

**TO:** Mayor Savage and Members of Halifax Regional Council

**SUBMITTED BY:** Original Signed by   
Jacques Dubé, Chief Administrative Officer

**DATE:** April 19, 2021

**SUBJECT:** Accessibility Strategy

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## **ORIGIN**

In 2017, the Province of Nova Scotia passed the *Accessibility Act*. The Act recognizes accessibility as a human right and sets a goal of an accessible Nova Scotia by 2030. The Act prescribes public sector bodies such as municipalities, post-secondary educational institutions, and Crown corporations to:

1. Create an Accessibility Advisory committee to provide support and recommendations to public sector bodies
2. Develop and implement an Accessibility Strategy, which would focus on removing barriers from seven key areas:
  - a. Built Environment
  - b. Education
  - c. Public Transportation and Transportation Infrastructure
  - d. Employment
  - e. Information and Communication
  - f. Goods and Services
  - g. A prescribed activity or undertaking

Coinciding with the release of the Provincial legislation, the Operational Plan for Government Relations and External Affairs for 2015/2016 stated: "Establish a framework and reporting model for Halifax's Inclusive and Accessible initiatives."

October 31, 2017 Regional Council motion (item 14.3.2):

MOVED by Deputy Mayor Craig, seconded by Councillor Whitman

1. The Walk 'n Roll proposal for funding, as submitted, be refused on the grounds that that \$90,000 has already been allocated in the 2017/2018 budget to support the delivery of accessibility related initiatives across the municipality;

2. The Chief Administrative Officer (CAO), through the Diversity and Inclusion office, continue work on HRM's framework and reporting model for Halifax's Inclusive and Accessible initiatives with consultation and input from Walk 'n Roll Halifax, the Accessibility Advisory Committee, and other community organizations and individuals, with the framework to be in alignment with the Council Priority Areas of Healthy, Liveable Communities (Recreation & Leisure), Social Development (Accessible Community), and Transportation (Interconnected & Strategic Growth; A Safe & Accessible Transportation Network); and

3. That the CAO prepare a report outlining progress to date on the accessibility framework.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED,

This motion led to the development of the HRM Accessibility Strategy, identified under the [Office of Diversity & Inclusion Key Deliverables for 2019-20 – 2020/21](#).

### **LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY**

The *Accessibility Act*, S.N.S. 2017, c. 2, subsection 39(2) provides:

39...(2) A municipality, university or organization shall prepare and make publicly available an accessibility plan within one year of being prescribed as a public sector body

The *Halifax Regional Municipality Charter*, S.N.S. 2008, c. 39, subsections 34(1) and 34 (3) provides:

34 (1) The Chief Administrative Officer is the head of the administrative branch of the government of the Municipality and is responsible to the Council for the proper administration of the affairs of the Municipality in accordance with the by-laws of the Municipality and the policies adopted by the Council.

...

(3) The Council shall provide direction on the administration, plans, policies and programs of the Municipality to the Chief Administrative Officer.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that Halifax Regional Council:

1. Adopt the Accessibility Strategy as set out in Attachment 1;
2. Direct the Chief Administrative Officer to carry out the actions contained in the Accessibility Strategy as part of the multi-year budgeting and business planning process; and
3. Request that the Chief Administrative Officer provide annual progress reports on the implementation of the Accessibility Strategy to Regional Council.

### **BACKGROUND**

In 2017, the Province of Nova Scotia passed the Accessibility Act which prescribes public sector bodies, including municipalities, to complete two key items: create an Accessibility Advisory Committee and develop an accessibility plan. Halifax Regional Municipality established its Accessibility Advisory Committee in 1997. The Municipality's current focus is to develop the Accessibility Strategy.

In September 2020, the Office of Diversity and Inclusion/ANSAIO presented a draft of the Accessibility Strategy to the Accessibility Advisory Committee. In January 2021, the draft Accessibility Strategy was presented to the Diversity and Inclusion Leadership Table.

## **DISCUSSION**

The Accessibility Strategy consists of 31 recommendations, the goal being to complete them by 2030 as prescribed in the Accessibility Act. Each recommendation includes a list of strategic actions, the estimated time to complete the actions, the business unit(s) responsible for completing the action(s), and the measures of success for each action.

The recommendations are categorized by the five key goals of the Diversity and Inclusion Framework: Inclusive Public Service; Safe, Respectful, and Inclusive Work Environment; Equitable Employment; Meaningful Partnerships; and Accessible Information and Communication. They also address five of the key areas in the Accessibility Act: Built Environment, Employment, Public Transportation and Infrastructure, Information & Communication, and Goods & Services.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

Regional Council's approval of the Accessibility Strategy will result in an increase in multiple municipal service level standards and therefore require an increase in funding for future operating and base capital program budgets. The specific Action Items listed in the Strategy (Attachment 1), required to meet its Objectives, have been included in the 2021/22 four-year funded capital plan presented to Council February 26, 2021, with the understanding that some project scopes and estimates will fluctuate. Examples of existing capital projects integrating accessibility improvements include:

- HRM Facilities Accessibility project (implementing Rick Hansen standards);
- New Transit Technology (Paratransit booking methods);
- Park Recapitalization;
- Regional Centre AAA Bikeways;
- Bus Stop Accessibility/Improvements;
- Road Safety Improvement;
- Access-A-Bus Replacement

Some of the Strategy's Action Items proposing new HRM programs and processes may be absorbed within current staffing and other capacity. Additional service program delivery outside of current capacity, as well as any new or increased capital work added will require an increase to the average tax bill or reductions within other services. Should provincial legislation for establishing accessibility standards influence the prioritization of recommended accessibility capital work, causing a greater funding and resource pressure on the existing high-risk asset renewal and desired growth projects.

## **RISK CONSIDERATION**

In light of potential impact of COVID-19, the implementation of the strategy could be impeded due to Council priority and direction. However, considering the process adopted in the development of the plan including extensive community engagement, the realization that this is the first time an Accessibility Strategy is being proposed in alignment with Provincial regulations, risks associated with not accepting the proposed strategy, particularly reputational and non-compliance with provincial legislation, may exceed any associated with accepting the recommendations.

## **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

Community engagement was conducted as part of initial project in 2018 and, again, both internally and externally in 2020. The development of the Accessibility and Strategy began in 2018 with a series of 18 public consultations with HRM citizens, which brought in nearly 200 participants. From those consultations,

three themes emerged: Transportation, Recreation, and Buildings. An external facilitator was hired to conduct these consultations.

Following the consultations, a report (Attachment 2) was written to summarize the results of the consultations and the feedback that was received. Following the public consultation, an internal survey was conducted among Municipal employees to gauge business units' current and future accessibility initiatives. Municipal staff had three main points of feedback: the need for improvement on accessibility, the need for better feedback and engagement with the disability community, and the need for additional supports on their accessibility services and initiatives.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

No environmental implications were identified.

### **ALTERNATIVES**

Regional Council may choose not to accept the proposed Accessibility Strategy. This is not recommended as the Nova Scotia Accessibility Act requires all municipalities to have an accessibility strategy.

### **ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment 1: Accessibility Strategy

Attachment 2: HRM's Accessibility and Inclusion Consultation Results

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A copy of this report can be obtained online at [halifax.ca](http://halifax.ca) or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 902.490.4210.

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Attachment 1

# Accessibility Strategy

**Creating an inclusive environment for  
individuals with disabilities within the  
Halifax Regional Municipality**

Melissa Myers  
Office of Diversity & Inclusion/ANSAIO  
April 8, 2021



**HALIFAX**

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# Executive Summary

*Accessibility* is an issue which concerns Nova Scotians of all ages, from those with disabilities to parents travelling with their children in strollers. Furthermore, *disability* is a broad term of self identification for many citizens, describing a variety of needs. With Nova Scotia having the highest rates of disability across Canada, action is needed to drastically improve accessibility.

As such, Nova Scotia has become the third province to enact Accessibility legislation, and in working with the province, the Halifax Regional Municipality is following with this initiative. Although there have been important steps taken in built environment, transportation, and recreation for those requiring accessibility, both the public and business units have identified key areas for improvement and future focus.

The *Accessibility Strategy* builds upon the *Diversity & Inclusion Framework* and Nova Scotia’s *Accessibility Act* to outline 30 action items for improving accessibility and representation for individuals with disabilities. The action items are to be implemented over a 10-year period to align with the provincial *Accessibility Act*. These goals represent a call to action and recognition of the need to create a municipality accessible to all, regardless of physical, mental, or financial ability.



*“The only thing worse than being blind is having sight but no vision”-*

*Hellen Keller*



# Individuals with Disabilities

As an organization, the Halifax Regional Municipality is fortunate to have representation from various ethnicities, cultures and backgrounds – including **individuals with disabilities**.

The word *disability* has a broad definition. Generally, it is a term of self-identification used by those with a range of disabilities including sensory, learning, developmental, psychiatric, cognitive, physical, etc.<sup>1</sup>

It is important to also recognize that individuals may experience different types of barriers due to intersectionality, where facets of people's social and political identities combine to create unique types of discrimination. The path to improving accessibility for those who have a disability requires a shift in how we perceive them. It is important to recognize that although a disability may be a part of an individual, it does not define who they are. Communities must recognize people as diverse and that **intersectionality** may play a part in how a person experiences the world around them.

