 - The LIP Coordinator sits on the Halifax Languages Consortium. The LIP will help coordinate their efforts with the municipality and the province.
 - Manager of Service Delivery and the Community Engagement Coordinator of Big Brothers Big Sisters of Greater Halifax to discuss a new initiative that will focus on serving newcomers' families.

Event Participation/Coordination

The LIP Coordinator has participated in the planning and/or delivery of the following events:

- Health Forum hosted by the LIP Health and Wellbeing Committee

Welcoming Newcomers Outcome 5: HRM staff value diversity and are provided with the appropriate tools to serve diverse client groups

- With the hiring of the Manager for Diversity and Inclusion, work has begun on the development of a regional diversity and inclusion framework.

Cultural Competency Training for Staff:

- The LIP Coordinator along with other members of the Diversity and Inclusion office developed and hosted a one day cultural competency workshop for HRM staff.
- Regional Police continue to provide diversity training to all members annually during block training.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications at this time.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Individual projects described within the body of the report have included public consultation of various degrees, including the Newcomers Welcome Guide and Rack Card; Diversity and Inclusion Framework; and Local Immigration Partnership initiatives.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

None

ALTERNATIVES

That the report not be accepted at the request of further information.

ATTACHMENTS

Detailed Welcoming Newcomers Action Plan Update

A copy of this report can be obtained online at <http://www.halifax.ca/commcoun/index.php> then choose the appropriate Community Council and meeting date, or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 902.490.4210, or Fax 902.490.4208.

Report Prepared by: Tracey Jones-Grant Manager, Diversity and Inclusion 902.490.3677

Appendix 1 Welcoming Newcomers Action Plan (Approved June 25, 2013)

Outcome 1: HRM communication tools are developed to serve and represent diverse groups		
Goals:	Lead(s):	Status:
1. HRM will complete its Branding Strategy	Corporate Communications	Completed
2. HRM will develop and utilize an immigrant “lens” when developing external communications in an effort to eliminate barriers	Corporate Communications	Developing such a lens needs to be done by those with the subject expertise; Communications can then use it as a lens to assess communication actions and products
3. HRM will continue to make improvements to Halifax.ca in an effort to inform and engage diverse communities. Promotional materials are representative of diversity in their design	Corporate Communications	The Web Transformation Program hosted four sessions for residents from across the municipality, with a diverse balance of participants (demographics) to inform the design and architecture of the new site; Newcomers is included in the new taxonomy
4. HRM will revise the youth portion of HRM’s website in an effort to provide information to immigrant youth and assist with integration	Community & Recreation Services with Corporate Communications	Information related to programming and services as they relate to immigrant youth needs to be reviewed and revised by content owners (P&R) and vetted by GREA; Corporate Communications will assist with editing and publishing
5. HRM will update the Newcomers Guide and make it available on Halifax.ca	GREA Corporate Communications GHP	Complete – ongoing updates for the online Newcomers guide will be done on a regular basis
6. HRM will ensure the Newcomer Guide is made available in remaining four most common languages spoken by newcomers to HRM including: Mandarin, Spanish, Farsi, and Russian	GREA Corporate Communications GHP	Communications - I am unaware of the status of translation of the Guide; Corporate Communications would be involved only in the layout and publishing of any translation
7. HRM will promote 311 as a tool for newcomers to get Municipal program & service information translated	Corporate Communications Community & Recreation	Corporate Communications applies 311 promotion in most products; wherever

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	Services	possible and as appropriate, 311 will be promoted to ensure language is not a barrier to accessing municipal programs and services
8. HRM citizen contact centres and recreation facilities will be used to provide information to assist newcomers	Community & Recreation Services	Ongoing
9. HRM will create a French Solid Waste Householder Guide, and promote the Arabic and Mandarin versions	Solid Waste & Corporate Communications	Mandarin completed. Translation services for Arabic in progress.
10. HRM will work with the Greater Halifax Partnership (GHP) develop communications related to the attraction and retention of immigrants	GREA/GHP	Work continues through the HRM LIP through the Economic Integration sub committee

Outcome 2: HRM programs and services support a welcoming community		
Goals:	Lead(s):	Status:
11. HRM will work with immigrants and Immigrant Services Association of Nova Scotia (ISANS) to identify specific challenges faced by newcomers and improve municipal service provision	GREA	Work continues with the HRM LIP. Education subcommittee working on a "barriers" document; Cultural Proficiency workshop hosted for service providers; Health forum hosted by Health Committee; Advisory committee has identified communication as a priority to March 21/15. Focus will be on how to support service providers and HRM on addressing challenges faced by newcomers settling in Halifax.

