



P.O. Box 1749
Halifax, Nova Scotia
B3J 3A5 Canada

Item No. 14.3.1
Halifax Regional Council
May 9, 2017

TO: Mayor Savage and Members of Halifax Regional Council

Original Signed

SUBMITTED BY: _____
Councillor Wayne Mason, Chair, Community Planning & Economic Development
Standing Committee

DATE: April 25, 2017

SUBJECT: Universal Access to Municipal Washroom Facilities

ORIGIN

April 20, 2017 meeting of the Community Planning & Economic Development Standing Committee, Item No. 12.1.1.

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

Community Planning & Economic Development Standing Committee Terms of Reference, section 5 (b) which states: "The Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee shall oversee the Municipality's Community building initiatives in the areas of arts, culture and recreation and related facilities strategies by promoting and enabling access to arts, cultural and recreational facilities that support the Municipality's Community Outcome areas".

RECOMMENDATION

The Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee recommends that Halifax Regional Council direct staff to draft an Administrative Order on universal access to all municipal facilities.

BACKGROUND

A staff report dated March 23, 2016 pertaining to Universal Access to Municipal Washroom Facilities was before the Community Planning & Economic Development Standing Committee for consideration at its meeting held on April 20, 2017.

For further information, please refer to the attached staff report dated March 23, 2016.

DISCUSSION

The Community Planning & Economic considered the staff report dated March 23, 2016 at its meeting held on April 20, 2017 and forwarded the recommendation to Halifax Regional Council as outlined in this report.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

As outlined in the attached staff report dated March 23, 2017.

RISK CONSIDERATION

Not applicable.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The Community Planning & Economic Development Standing Committee meetings are open to public attendance, a live webcast is provided of the meeting, and members of the public are invited to address the Committee for up to five minutes at the end of each meeting during the Public Participation portion of the meeting. The agenda, reports, video, and minutes of the Community Planning & Economic Development Standing Committee are posted on Halifax.ca.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

Not applicable.

ALTERNATIVES

The Community Planning & Economic Development Standing Committee did not discuss alternatives.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Staff report dated March 23, 2016.

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: Liam MacSween, Legislative Assistant, 902.490.6521



P.O. Box 1749
Halifax, Nova Scotia
B3J 3A5 Canada

Attachment 1
Community Planning & Economic Development
April 20, 2017

TO: Chair and Members of Community Planning and Economic
Development Standing Committee

Original Signed

SUBMITTED BY: _____
Peter Stickings, Acting Director, Operations Support

DATE: March 23, 2016

SUBJECT: **Universal Access to Municipal Washroom Facilities**

ORIGIN

On September 15, 2016, Community Planning & Economic Development passed the following motion:

MOVED by Councillor Watts, seconded by Councillor Adams that the Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee request a staff report on how HRM can ensure universal access to municipal washroom facilities. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Community Terms of Reference - Section 5, Oversight - Community Building Initiatives.

Halifax Regional Municipality Charter, section 59(3): In addition to matters specified in this Act or another Act of the Legislature, the Council may adopt policies on any matter that the Council considers conducive to the effective management of the Municipality.

Administrative Order 54, the Procedures for the Development of Administrative Orders, section 8(b): Administrative Orders may be initiated by a resolution of a Community Council or a Standing Committee of the Council by means of a recommendation from the Community Council or Standing Committee to the Council and by a further resolution of the Council directing staff to draft an Administrative Order for consideration by the Council.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee recommend to Regional Council that staff be directed to draft an Administrative Order on universal access to all municipal facilities.

BACKGROUND

The term 'universal' access is generally used to describe the accommodation of all members of society within the built environment.

In 2012, Corporate Facility Design & Construction (CFD&C), in consultation with the Accessibility Advisory Committee, adopted the Canadian Standards Association's (CSA) Standard B651-12 Accessible Design for the Built Environment, as a benchmark to guide all new construction.

Through application of the standard, many barriers have been removed which has improved accessibility at HRM facilities, increasing the independence and inclusion of a wider segment of society. Examples of removing barriers include the provision of door operators, ramps, lever door handles, grab bars, and braille signage. Additional items include lowering of counter tops and controls to meet the requirements of CSA B-651.

DISCUSSION

While design to minimize barriers associated with physical, auditory, visual and cognitive challenges was a starting point, a broader consideration of access to public facilities proposes that washrooms be equitably available to all. Examples include public washrooms designed to accommodate gender neutral access, access for a child with a care-giver, or a person with an attendant.

Some Canadian municipalities have developed policies to ensure a proactive approach to universal access to their municipal facilities. Currently, HRM does not have a written policy to define and ensure universal access to municipal facilities. CFD&C staff work with each client business unit to determine, on a project-by-project basis, their program needs and rely on consultants to design project specific solutions compliant with current codes and standards.

A universal access administrative order, aligned with Regional Council's Priority Areas, would clarify expectations and ensure application in a consistent manner. The administrative order could address constraints and opportunities associated with both existing and new facilities, and include provisions to ensure universal access to municipal washroom facilities.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The financial implications associated with this report will be identified should the recommended action be actioned by Regional Council.

RISK CONSIDERATION

N/A

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Standing Committee meetings are open to the public.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

N/A

ALTERNATIVES

Alternative 1: The Standing Committee could refuse to recommend to Regional Council that staff be directed to draft an Administrative Order. This is not recommended by staff.

Alternative 2: The Standing Committee may choose to recommend to Regional Council that staff be directed to draft an Administrative Order on universal access to all municipal facilities and municipal infrastructures such as parks, playgrounds and sidewalks.

ATTACHMENTS

None

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: Darren Young, A/Senior Project Manager, CFDC 902.476.9295

Report Prepared by: Moira Edmonds, Project Manager, CFDC 902.818.0108