Once this conceptual shift takes place, the municipality can take steps to make the Halifax region more **accessible** by removing barriers that prevent individuals from easily accessing services and resources.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> City of Ottawa (2009). 2009 City of Ottawa municipal accessibility plan (COMAP). Ottawa: City of Ottawa.

<sup>2</sup> City for All women Initiative (2015). Advancing Equity and inclusion: A guide for municipalities. Ottawa: City for All Women Initiative.

# Disabilities in Nova Scotia

According to the [Canadian Survey on Disability 2017](#), approximately 30 per cent of Nova Scotians over the age of 15 identify as having a disability, an 11 per cent increase from 2012. Furthermore, Nova Scotia has the highest provincial population of individuals with disabilities, with the Canadian average being 22.3 per cent. This survey does not include individuals living in institutions, on Canadian Armed Forces bases, on First Nations reserves, or those living in other collective dwellings.<sup>3</sup>

The four most common disabilities among Nova Scotian adults include pain related disabilities, flexibility issues, mobility, and mental health related disabilities, with almost 20 per cent of individuals identifying as having a pain related disability.

Within the labour force, 55 per cent of surveyed individuals identified as being employed, while 45 per cent of individuals with disabilities were either unemployed or were unable to work or chose not to work due to systematic barriers.

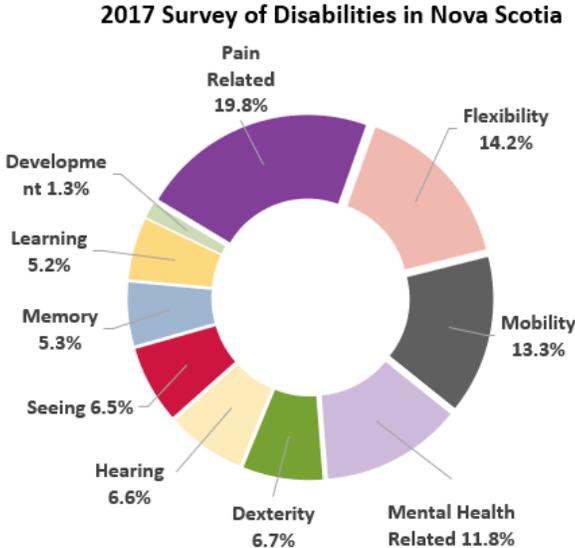


Figure 1 Prevalence of Disability Type in Nova Scotia from the 2017 Canadian Survey on Disability

<sup>3</sup> Statistics Canada (2018). Canadian survey of disabilities 2017. Ottawa: Government of Canada.

# Nova Scotia Accessibility Legislation

In 2015, the Province of Nova Scotia conducted public consultations on the creation of a Nova Scotia Persons with Disabilities Act. This later grew into the *Accessibility Act* which was passed in April 2017, resulting in Nova Scotia becoming the third Canadian province to adopt accessibility legislation.<sup>4</sup>

The Nova Scotian government released the report [\*Access by Design 2030: Achieving an Accessible Nova Scotia\*](#) in 2018, in line with the *Accessibility Act* legislation, the Accessibility Advisory Board, and the public consultations. It outlined how government, communities, and individuals could work together to ensure that Nova Scotia would become completely accessible by 2030.

Although the Act only prescribes the **creation of an accessibility advisory committee** and an **accessibility plan** per city/municipality, the accessibility legislation is to be followed by the enactment of standards related to six key areas:



Built Environment



Goods & Services



Education



Information & Communication



Employment



Public Transportation and Transportation Infrastructure

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<sup>4</sup> Department of Justice (2018). Access by design 2030: achieving an accessible nova scotia. Halifax: Province of Nova Scotia.

# History of Accessible Service Development in the Halifax Region



The journey towards a fully accessible municipality has been ongoing. Since 1996, the [Accessibility Advisory Committee](#) (formerly the Advisory Committee for Persons with Disabilities) has been providing advice to Regional Council on facilitating and promoting access of all residents to the municipality.

Internally, a steady focus on inclusion, diversity, and accessibility led to the creation of the Office of Diversity & Inclusion in 2015 (renamed the Office of Diversity & Inclusion/ANSAIO in 2020), and a tentative draft for an accessibility framework.

In 2017, Halifax Regional Council passed a motion requiring the Office of Diversity & Inclusion to continue work on the framework. The following strategy is based on this previous work and relies upon the 2018 [HRM's Accessibility and Inclusion Consultation Results](#) and input from all business units.

The *Accessibility Strategy* will outline how all business units, employees, and citizens of the Halifax region can continue to improve accessibility and contribute to the goal of a fully accessible province.

# Current Accessibility Initiatives

Below is a summary of the current initiatives. Further details and statistics are provided in Appendix A.

## Halifax Transit

There have been several municipal initiatives to improve areas of accessible transportation in the Halifax region. This has included making changes to various Transit policies, such as allowing service animals on Transit and making physical changes to fixed Transit routes and bus terminals.<sup>5</sup>

Halifax Transit is currently reviewing their Access-A-Bus service and are in the stages of implementing the [Access-A-Bus Continuous Improvement Service Plan](#) to improve and modify the paratransit service. To better serve the municipality, this may include same-day bookings and seamless cancellations<sup>6</sup>.



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*“My son goes to school and needs Access-A-Bus every day. Booking the bus is what I think about all night and it’s the first thing I worry about in the morning when I get up. Our whole lives are centered around trying to get him to school.”*

*-2018 HRM’s Accessibility and Inclusion Public Consultation Results*

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<sup>5</sup> Halifax Transit (2016). Accessible transit service handbook: Guide to Halifax Transit’s accessible service. Halifax: Halifax Regional Municipality.

<sup>6</sup> Halifax Transit (2019). Access-a-bus continuous service plan. Halifax: Halifax Regional Municipality.

## Built Environment

The municipality has recently taken further steps towards accessible infrastructure, such as adopting the Rick Hansen Foundation Accessibility Certification™ gold standards that apply to multiple aspects of built environment including public washrooms, sidewalks, ramps, elevators and trails.



Examples includes the new Zatzman Sportsplex, which was reviewed by the Accessibility Advisory Committee, and contains ramps for both the small and large pools, and a sensor activated pool pod wheelchair lift which is available during all open swim hours. As well, the new Fort Needham play structure includes inclusive

elements specific to blind users to reflect the significant number of children whose sight was impacted by the Halifax Explosion.

## Recreation

Parks & Recreation has worked towards improving access to recreational program and parks for individuals with disabilities. This includes their [Summer Inclusion Support Policy](#), which was developed in response to the increased demand for accessible and inclusive support for children with disabilities during the summer months. It also includes the provision of an Inclusion Support Staff for each facility.



As well, Parks & Recreation recently unveiled a new inclusion opportunity for children requiring higher support needs - [Ready for Rec.](#) This program allows children access to an environment where they can effectively integrate in a recreational setting with trained workers which include teachers, recreational therapists, and education program assistants.

Parks & Recreation enhanced their year-round inclusion training to include Community Partners and HRM operated facilities and broader topics, such as NVCI, Trauma Informed Care, Mental Health, Autism, Behavioural Management and Personal Care.

Accessible equipment is available at several parks and recreation facilities across the municipality. Examples of this equipment include inclusive playground equipment, Hippocampe AL Terrain Wheelchairs, adapted bikes, a portable Hoyer lift at the Emera Oval, Mobi beach chairs, accessibility beach mats, and accessibility lifts. As future capital projects are carried out at parks, further accessibility will be added. This will also include inclusive designs for trails, where possible.

Through the Affordable Access Program, Recreation offers discounts of either 50% or 100% off recreation program costs for qualified families or individuals with financial needs.

In 2018 an Inclusion and Access Strategy was developed and approved internally for Parks and Recreation and the six areas being developed under this strategy are:

1. Community Partnership opportunities
2. Affordability – strategies and policies to address this participation barrier;
3. Supports and Adaptations – acquire resources to address physical barriers to participation;
4. Training and Development – opportunities to develop required skills and knowledge;
5. Targeted Approaches – new opportunities; and
6. Welcoming Spaces – accessible design and renovations of facilities.

## Transportation and Public Works

Transportation and Public Works continues with initiatives to improve accessibility within the Halifax region. These initiatives include the installation of tactile warning surface indicators at pedestrian ramps, process amendments to improve pedestrian accessibility through right of way construction sites, an implementation plan to upgrade all signalized intersections with accessible push buttons by 2030 and, the development of an internal policy that will provide guidelines for the management of existing accessible parking spaces and the introduction of new spaces during construction or other road related projects.



# Recommendations from the 2018 Public Accessibility Consultations

Summarized below are highlights from the public consultation report on how accessibility can be improved within the Halifax region<sup>7</sup>. Three primary themes emerged: Transportation, Recreation, and Buildings.



## 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

- Enforce existing building codes to ensure they meet minimal standards
- Develop an auditing and reporting system for repairs
- Control housing costs for new immigrants with disabilities
- Improve housing conditions and ensure that new housing is accessible

<sup>7</sup> Office of Diversity and Inclusion (2018) accessibility and inclusion consultation results. Halifax: Halifax Regional Municipality

# Business Unit Accessibility Questionnaire

In developing the municipality's *Accessibility Strategy*, business units were extensively consulted on their current accessible initiatives and future plans.

Business units and their divisions were asked to complete a four-question questionnaire in July 2019. Questions centred on whether business units focused on corporate support or providing services to residents internally or externally, whether they provided accessible services, whether they were planning to improve or implement accessible services, and whether they felt that they were overall meeting the needs of the disability community. The results were compiled into a thematic analysis, and a graphic of the main themes was captured in the *Business Unit Accessibility Report* (See Appendix C for summary of results).