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<p>12. HRM will continue to review areas which have the potential to impact demands for recreation and leisure infrastructure and resources on an ongoing basis. This review will include the need for culturally specific programs.</p>	<p>Community & Recreation Services</p>	<p>Individual review of existing and proposed cultural facilities and program delivery in advance of process to conduct Cultural Spaces Plan: i.e. Khyber building, Shakespeare by the Sea building, Point Pleasant Lodge</p>
<p>13. HRM Community Recreation Services regards equal access to their programs and services as paramount. Outreach/Accessible/Inclusive Services is identified as a strategic outcome within the recreation blue print.</p>	<p>Community & Recreation Services</p>	<p>Fun Van implemented in 2015 Increased opportunities for free programming including inline skating, biking, etc at the Emera Oval, continuation of free swimming lessons at beaches Additional open gym times have been offered</p>
<p>14. Language interpretation services will be made available through a contract agency, at HRM's citizen contact centres</p>	<p>Community & Recreation Services (note: this is now with Operations Support)</p>	<p>Ongoing, provide translation in over 150 languages.</p>
<p>15. HRM will increase efforts to involve diverse representation on municipal committees and boards in alignment with the Council approved Public Appointment Policy adopted in 2011</p>	<p>Regional Council/ City Clerk's Office</p>	<p>Targeted awareness and recruitment specifically to Newcomers (Newcomers open house) and African Nova Scotian community in 2015 will continue into 2016.</p> <p>Workshop on Volunteering in HRM at Newcomers "Get to Know your City" event April 2015</p> <p>Workshop on How Municipal government Works at Newcomers "Get to Know your City" event April 2015</p>

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		<p>Opportunity continues to “self-identify” on applications to Board & Committee</p> <p>Outreach to Multi-Cultural Association of NS and ISANS re: voting for permanent residents and applying to Boards & Committees</p> <p>Public Appointment Analyst Intern – will more formally coordinate outreach to communities across Halifax in 2016</p>
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Outcome 3: HRM celebrates and enables a variety of cultural and creative opportunities		
Goals:	Lead(s):	Status:
The Mayor or designate and Regional Councillors will participate in citizenship ceremonies and welcome newcomers to Halifax	Mayor’s Office/Councillor Support Office	Ongoing
HRM civic events and recreation are inclusive and welcoming HRM will host an annual welcome barbeque and potluck	Community & Recreation Services	<p>HRM Operational Events program (assessment of funding allocations completed and approved) includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning, financial support, delivery and logistical support of cultural and arts festivals and events such as Natal Day, Canada Day, Hopscotch, Halifax Explosion Commemoration • Increased attendance at 2015 Welcome Barbeque event

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased staff support to Volunteer Committee for 2015 event
<p>Through the HRM Community Grants Program and other funding mechanisms, the Municipality will support events that promote community history and diversity</p>	<p>Community & Recreation Services</p>	<p>Phase 1 of cultural artifact inventory project completed, phase 2 initiated</p> <p>100th Anniversary Halifax Explosion Commemoration Committee and Legacy & funding programs</p>
<p>HRM will support artistic diversity, ethno-cultural, indigenous and culturally diverse communities including broad social-economic representation by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Developing the public art policy - Diversifying HRM's public art and events to represent various cultures - Increasing investment in a variety of cultural and creative opportunities in the Regional Centre - Updating HRM's Cultural Strategy - Developing Social Heritage Strategy 	<p>Community & Recreation Services Planning & Infrastructure</p>	<p>Public Art opportunities w/infrastructure improvements (Cenotaph maintenance and Afghanistan inscription, Cogswell Interchange, Fort Needham memorial, Greater Hammonds Plains & Lucasville Memorial)</p> <p>Partnership projects with Sculpture Nova Scotia- Black Cultural Centre, NSCAD</p> <p>Arts Halifax Committee</p> <p>Increased support to Multicultural Festival, Prismatic Arts Festival, Iranian Festivals</p> <p>Realignment and program specific funding in Regional Events Grant Program</p>