Overall, business units felt that they **needed further engagement with the disability community** and that they were currently **providing accessible services, but that improvements were needed**. Divisions also asked for **additional resources from the municipality**, such as funding and support from the Office of Diversity & Inclusion.

# A Vision for the Accessibility Strategy

Every citizen, regardless of their disability, should feel that they are a valued member of the Halifax region. The way to achieve this is through emphasizing values and ideals that prioritize inclusivity and diversity within every social system. Making Halifax a truly accessible and welcoming community to persons with disabilities requires changes in key areas, such as the representation of individuals with disabilities within our organization. This may also take the form of adapting our current transportation, infrastructure, and recreational facilities to be open and inclusive to all persons regardless of ability.

There has been an increased motivation within Nova Scotia to improve services and systems to benefit persons with disabilities. This is seen in the recent provincial legislation, and the work of the municipality through Regional Council and its committees by prioritizing accessibility in the design of our municipal infrastructure.

The vision of this document is to help unite the public and the municipality in a common goal to make the Halifax region 100 per cent accessible by 2030. This can be done through listening to the public's comments and concerns, as well as business units that have worked hard to improve the municipality's understanding of accessibility.

The Halifax Regional Municipality can be a leading example for other municipalities and communities on how to take proactive steps in universal design to not only build an accessible community, but to form a community of allies working together to make their city a better place for all.

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*"Anything can convert any one of us from an able-bodied person to a person with a disability. We need to view accessibility as an insurance."*

*-2018 HRM's Accessibility and Inclusion Public Consultation Results*

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# Strategy and Implementation Plan

This strategy draws from the five priorities outlined in the *Diversity & Inclusion Framework*. It also takes into consideration the community consultations that were held in 2018 as well as detailed input from business units on their current plans for accessibility and areas for improvement.

A key goal is to remove barriers, whether they be systemic, attitudinal, or structural. As such, the strategy focuses on key areas in improving how individuals with disabilities interact with the municipality, in alignment with the Council Priority Outcome – Inclusive Communities: “HRM is a leader in building an accessible community where everyone can participate fully in life, including persons with disabilities and seniors.” The strategy also supports the Office of Diversity & Inclusion/ANSAIO’s mission: “to remove barriers and create opportunities for the *full* participation of *all* Halifax residents and municipal employees.”



Removing systemic barriers and creating opportunities for the full participation of all Halifax residents and municipal employees.

# Diversity & Inclusion Framework

## Strategic Objectives

- 1 Inclusive public service** To ensure inclusive and equitable access and benefit of municipal services, programs and facilities.
- 2 Safe work environment** To have a diverse and inclusive workplace free of harassment, discrimination, and systemic barriers.
- 3 Equitable employment** To have a skilled workforce that reflects the diverse residents of the municipality.
- 4 Meaningful partnerships** To develop positive and respectful internal and external partnerships that contribute to inclusive decision making.
- 5 Accessible information and communication** To communicate both internally and externally, in a way that demonstrates, exemplifies, and embodies our municipal diversity and inclusion values.

# 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 work environment**

To have a diverse and inclusive workplace accessible to all employees, which provides the accommodations needed to support municipal 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 the Halifax region.
- 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.

**Strategic Objective 1 – To ensure that individuals with disabilities can easily access inclusive and equitable municipal services, programs, and facilities without substantial barriers.**

Objectives	Strategic Actions	Timeline	Lead	Success Measures
<b>1.1</b> <b>Improving systems for accessing accessible transportation</b>	1 Implement Mobile Data Computer Software, online booking, and automatic fare systems to improve Access-a-bus booking service	2 years	Transit	Increased Access-A-Bus usership by 10 per cent or more by 2024
	2 Develop system for booking accessible transportation within the Halifax region (i.e., accessible taxis, Access-A-Bus, regular bus, ferries)	6 years	Transit	Decreased Access-A-Bus waitlist times by 50 per cent by 2024
	3 Develop a passenger survey regarding accessible services to measure success	2 years	Transit	Passenger Survey developed
<b>1.2</b> <b>Reducing transportation barriers to individuals with disabilities</b>	4 Ensure all bus stops follow accessible standards (e.g., well-maintained shelters)	10 years	Transit	All bus stops accessible by 2030
	5 Increase public awareness, to the disability community, around snow removal	8 years	TPW	# of community consultations on snow removal
	6 Increase number of accessible taxis and/or have an alternative provider for accessible cabs in the Halifax region	10 years	P&D, Transit	Increased percentage of accessible taxi roof lights every year until 2030

**Strategic Objective 1 – To ensure that individuals with disabilities can easily access inclusive and equitable municipal services, programs, and facilities without substantial barriers.**

Objectives	Strategic Actions	Timeline	Lead	Success Measures
<p><b>1.3</b>  <b>Improve accessibility to built environments for individuals with disabilities</b></p>	<p>7 Use Rick Hansen gold certification and CSA B561-18 standards for future infrastructure in the Halifax region (e.g., Rick Hansen curb cuts, public washrooms, CSA standards for accessible parking spaces)</p>	<p>10 years</p>	<p>CCS, TPW, P&amp;D</p>	<p># of curb cuts built/modified meeting the Rick Hansen and CSA standards</p> <p>System audit conducted by parties determined by business units</p>
	<p>8 Adopt Rick Hansen gold certification and CSA B561-18 standards for current infrastructure, including street infrastructure, owned by HRM</p>	<p>10 years</p>	<p>CCS, TPW, P&amp;D</p>	<p># of buildings built/modified meeting the Rick Hansen and CSA standards</p> <p>Rick Hansen Gold Standard adopted</p>
	<p>9 Develop review system to audit buildings, public facilities, recreational parks/playgrounds , and trails to assess when repairs or upgrades are needed to maintain accessibility</p>	<p>4 years</p>	<p>CCS, Parks &amp; Rec, P&amp;D</p>	<p>CSA Adopted</p> <p>Identify the number of buildings meeting Rick Hansen Gold Certification &amp; CSA</p>

**Strategic Objective 1 – To ensure that individuals with disabilities can easily access inclusive and equitable municipal services, programs, and facilities without substantial barriers.**

Objectives	Strategic Actions	Timeline	Lead	Success Measures
<b>1.4 Improve access to individuals with disabilities seeking recreational activities and programs</b>	Ensure that all signage (including new signage templates), walkways, and equipment for beaches, parks, playgrounds, and recreational facilities (e.g., proper gymnasium flooring for para sports) are accessible for individuals with disabilities	10 years	Parks & Recreation	Increased percentage of beaches, parks, recreation facilities accessible by 2030
	Increase training for municipal staff (e.g., recreation, fire, police, librarians) on how to serve/accommodate persons with disabilities	4 years	All BU	Increased percentage of full-time spots for children with disabilities in summer programs
	Improve services & operations (e.g., number of recreational support staff) to reflect the demand for accessible recreation	4 years	Parks & Recreation	Increase number of staff able to provide accessible recreation

**Strategic Objective 2 – To have a diverse and inclusive workplace accessible to all employees, which provides the accommodations needed to support municipal employees**

Objectives	Strategic Actions	Timeline	Lead	Success Measures
<b>2.1</b> <b>Ensure equitable and accessible employment for individuals with disabilities</b>	13 Collect and maintain information from employment equity reports which indicates the number of individuals employed by the municipality who self-identify as having a disability	2 years	HR	Maintain employment equity statistics tracking the number of applicants who self-identify as having a disability  Increase the per cent of employees self identifying as having a disability
	14 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, etc.)	2 years	HR	
	15 Compile internal list of accommodations provided to employees with disabilities (e.g., visual, physical, neurodevelopmental, etc.)	4 years	HR	Internal list is created
	16 Develop a <i>Workplace Accommodation Policy</i> which outlines a formal process for providing accommodations to job candidates and employees with disabilities.	2 years	HR D&I	<i>Workplace Accommodation Policy</i> is developed

**Strategic Objective 2 – To have a diverse and inclusive workplace accessible to all employees, which provides the accommodations needed to support municipal employees**

Objectives	Strategic Actions	Timeline	Lead	Success Measures
<p><b>2.2</b>  <b>Improve education on accessibility for employers</b></p>	<p>17 Develop corporate training which educates hiring managers about workplace accessibility</p>	<p>4 years</p>	<p>HR, D&amp;I</p>	<p>Number of hiring managers attending training</p> <p>Number of sessions held</p>

**Strategic Objective 3 – To have a skilled workforce that includes persons with disabilities in a variety of positions.**

Objectives	Strategic Actions	Timeline	Lead	Success Measures
<b>3.1 Improving access to municipal employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities</b>	18 Establish partnerships with external partners (e.g., universities and colleges) to provide municipal work placements and internships that are available for students with disabilities	2 years	HR	# of partnerships established  # of work placements established
	19 Review current hiring practices and ensure that they are providing employment to individuals with disabilities	4 years	HR	Increase number of positions for individuals with disabilities
	20 Develop a procedure to share municipal job postings with agencies who support individuals with disabilities seeking employment	2 years	HR	Increase percentage of individuals with disabilities hired by the municipality  # of job postings shared

**Strategic Objective 4 – To develop positive and respectful internal and external partnerships that include disability organizations who contribute to improving accessibility in the municipality**

Objectives	Strategic Actions	Timeline	Lead	Success Measures
<b>4.1</b> <b>Establish organizational collaboration to improve policies and the provision of services</b>	Align D&I business unit initiatives with the actions outlined in the <i>Accessibility Strategy</i>	10 years	All BUs	Every business unit establishes an accessibility goal
	Establish partnership between the accessibility advisor and business units to conduct annual business unit accessibility reviews	2 years	All BUs	Accessibility goals included in corporate accountability tracker Annual business unit accessibility review conducted
	Develop an accessibility policy and procedures to align with the provincial <i>Accessibility Act</i>	4 years	D&I (Supported by all BUs)	Accessibility policy developed Accessibility procedure developed
	Develop municipal procedures for accessible business unit consultations with the public	4 years	D&I, (Supported by all BUs)	Accessible community consultation guidelines developed

**Strategic Objective 4- To develop positive and respectful internal and external partnerships that include disability organizations who contribute to improving accessibility in the municipality**

Objectives	Strategic Actions	Timeline	Lead	Success Measures
<p><b>4.2</b>  <b>Establish partnerships between the municipality and organizations supporting individuals with disabilities</b></p>	<p>25 Establish dialogue between Accessibility Directorate and the municipality regarding accessibility in the Halifax region and compliance with the provincial <i>Accessibility Act</i></p>	10 years	D&I	<p>Relationship established</p> <p># of meetings with province on <i>Accessibility Act</i></p> <p># of community meetings between business units and stakeholders</p>
	<p>26 Facilitate relationships between business units and accessibility community stakeholders (e.g., CNIB, Autism Nova Scotia, etc.) to improve information sharing regarding municipal services</p>	6 years	D&I, All BUs	

**Strategic Objective 5 – To provide accessible information, in a way which educates individuals on the accessible services that are offered and how to access these services**

Objectives	Strategic Actions	Timeline	Lead	Success Measures
<b>5.1 Improve municipal resource services regarding accessibility</b>	27 Develop guide for municipal promotional materials which make them accessible to individuals with disabilities	2 years	Corporate Communications, D&I, BUs	Guide developed
	28 Make the municipal internet and intranet websites and web content conform to the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1 format (Minimum Level AA- including job postings on Brass Ring and GIS mapping)	4 years	Corporate Communications, HR	Municipal website, Brass Ring, intranet conformed to the WCAG 2.1 format # of views of accessibility page on Halifax.ca
	29 Ensure plain language and clear format, for all municipal communications	2 years	Corporate Communications, BUs	
	30 Update accessibility page on Halifax.ca to provide information on accessibility in the municipality	2 years	BUs, D&I	

# Action Item Summary

	2020-2022	2022-2024	2024-2026	2026-2028	2028-2030
Goal 1 Inclusive Public Service	1. Access-a-Bus Restructuring				
		2. Transportation Booking			
		3. Passenger Survey			
	4. Accessible Bus Shelters				
	5. Snow removal awareness				
	6. Accessible Taxis				
	7. Future Infrastructure Built Environment Standards				
	8. Current Infrastructure Built Environment Standards				
	9. Infrastructure Audit				
		10. Transit to Beaches, Parks, and Facilities			
		11. Municipal Staff Training			
		12. Recreational Services Support			
Goal 2 Safe Working Environment	13. Employment Equity Review				
	14. Applicant Accommodations				
		15. Employee Accommodations			
	16. Accommodation Policy				
	17. Corporate Training				
Goal 3 Equitable Employment		18. Municipal Work Placement			
				19. Hiring Practice Audit	
		20. Municipal Job Postings			

≤ 2 years

≤ 4 Years

≤ 6 Years

≤ 8 Years

≤ 10 Years



2020-2022	2022-2024	2024-2026	2026-2028	2028-2030
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<b>Goal 4</b> Meaningful Partnerships	21. Align Business Unit Goals				
	22. Directors' Accessibility Reviews				
				23. Accessibility Policy	
				24. Consultation Policy	
	25. Accessibility Directorate Partnership				
		26. Community Stakeholders			
<b>Goal 5</b> Accessible Information and Communication			27. Promo Materials		
			28. WCAG 2.0 Municipal Website/Intranet		
		29. Plain Language Use			
		30. Municipal Accessibility Site			

≤ 2 years	≤ 4 Years	≤ 6 Years	≤ 8 Years	≤ 10 Years
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# Glossary

## **Accessibility Act**

Also known as Bill 59, is the Nova Scotian legislation passed in April 2017, which aims to make the province inclusive and barrier-free by 2030.

## **Accessibility Advisory Board**

A board which was established under the Accessibility Act that works to address barriers in the province for individuals with disabilities. Under the Act, the majority of board members must be persons with disabilities.

## **Accessibility Advisory Committee**

A municipal committee which advises and assists with municipal policies, programs, and services for persons with disabilities.

## **Accommodations**

Modifications which have been made to facilities, objects, environments, or systems that enable persons with disabilities to be on an equal level to other individuals

## **CSA B651-18**

A set of standards, released by the Canadian Standards Association, which outlines a set of technical recommended requirements for accessible design within built environments including sidewalks, buildings, sign posts, etc.

## **Disability**

A term of self-identification used broadly by those with a broad range of disabilities including vision, deafness/hard of hearing, intellectual/developmental, learning, mental health issues, cardiac/diabetic conditions, balance, cognition, mobility, etc.

## **Mobile Data Computer Software**

Computerized software used in public transit vehicles and taxis to communicate digitally with a central dispatcher.

## **Plain Language**

Ensuring that writing is clear, concise, well-organized, and able to be properly understood by a diverse group of individuals, regardless of their intellectual or educational backgrounds.

## **Rick Hansen Foundation Accessibility Certification™**

A rating system provided by the Rick Hansen Foundation which uses trained professionals to evaluate the meaningful access of commercial, institutional, and multi-unit residential buildings and sites. Rick Hansen Certification is recognized Canada-wide.

## **Systemic Barriers**

Obstacles that exclude groups or communities of people from full participation in, and the benefits of, social, economic, and political life. They may be hidden or unintentional but are built into the way society works. Existing policies, practices and procedures, as well as assumptions and stereotypes, reinforce them (City for All, 2015).

## **Tactile Ground Surface Indicators**

A system of textured ground surface indicators found on footpaths, stairs, bus stations platforms and more to assist pedestrians who are visual impaired.

## **Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1**

Guidelines which covers a wide range of recommendations for making web content more accessible to a wide range of individuals with disabilities including blindness, low vision, deafness, and hearing loss, etc. Recommendations include easily read fonts, simpler layout for website content, and making all functionality available from a keyboard.

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*Tactile ground surface indicators have been installed across the municipality at newly constructed bus terminals, pre-existing crosswalks, and the curb of the new Argyle street re-design*

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# Appendix A: Current Accessibility Initiatives

## Regular Transit Service

As of 2011, Halifax Transit implemented a program to allow a Personal Care Attendant to travel free of cost when accompanied by an individual who requires an attendant.

In 2012, Halifax Transit finished development of the new Dartmouth Bridge Terminal, which presented an accessible standard for future terminals. Measures such as Tactile Ground Surface Indicators for those who are visually impaired were included.

In 2013, the *Service Animal Policy* allowed individuals to board the buses with their services animals.

In 2016, Halifax Transit implemented a *Request-A-Stop Policy* to support unaccompanied individuals or individuals with mobility impairments. This policy allows individuals to stop at a location along the bus route other than the scheduled stop.

In 2017, Halifax Transit effectively replaced pre-existing buses with modern accessible vehicles. Additionally, all buses have now been fitted with audio and visual aids, including an audio system which verbally and visually indicates the upcoming stop. As a part of the development of Lacewood Terminal in 2017, raised signs indicating the bus stop bay number were additionally included in the design.

Although the program is currently only able to accommodate bookings one week in advance, Halifax Transit is reviewing the Access-A-Bus service and are in the stages of implementing the [Access-A-Bus Continuous Improvement Service Plan](#) to improve and modify the paratransit service. To better serve the municipality, this may include same day bookings and seamless cancelations<sup>8</sup>.

The plan focuses on four main areas including: : Continuous Improvement, New Technology, Adaptable Service, and Integrated Trips. They are broken

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<sup>8</sup> Halifax Transit (2019). Access-a-Bus Continuous Improvement Service Plan. Halifax: Halifax Regional Municipality.

down into either short-term, medium-term, or long-term goals (see Appendix B).

### **Affordable Access Program**

This program allows qualified individuals to apply for municipal subsidized programs. Recently, the municipality combined the Recreation Access Program, Low Income Transit Pass Program, and Property Tax Exemption and Deferral Program into a single form.

### **Access-A-Bus**

When Halifax Transit was formed in 1981, the Access-a-Bus service was implemented for Halifax citizens.

From 2014 to 2019, Access-A-Bus ridership has increased by 16.7 per cent, with a 6.7 per cent increase from the previous fiscal year. The use of the service has increased slowly, with the number of trips provided increasing by 5.7 per cent.<sup>9</sup>

### **Built Environment**

Since 2000, the municipality has improved 30 per cent of municipal crosswalks with the addition of accessible pedestrian technologies. These include Novax beacons for safe crossing, easily activated buttons, and pole locators

Furthermore, important steps have been taken to ensure there are reduced built environment barriers to individuals looking to take Transit. 61 per cent of all bus stops now follow Transit's accessibility standards (i.e., concrete landing pad, minimum size of 1.5m wide X 2.5m deep from the face of the curb to the back of the sidewalk, access to a sidewalk/walkway).