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	<p>\$200,000 to Cultural Festivals and Showcases program</p> <p>Interim Grants for Professional Arts Organizations Program</p> <p>Alignment with Federal Canada 150 program</p> <p>Tourism Marketing: increased DH support on major hosting events</p> <p>Ad hoc stakeholder committee, strategic event attraction and retention to align with Provincial Tourism strategy</p>
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Outcome 4: HRM maximizes opportunities for increased stakeholder alignment, awareness, engagement and newcomer retention through partner organizations		
Goals:	Lead(s):	Status:
<p>HRM assist the Greater Halifax Partnership to provide programs and communications related to attraction and retention of immigrants such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Connector Program - Immigration Employer Support Program - Coop and Internship Programs - Mayor's Welcoming Event for International Students - Branding Strategy 	<p>GREA</p>	<p>Brand: The launch of the brand included the website www.Halifaxdefined.ca, this website is a showcase for the new brand an outlines how the new brand was chosen and what the new brand means to the community.</p> <p>The Greater Halifax Partnership changed its name to Halifax Partnership and is now aligned to the new Halifax brand.</p> <p>Halifax Partnership Connector Program: The Partnership has presented upon the</p>

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		<p>benefits of being a Connector at over 100 career, program and networking events so far this fiscal year.</p> <p>Halifax Connector Program results for Q1 and Q2 of 2015-2016 are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 205 new participants (64 immigrants; 85 international students; 56 recent local graduates);• 49 new Connectors;• 96 jobs found (27 immigrants; 39 international students; 30 recent local graduates); and,• 28 speed interviews (3 immigrants; 23 international students; 2 recent local graduates). <p>Since its creation, the Halifax Connector Program has included 1,450 participants and 812 Connectors to create 652 job placements.(April – Sept. 2015)</p> <p>Mayors Welcome Reception: Held on September 12, 2015. More than 300 international students were welcomed by Major Mike Savage, Nova Scotia Minister of Immigration and their University presidents. This event is aimed at introducing International Students to their new city including information booths from various service</p>
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		providers. In addition to the partners who had booths last year, new partners were approached this year, including Nova Scotia Department of Immigration and the Conseil Communautaire du Grand-Havre representing the Francophone Community in Nova Scotia.
HRM will support the development of coordinated strategies and work with community partners in an effort to bring immigrant settlement and integration into broader planning processes	GREA	HRM LIP has been working with partners on significant settlement issues such as Health, Education, Employment and Integration. Work has begun to look at how to support Syrian Refugees (and all Refugees who come to HRM), LIP coordinator is a member of the Diversity and Inclusion team bringing issues related to immigrant services to the table.
HRM's Partners in Policing Cultural Diversity Committee will advance and promote positive relations between HRM Partners in Policing and culturally diverse communities	HRP	We continue to be part of the multicultural working group that meets once a month. Work continues with ISANS in regards to law awareness workshops with newcomers

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Outcome 5: HRM staff value diversity and are provided with the appropriate tools to serve diverse client groups		
Goals:	Lead(s):	Status:
HRM will develop a Corporate Diversity Framework and Strategy inclusive of individual business unit goals and report to the CAO annually	Human Resources (HR)/GREA	Diversity and Inclusion division has been established, Manager hired. Work has begun on the development of the Diversity and Inclusion framework including discussions with Directors and other HRM staff. Best practices research completed, framework outline in draft form.
The Halifax Regional Police Diversity Action Team will support initiatives within the Department to promote and encourage diversity in the workplace	HRP	Diversity Training is delivered to all members annually during block training. All new members receive all diversity training that was delivered to date of hiring
HRM will continue to provide training for customer service and front-line public facing employees in cultural competencies and valuing diversity to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Performance accountabilities for recognizing diversity are developed - Supervisors model appropriate behavior and hold staff accountable 	HR Halifax Regional Police (HRP)	Training is held annually
HRM will strive to employ a workforce that is representative of the population they serve	HR	Ongoing
HRM will continue to utilize the Community Engagement Strategy when consulting with the public, to improve outreach to under-represented groups and those who experience barriers to participation	All Business Units	Ongoing

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<p>HRM internal communications will continue to emphasise the value of a diverse workforce and the benefits of diversity in building a healthy workplace and community</p>	<p>Corporate Communications</p>	<p>Internal communications applies such emphasis wherever possible to ensure accessible language, appropriate visual representation and use of multiple channels to ensure accessibility. Internal communications also works with HR to influence the same outcomes.</p>
<p>HRM will provide staff training to increase awareness and build capacity to communicate clearly and concisely with citizens through plain language correspondence</p>	<p>Corporate Communications</p>	<p>Media training has been provided to Transit, Planning and Development and Transportation & Public Works; Parks & Recreation is pending; HR also offers effective communication skills workshop</p>