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<sup>9</sup> [Halifax Transit \(2019\). 2018/19- Year end performance measures report](#). Halifax: Halifax Regional Municipality

# Appendix B: Access-A-Bus Continuous Service Improvement Plan

	SHORT-TERM (0-6 MONTHS)	MEDIUM-TERM (6-18 MONTHS)	LONG-TERM (18+ MONTHS)
<b>1: CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visit Service Providers to Gain Input</li> <li>• Create Call Scripts for Employees</li> <li>• Improve Daily Reporting Management</li> <li>• Review Policies and Practices</li> <li>• Improve Schedule Templates for Repeat Customers</li> <li>• Cleanup Current Schedule Data System</li> <li>• Implement New Shift Schedule for Reduced Wait Times</li> <li>• Collect On-Time Performance Data</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update Map Speeds</li> <li>• Improve Services Based on Potential Demand Levels</li> <li>• Improve System for Live Schedules</li> </ul>	
<b>2: NEW TECHNOLOGY</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create a Mobile Data Computer Software for the Access-A-Bus Fleet</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement Mobile Data Computer Software for the Access-A-Bus</li> <li>• Implement Automatic Telephone Systems to Update Customers on Bus Arrival/ Changes in Trips</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Online Booking</li> <li>• Automatic Fare System for Easy Use</li> </ul>
<b>3: ADAPTABLE SERVICE</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve Registration for Access-A-Bus and Eligibility Criteria for Customers</li> <li>• Training Customers on How to Navigate Conventional Transit</li> <li>• Review Alternative Transportation Methods for Customers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement Alternative Transportation for Customers</li> </ul>
<b>4: INTEGRATED TRIPS</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Setup Control Room to Survey and Improve Both Access-A-Bus and Conventional Transit Services</li> <li>• Review Eligibility Service Area for Customers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integrate trips with other forms of transportation including, ferry, taxis, etc.</li> </ul>
<b>SUCCESS MEASURES</b>	Per cent of Trip Denials	On-Time Performance	Trips Per Hour

# Appendix C: Business Unit Questionnaire Summary



# Appendix D: Contacts & Community Organizations

Organization	Contact Information
<b>Autism Nova Scotia</b>	info@autismns.ca 902-446-4995 <a href="http://www.autisimnovascotia.ca">www.autisimnovascotia.ca</a>
<b>Alzheimer Society Nova Scotia</b>	alzheimer@asns.ca 902-422-7961 <a href="http://www.alzheimer.ca">www.alzheimer.ca</a>
<b>Arthritis Society</b>	info@ns.arthritis.ca 902-429-7025 <a href="http://www.arthritis.ca">www.arthritis.ca</a>
<b>Canadian National Institute for the Blind</b>	info@cnib.ca 1-800-563-2642 <a href="http://www.cnib.ca">www.cnib.ca</a>
<b>Canadian Paraplegic Association</b>	halifax@canparaplegic.org 1-902-492-1213 <a href="http://www.thespine.ca">www.thespine.ca</a>
<b>Canadian Mental Health Association</b>	cmahal@ns.aliantzinc.ca 902-455-5445 <a href="http://www.cmhahaldart.ca">www.cmhahaldart.ca</a>
<b>Caregivers Nova Scotia</b>	Info@caregiversns.org 1-877-488-7390 <a href="http://www.caregiversns.org">www.caregiversns.org</a>
<b>Cystic Fibrosis Canada Atlantic Office</b>	lweatherhead@cysticfibrosis.ca 902-425-2462 <a href="http://www.cysticfibrosis.ca">www.cysticfibrosis.ca</a>
<b>Easter Seals Nova Scotia</b>	joannebernard@easterseals.ns.ca 902-453-6000 <a href="http://www.easterseals.ns.ca">www.easterseals.ns.ca</a>
<b>Halifax Association for Community Living</b>	halifaxcommunityliving@gmail.com 902-463-4752 <a href="http://www.halifaxacl.com">www.halifaxacl.com</a>
<b>Halifax NS Down Syndrome Society</b>	info@halifaxnsdss.ca 1-800-883-5608 (Canadian Down Syndrome Society) <a href="http://www.halifaxnsdss.ca">www.halifaxnsdss.ca</a>

<b>Immigrant Services Association of Nova Scotia</b>	Info@isans.ca 902-423-3607 <a href="http://www.isans.ca">www.isans.ca</a>
<b>Independent Living Nova Scotia</b>	ilnsadmin@ilns.ca 902-453-0004 <a href="http://www.ilns.ca">www.ilns.ca</a>
<b>March of Dimes Canada</b>	902-444-1090 <a href="http://www.marchofdimes.ca">www.marchofdimes.ca</a>
<b>Multiple Sclerosis Society Nova Scotia</b>	Info.atlantic@mssociety.ca 1-902-468-8230 <a href="http://www.mssociety.ca">www.mssociety.ca</a>
<b>Nova Scotia Association for Community Living</b>	inform@nsacl.ca 1-844-469-1174 <a href="http://www.nsacl.ca">www.nsacl.ca</a>
<b>Nova Scotia League for Equal Opportunities</b>	Nsleo2018@outlook.com 902-455-6942 <a href="http://www.nsleo.com">www.nsleo.com</a>
<b>Society of Deaf and Hard of Hearing Nova Scotia</b>	sdhns@ns.sympatico.ca 902-422-7130 <a href="http://www.sdhns.org">www.sdhns.org</a>
<b>Special Olympics Nova Scotia</b>	<a href="mailto:moniquecfares@gmail.com">moniquecfares@gmail.com</a> (902) 429-2266 <a href="http://www.specialolympicsns.ca">www.specialolympicsns.ca</a>

# Appendix E: Employment Organizations

\*Some organizations have more experience with supporting individuals with disabilities, but all are mandated to assist with employment services for all citizens

Organization	Contact Information
Building Futures	contact@buildfutures.ca 902-865-1797 <a href="http://www.buildfutures.ca">www.buildfutures.ca</a>
Dartmouth Adult Services Centre	info@dasc-ns.ca 902-468-5359 <a href="http://www.dasc-ns.ca">www.dasc-ns.ca</a>
Job Junction	contact@jobjunction.ca 902-455-9675 <a href="http://www.jobjunction.ca">www.jobjunction.ca</a>
Lakecity Works	info@lakecityworks.ca 902-465-5000 <a href="http://www.lakecityworks.ca">www.lakecityworks.ca</a>
Neil Squire Society	nb.info@neilsquire.ca 902-755-4942 <a href="https://www.neilsquire.ca">https://www.neilsquire.ca</a>
Nova Scotia Works	eop@bellaliant.com 902-245-1830 <a href="https://employmentopportunitiespartnership.ca/">https://employmentopportunitiespartnership.ca/</a>
Prescott Group	info@prescottgroup.ca 902-454-7387 <a href="http://www.prescottgroup.ca">www.prescottgroup.ca</a>
ReachAbility	info@reachability.org 902-429-5878 <a href="http://www.reachability.org">www.reachability.org</a>

<b>Ready, Willing, &amp; Able</b>	<p>info@autismns.ca  902-446-4995  <a href="http://www.autisimnovascotia.ca">www.autisimnovascotia.ca</a></p>
<b>TEAM Work Cooperative</b>	<p>reception@teamworkbridge.org  (902) 422-8900  <a href="http://www.teamworkbridge.org">www.teamworkbridge.org</a></p>
<b>YMCA</b>	<p>902-425-3646  <a href="http://www.ymcafx.ca">www.ymcafx.ca</a></p>
<b>YWCA</b>	<p>b.leblanc@ywcahalifax.com  902.423.6162  <a href="http://www.ywcahalifax.com">www.ywcahalifax.com</a></p>

# ACCESSIBILITY & INCLUSION

## HRM'S ACCESSIBILITY AND INCLUSION CONSULTATION RESULTS



CONDUCTED ON BEHALF OF HRM

*Office of Diversity and Inclusion*

*November, 2018*



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# ★ Introduction and Acknowledgements



In February, March and November of 2018, the Halifax Regional Municipality Office of Diversity and Inclusion scheduled 18 public consultation sessions to identify priority accessibility needs for persons with disabilities, and to help the municipality develop a corporate accessibility framework. We would like to express our gratitude to the almost 200 citizens of HRM who turned out for the focus group sessions across the region during the chilly days and evenings of late winter and fall to share their experiences and insights. What we encountered in the overflow crowds in Halifax and the small reflective groups in Cherry Brook and Spryfield - in every meeting room where we assembled across HRM - was one, great visionary voice. It is the voice of people who are deeply committed to enhancing the quality of life for their children, parents, friends, neighbours, themselves, you and I.

Specifically, participants shared their suggestions about how to make HRM's transportation services, programs, parks, services, buildings, roads and recreation centres more accessible and inclusive for all citizens.

The following summarizes the number of participants who attended each session.

Session Time	Consultation Date	Consultation Location	Number of Participants
2:00 - 4:00	February 28, 2018	Sackville Sports Stadium, Sackville, NS	30
6:00 - 8:00	February 28, 2018	Sackville Sports Stadium, Sackville, NS	10
2:00 - 4:00	March 1, 2018	Alderney Gate, Dartmouth, NS	20
6:00 - 8:00	March 1, 2018	Alderney Gate, Dartmouth, NS	6
2:00 - 4:00	March 5, 2018	Halifax Public Library, Halifax, NS	41



6:00 - 8:00	March 5, 2018	Halifax Public Library, Halifax, NS	20
2:00 - 4:00	March 7, 2018	Tantallon Library, Tantallon, NS	1
6:00 - 8:00	March 7, 2018	Tantallon Library, Tantallon, NS	0
2:00 - 4:00	March 22, 2018	Gordon Snow Rec Centre, Fall River, NS	1
6:00 - 8:00	March 22, 2018	Gordon Snow Rec Centre, Fall River, NS	1
2:00 - 4:00	March 26, 2018	Captain Spry Centre, Spryfield, NS	12
6:00 - 8:00	March 26, 2018	Captain Spry Centre, Spryfield, NS	8
2:00 - 4:00	November 1, 2018	Mi'kmaw Native Friendship Centre, Halifax, NS	2
6:00 - 8:00	November 1, 2018	Mi'kmaw Native Friendship Centre, Halifax, NS	0
2:00 - 4:00	November 7, 2018	Black Cultural Centre for Nova Scotia, Cherry Brook, NS	7
6:00 - 8:00	November 7, 2018	Black Cultural Centre for Nova Scotia, Cherry Brook, NS	8
1:00 - 4:00	November 21, 2018	Immigrant Services Association of Nova Scotia, Halifax, NS	8
6:00 - 9:00	November 21, 2018	Immigrant Services Association of Nova Scotia, Halifax, NS	18

## Consultation Process

The focus groups were designed and conducted by an external consulting firm contracted by HRM to carry out the public review. Participants shared their views in a series of two-hour group discussions to define what they believe is needed to make HRM a more accessible and inclusive place to live. Specifically, participants were invited to respond to questions related to 4 areas impacting



accessibility and inclusion: Buses, Streets and Roads; Parks, Recreation and Communities; Buildings; and HRM Services such as Fire, Garbage Collection, 311, etc.

---

 Consultation Agenda

The same series of questions were posed to participants during each two-hour focus group session exploring the themes noted above. The goals and purpose of each round of discussion were reviewed before people were invited to offer their comments. The specific questions employed in the focus groups are listed below.

**DISCUSSION ONE:  
TRANSPORTATION**

The question asked was:

- ▶ Based on your experience, what input can you offer to help HRM make our regular bus and Access-A-Bus service more accessible and inclusive? And, what input can you offer to help HRM make our streets, roads and sidewalks more accessible and inclusive?

**DISCUSSION TWO:  
RINKS, PLAYGROUNDS, INFRASTRUCTURE FOR PARKS AND  
LEISURE**

The question asked was:

- ▶ Based on your experiences, what input can you offer to help HRM ensure that our new and existing rinks, playgrounds, and infrastructure for parks and leisure are more accessible and inclusive? And, what input can you offer to help HRM ensure that our new and existing recreation programs are more accessible and inclusive?

**DISCUSSION THREE:  
HRM BUILDINGS**

The question asked was:

- ▶ Based on your experiences, what input can you offer to help HRM ensure that our new and existing buildings are more accessible and inclusive?



## **DISCUSSION FOUR: HRM SERVICES**

The question asked was:

- ▶ Based on your experiences, what input can you offer to help HRM ensure that the way we communicate with our citizens is more accessible and inclusive? The specific aspects of our communication that we would like you to consider are: Mail-outs; website and social media; 311; press releases and ads; services such as fire and garbage collection; and employment.

---

### Prioritization Process

At the end of each public session, people were asked to consider the entire set of recommendations shared and to identify the ones that they believed would most positively impact accessibility and inclusivity in HRM. Participants indicated their priorities using a multi-voting technique.

The result of the multi-voting process gives the Office of Diversity and Inclusion insight into which recommendations were supported most deeply by most people. They give HRM insight into where to start.

In total, nine recommendations and 32 related pieces of advice received the highest numbers of votes throughout the 16 consultation sessions (the evening Tantallon and Mi'kmaw Native Friendship Centre sessions had no participants reducing the total number of planned consultations from 18 to 16).

The recommendations and related pieces of advice are broadly presented on pages 8 - 12. It is important to note that the recommendations are numbered to make discussing and referencing them easier. The numbering system does not denote importance since all nine recommendations and the accompanying pieces of advice were identified as important by consultation participants.

- Pages 13 - 34 of this report elaborate upon the recommendations and corresponding pieces of advice that received the highest number of votes



- Appendix A (beginning on page 35) of this reports presents the verbatim transcript and voting results of each session organized by location and discussion topic
- Appendix B of this report presents the steps that were taken to create an accessible and inclusive consultation process



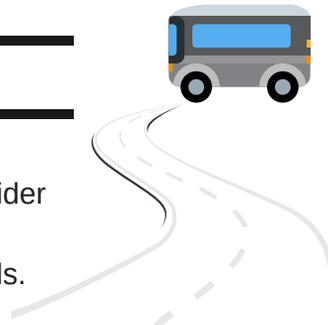
# ★ SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS



## ➔ Transportation



1. Improve accessible transportation to increase rider usage.
2. Treat sidewalks like roads.

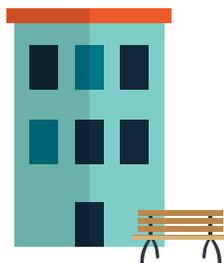


## ➔ Recreation

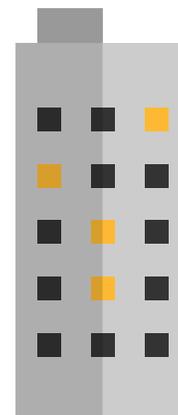


3. Ensure everyone can access nature, parks and facilities.
4. Build upon a strength by expanding recreation programming and its reach.
5. Promote accessible programs and facilities.
6. Improve existing recreation facilities.

## ➔ Buildings



7. Enforce existing building codes and ensure they exceed minimal standards.
8. Develop an auditing, tracking and reporting system for repairs.
9. Improve housing conditions, costs and accessibility.



# SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS BY THEME



## Transportation Recommendations

The multi-voting process yielded the following as important recommendations for improving transportation services.



### **1.0 Improve accessible transportation to increase rider usage**

1.1 Improve the Access-A-Bus service and booking process in consultation with users (page 13)

1.2 Provide a one-stop transportation booking option (page 14)

1.3 Change the current Access-A-Bus booking criteria (page 14)

1.4 Make accessible taxis more widely available (page 15)

1.5 Train regular bus drivers how to accommodate persons with disabilities (page 15)

1.6 Ensure bus stops are clear of any and all obstructions (page 17)

1.7 Improve bus routes and service (page 17)



### **2.0 Treat sidewalks like roads**

2.1 Clear obstructions from sidewalks and parking spaces in Winter, Spring, Summer and Fall (page 18)

2.2 Ensure that community infrastructure is connected via sidewalks, transit and crosswalks (page 18)

2.3 Commit to and implement a consistent curb cut standard (page 19)

2.4 Ensure accessible parking spots are barrier free (page 19)



# Recreation Recommendations

Participants offered the following as important recommendations for improving recreation services.



## **3.0 Ensure everyone can access nature, parks and facilities**

3.1 Extend transit routes to beaches, parks, trails and recreation centres (page 20)

3.2 Make beaches, parks and trails fully accessible (page 21)



## **4.0 Build Upon a Strength by Expanding Recreation Programming and its Reach**

4.1 Increase current levels and types of recreation programming (page 22)

4.2 Offer subsidies to persons with disabilities (page 22)

4.3 Increase numbers of and train recreation staff to accommodate persons with disabilities (page 23)



## **5.0 Promote Accessible Programs and Facilities**

5.1 Make accessible programs and features more visible on HRM website (page 24)

5.2 Improve trail and park signage (page 24)

5.3 Use Parks to Improve Usage and Tourism (page 24)



## **6.0 Improve Existing Recreation Facilities**

6.1 Improve washroom facilities (page 25)

6.2 Install flooring that accommodates para sports (page 25)

6.3 Install, maintain and train staff in using pool lifts (page 25)

6.4 Increase numbers of and support use of ice surfaces (page 26)

6.5 Consult with citizens before offering programs and building facilities (page 26)



# Building Recommendations

Participants offered the following as important recommendations for improving building services.



## **7.0 Enforce Existing Building Codes and Ensure They Exceed Minimal Standards**

7.1 Ensure HRM buildings exceed minimum accessible requirements (page 27)

7.2 Enforce existing building codes (page 28)

7.3 Improve the quality and conditions of accessible public washrooms (page 28)



## **8.0 Develop an Auditing, Tracking and Reporting System for Repairs**

8.1 Track and publicize building and equipment (i.e. showers, pool lifts, etc.) repair status (page 29)

8.2 Partner early and often with persons with disabilities to perform audits (page 29)



## **9.0 Improve Housing Conditions, Costs, and Accessibility**

9.1 Control housing costs for new immigrants (page 30)

9.2 Improve housing conditions (page 30)

9.3 Ensure housing is accessible (page 30)



# HRM Services Recommendations

Towards the end of each consultation, participants were given an opportunity to consider a variety of HRM Services - from fire service to HRM's website. We anticipated that some participants would have a lot to say about one or two of these variables and, perhaps, no strong opinions regarding the rest. As a result, we chose to give individuals the chance to work on their own for this task. They either recorded their own suggestions or participated in one-on-one interviews with HRM staff who recorded suggestions for them. All suggestions were transcribed and the common themes are presented on the following pages.



## **Employment, Website and Social Media, Mail-Outs, 311, Police, Garbage Collection, Fire, Press Releases and Ads, Other**

Employment (page 31)

Website and Social Media (page 32)

Mail-Outs and Signage (page 32)

311 (page 32)

Police (page 33)

Garbage Collection (page 33)

Fire Services (page 33)

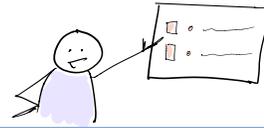
Press Releases and Ads (page 34)

Other (page 34)





# TRANSPORTATION RECOMMENDATIONS



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"Bus passes are incredibly expensive. There should be options for subsidies especially if you don't have a job."

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"You need to book Access-A-Bus seven days in advance. It takes all spontaneity out of life."

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"HRM sidewalks are like an obstacle course. In the summer there's patios in the way and in the winter there's snow."

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"My child is in a wheelchair. I chose my neighbourhood because there was a bus stop. Now the bus stop has been moved and I have to walk a very long way with my child to catch the bus. When it snows, it's impossible. I have complained but no one takes it seriously. No one has followed up."

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"My son goes to school and needs Access-A-Bus every day. Booking the bus is what I think about all night and it's the first thing I worry about in the morning when I get up. Our whole lives are centred around trying to get him to school."

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## Transit: What Participants Said



### 1.0 Improve Accessible Transportation to Increase Rider Usage

#### *1.1 Improve the Access-A-Bus Service and Booking Process in Consultation with Users*

- **Improvements Required:** The overwhelming theme regarding transit was that citizens need better transportation alternatives than the ones currently being offered. These alternatives will need to be developed in



- collaboration** with key stakeholders: the Taxi Commission, Access-A-Bus, Regular Bus, Citizens. Several participants suggested that identifying ways of supporting and/or subsidizing taxi drivers to help them provide service for persons with disabilities will make the collaboration less adversarial.
- Participants also noted that routes, seating capacity and service dependability need to be examined in consultation with people who rely on the service in order to improve it. HRM should collaborate with Access-A-Bus users and would-be users to design a system that works.
  - **Booking Lead Time:** Participants asked HRM to provide greater scheduling flexibility and shorter booking lead times with same-day booking offered as the ideal. Participants described the impact that having to book transportation 7 days in advance had on their ability to do what most people take for granted: spontaneously participate in work, medical, family and social opportunities as they arise. For example, one participant noted that if a friend asked him to go see a movie in two days time, he would have to say no because he would not be able to book Access-A-Bus. He described the isolating effect this has on his life, one that others who do not rely on Access-A-Bus would have difficulty imagining. Others described the all-consuming effect that booking Access-A-Bus has on their lives. If their child attends a program daily, they need to contact Access-A-Bus every morning to book for the following week. There is never a reprieve and never a guarantee that they will be successful in securing their booking.

### *1.2 Provide a One-Stop Transportation Booking Option*

- **One-Stop Booking:** HRM needs to provide users with more transportation options as part of its booking system to create a more seamless interface between Access-A-Bus and regular bus and taxi service. Many participants suggested that if, for example, Access-A-Bus was not available when needed then HRM should find a suitable regular bus route or an accessible taxi that is available.

### *1.3 Change the Current Access-A-Bus Booking Criteria*

- **Booking Criteria:** HRM should review Access-A-Bus's current booking prioritization requirements. Participants noted that the current prioritization process seems to place appointments related to



employment ahead of medical appointments. This prioritization system has left some community members unable to make important medical appointments.

#### 1.4 Make Accessible Taxis More Widely Available

- **Accessible Taxis:** Participants noted that the current accessible taxi system is not working as intended - there are not enough accessible taxis and those that say they are accessible will often prioritize other paying customers over persons with disabilities. One participant noted that there seems to be only two accessible taxis available at any one time and that those taxis typically do not prioritize people using wheelchairs or seeing eye dogs. Participants felt that there should be a minimum requirement for accessible taxis with one person offering New York City as a model to consider. The following excerpt taken from the New York Times (Riders Outside Manhattan Can Now Hail Accessible Taxis, Too, January 24, 2018) illustrates New York City's new approach. (<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/01/24/nyregion/accessible-taxis-disabled-nyc.html>)

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"Through the dispatch program, riders can arrange to be picked up by a wheelchair accessible taxicab by calling 311, using a mobile app or a website or calling or texting a dispatcher. They would not be charged anything beyond the metered fare for the pickup."

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- **Enforce Policy:** Participants also noted that many accessible taxis will not accept passengers with guide dogs. They report that their repeated calls to 311 have not addressed this situation.
- **Transit Subsidies:** Many participants also recommended that HRM offer discounts on public transit to persons with disabilities or make transit free for persons with disabilities.

#### 1.5 Train Regular Bus Drivers how to Accommodate Persons with Disabilities

- **Training:** HRM should train bus drivers to fully utilize accessible bus features (tie-down straps, for example) in order to take some pressure off Access-A-Bus. Many participants noted that if drivers in the regular



- bus system were better trained on how to assist persons with disabilities in using public transit, then many persons with physical and intellectual disabilities would begin to rely on the regular bus system instead of relying solely on Access-A-Bus. One participant noted that drivers need to have a better understanding of both the challenges persons with physical and intellectual disabilities face and how integral the bus driver's role is in making them feel welcome. Examples of content to incorporate in the training include: handling wheelchairs, using tie-down straps, best practices for helping passengers board, best practices/timing for departing (some drivers leave before passengers are safely seated or secured).
- "Some drivers are great and some are not." The level of service provided needs to be trained and then monitored carefully and many felt that drivers who do not perform as required should be disciplined. Other participants noted that some drivers were neither polite nor patient. They described some drivers not waiting for people running for the bus or not waiting for people to sit down before departing as examples of impatient behaviour.
  - **Awareness:** Several participants noted how challenging bus travel can be for people with autism. Drivers (and passengers) need to do a better job of accommodating and welcoming people who may experience distress and, as a result, display behaviours that fall outside rigid societal norms. Several people described seeing passengers refused entry or who were forced off the bus because of behaviours associated with Tourette's or autism.
  - **Other Transit Users:** Participants extended the same advice to regular bus passengers who sometimes seem impatient or annoyed when persons with disabilities require more time to board and disembark. Some participants suggested that a promotional campaign would help in reminding fellow passengers that we all might need some extra accommodation at some point in our future lives and that creating an inclusive and welcoming environment starts with each one of us and may someday benefit each one of us.
  - **Strollers Versus Walkers:** Participants also noted a perceived contradiction in regular bus policy, one which allows for a seemingly unlimited number of baby strollers but a limited number of walkers, etc.



## 1.6 Ensure Bus Stops are Clear of Any and All Obstructions

- **Obstructions:** Contractors responsible for snow removal should be required to clear snow from sidewalks in a way that does NOT obstruct people's ability to get on or off the bus.

## 1.7 Improve Bus Routes and Service

- **Bus Connections:** From the lost bus connection in Bedford Commons to the 'connectionless' 80 and 87 routes, to name but a few examples, the current bus routes need to be 'knit together' in a more effective manner, one which considers ease of transfers and the needs of persons with disabilities.
- **Routes:** Participants also commented on how many areas within HRM have no bus service at all. Lucasville, for example, has neither bus service nor sidewalks yet is flanked by two routes (Sackville Drive and Hammonds Plains Road) that have both. The question was posed, "Why doesn't HRM connect the two roads through Lucasville?" Lack of bus service poses a significant problem for aging and low income populations outside the downtown core.
- **Wifi:** Another significant problem people noted is that scheduling is not often accurate. If Wi-Fi were provided on buses, this would help people adjust their schedules accordingly.
- **Bus Stops:** Increase the number of stops in high employment areas to help persons with disabilities because multiple stops/transfers are especially difficult for persons with disabilities. Alternatively, buses could be asked to stop outside the homes or apartments of wheelchair users.
- One father shared his own personal struggle that changes to bus stops has posed for him and his family. His daughter has significant physical disabilities and is confined to a wheel chair. The family chose their apartment because of its proximity to a bus stop. Unfortunately, the bus stop was moved and the change has made access to public transportation almost impossible. Despite his repeated efforts to speak with a representative from HRM, no one has returned his calls.
- **Bus Shelters:** Make bus shelters more comfortable and safe by cleaning them more regularly, improving lighting and seating and enforcing the



smoking bylaw. The Lacewood bus shelter was cited as an example of a shelter that requires improvement.

- **Bus Seats:** Modify the new plastic bus seats so that they pose less of a slipping hazard for people with mobility issues.

## Sidewalks and Roads: What Participants Said

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### 2.0 Treat Sidewalks Like Roads

#### *2.1 Clear Obstructions from Sidewalks and Parking Spaces in Winter, Spring, Summer and Fall*

- **Seasonal Obstructions:** HRM should keep sidewalks clear of obstructions throughout the year. Participants commented on the ever-changing seasonal challenges associated with travelling on city sidewalks; from outdoor patios and construction barriers in the summer to snow banks in the winter, they described an ever-changing gauntlet of dangerous obstacles. Many people noted that on snowy mornings, roads are cleared for cars but sidewalks are not. Sidewalks are to wheelchair commuters as roads are to drivers. Drivers, for example, would not tolerate sandwich boards featuring daily specials or outdoor patios in the middle of their roads.
- **Snow:** The ideal winter sidewalk snow clearance would keep snowbanks at crosswalks low enough for a person using a wheel chair to see over and banks cleared at every direction so people don't need to travel two blocks out of the way to cross the street. HRM needs to monitor how its snow removal contractors are clearing sidewalks more closely and enforce standards consistently.

#### *2.2 Ensure that Community Infrastructure is Connected via Sidewalks, Transit and Crosswalks*

- **Equality in Sidewalks and Transit:** Parks, playgrounds and cultural centres can only be enjoyed if they can be accessed. Many vital services in HRM are not connected to the communities they serve because there is no way of reaching them by bus, bike or foot. For example, Africville, one of HRM's and Nova Scotia's most significant historic sites is only



accessible by car. And, Lucasville is not connected to Bedford or Sackville by sidewalks or transit. The increase in population and corresponding high-speed traffic has made the road too dangerous for citizens, especially children, to walk on. The same dangerous situation is also found in Cherry Brook, Preston and North Preston.

### *2.3 Commit to and Implement a Consistent Curb Cut Standard*

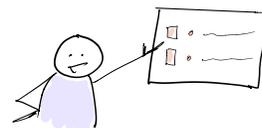
- **Curb Cuts:** Participants noted how inconsistent curb cuts were throughout HRM making it difficult, and dangerous, for people to anticipate how to enter or step off of a sidewalk. Many participants commented that standardizing curb cuts within HRM would assist everyone - mothers with strollers, senior citizens with walkers, people with visual impairments and people using wheelchairs.

### *2.4 Ensure Accessible Parking Spots are Barrier Free*

- **Enforcement:** Participants shared many examples of accessible parking spaces that are not accessible. Some are too narrow, some have obstructions like parking meters or curbs with no curb cuts. HRM needs to ensure that its accessible parking spaces are, in fact, accessible.



# RECREATION RECOMMENDATIONS



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“Accessibility needs to be a leading thought, not an after thought.”

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“Understand that persons with disabilities face a lot of extra barriers.”

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“Anything can convert any one of us from an able-bodied person to a person with a disability. We need to view accessibility as an insurance.”

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“Communities are based on relationships. It takes time to build relationships but they’re necessary.”

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“No one should be turned away. If people want to come, they should be accommodated like they are at a YMCA.”

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## Access to Nature, Parks and Facilities: What Participants Said

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### 3.0 Ensure Everyone can Access Nature, Parks and Facilities

#### *3.1 Extend Transit Routes to Beaches, Parks, Trails and Recreation Centres*

- **Transit:** Transit routes should facilitate access to beaches, parks, trails and recreation centres. Many participants noted that we live in one of the most beautiful Municipalities in Canada. We’re surrounded by beautiful beaches and trails, yet adults and children with disabilities and/or living in poverty cannot either get to them because current public transportation routes do not go there.



### 3.2 Make Beaches, Parks and Trails Fully Accessible

- **Access Beyond Parking Lot:** Getting to HRM's trails, beaches and parks is only half the battle. Once a person with a disability arrives, they often find that they cannot access the beach or trail beyond the parking lot. Several people noted that if they can get to a beach, they can often only travel as far as the end of the wheel chair ramp which often ends where they beach begins. Mobimats were offered as an example of something that HRM could install in more beach and lake areas which also are accessible on public transit and Access-A-Bus routes. This would allow persons with disabilities to join their children, family and friends in an activity that many of us take for granted.
- The addition of benches, placed generously along trails, would also accommodate people who may need to stop and rest frequently.
- People also noted that the North Preston Sports Field, a new field, is impossible to access for anyone with a mobility issue. The field's steep trail entrance, the boulders blocking the path all make access impossible. This is a new facility that was not designed with accessibility in mind.
- **Fitness:** Some participants offered the Metropolitan Track in Sackville as an example of a HRM facility that helps maintain their fitness and prolong their independence. They cited this track as an example of how maintaining an outdoor facility year-round could support people in maintaining their health and quality of life year-round.
- **Playgrounds:** Accessible principles should be a "leading thought", not an "after thought" in designing and building playgrounds. The Hawthorne School Playground was offered as a model of accessibility. Playgrounds should also be designed for a variety of needs. APSEA's playground was also offered as an ideal.
- **Nature and Gardening:** Access to nature also included gardens. Community gardens should be accessible to HRM citizens for three reasons: health promotion, community building and food security.
- **Enforce Dog Bylaws:** Participants noted that some immigrants may come from countries where dogs are feared. When some people encounter a dog off-leash in Canada, their reaction reflects previous



frightening experiences. This can be particularly difficult for young children or adults with physical disabilities.

## Recreation Programming: What Participants Said

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### 4.0 Build Upon a Strength by Extending Recreation Programming and Its Reach

#### *4.1 Increase Current Levels and Types of Recreation Programming*

- **Increase Spaces and Reach:** Increase availability of programs in spaces where there is high demand and long waiting lists. Participants also recommended that HRM should reach out to youth who currently do not access recreation programs and services. The Friendly Faces Friendly Spaces program was cited as an example of a start to achieving this.
- **Variety in Programming:** Parents of children with autism also noted how stressful recreation programming can be for people with autism. They suggested providing quiet spaces, times and/or smaller classes so that these individuals can enjoy the programs and services that HRM has to offer without feeling overwhelmed by the hustle, bustle and noise that often accompany these programs and services.
- Participants also requested more gender-specific programs such as those currently offered at the Canada Games Centre.

#### *4.2 Offer Subsidies to Persons with Disabilities*

- **Increase Funding:** HRM should expand the recreation programs it currently offers by increasing funding and staffing levels. Many participants noted the profound and positive impact that HRM's current recreation programming has had on their lives and/or their children's lives. Parents noted the psychological and physical benefits of swim lessons and summer camp for their children. Other participants noted that HRM's recreation facilities (pools, gyms, etc.) allowed them to maintain muscle mass and fitness levels all essential factors in maintaining their ability to live independently - something that both the individual and HRM would surely support. Ultimately, participants



reminded HRM that investing in recreation facilities, programs and parks is a long term investment that pays significant dividends years from now.

- **Promote Funding Options:** Make information on funding options like Jordan's Principle, for example, available to people when they register for programs.
- **Subsidies:** Many Nova Scotian children and adults with disabilities rely on income assistance. There are innovative ways to support Recreation for those who can't afford it because it is an important contributor to health. HRM should subsidize services and programs or make them free for persons with disabilities.
- One participant noted that the YMCA's philosophy should be adopted by HRM. "No one should be turned away. If people want to come, they should be accommodated like they are at a YMCA."

#### *4.3 Increase Numbers of and Train Recreation Staff to Accommodate Persons with Disabilities*

- **Staff Training:** HRM staff need to possess the appropriate skills, knowledge and attitudes in order to accommodate many needs. Amputees, for example, need specialized assistance from staff to help them get from the change room to the pool. Cultural sensitivity training should also be provided to staff to ensure that all members of HRM are welcome in HRM facilities. Several participants noted that children from Cherry Brook, for example, may not feel welcome in Cole Harbour Place because of the way they are treated by some staff.
- **ASL:** HRM should offer interpreting services in its programs to accommodate people who are deaf or hard of hearing.
- **Variety in Language Services:** Participants in the ISANS sessions recommended providing translation services for communities where other languages, Arabic or Farsi for example, are commonly spoken.
- **More Inclusion Coordinators:** Increase the number of Inclusion Coordinators to help make Programs accessible.



## Promoting Recreation: What Participants Said

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### 5.0 Promote Accessible Programs and Facilities

#### *5.1 Make Accessible Programs and Features More Visible on HRM Website*

- **Improve Materials and Remove “Planning Speak”:** Participants described how difficult it was to find out about the accessible programs offered throughout HRM. They suggested revising the Recreation Catalogue and HRM website to make that information easier to find.
- **Publish Accessibility Features:** The HRM website should also clearly indicate the accessible features that each recreation centre provides: pool lifts (and their current state of repair), adult change tables, accessible playground features, etc.
- **Conduct Strategic Outreach:** HRM should strategically and actively promote its services in targeted communities by embedding HRM staff within those communities in order to build relationships and increase participation in programs and services.

#### *5.2 Improve Trail and Park Signage*

- **Better Signage:** Participants suggested including signage which clearly indicates trail routes and relevant trail information about grade, trail surface, rest stops, etc. This information should also be available on HRM’s website and at the trail head allowing citizens to set expectations and plan accordingly.

#### *5.3 Use Parks to Improve Usage and Tourism*

- **Enhance Attractions:** Participants also noted that local parks and attractions could be made more attractive and family-friendly by providing snacks, shops similar to other countries.



## Recreation Facilities: What Participants Said

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### 6.0 Improve Existing Recreation Facilities

#### *6.1 Improve Washroom Facilities*

- **Washrooms and Change Rooms:** Participants offered many examples of recreation facilities that lacked adult change tables, or acceptable accessible washroom/change facilities. Although a facility may claim to have an accessible washroom, for example, it does not mean that the washroom is 'usable'. Some washrooms have doors that swing inward or are too small for a person in a wheel chair to maneuver once inside.
- **Increase Numbers:** Participants recommended that HRM improve the quantity and quality of family washrooms. They noted that it is particularly important for parents with adult and child dependents.
- **Provide Ongoing Funding for Cherry Brook Recreation Centre:** HRM gave Cherry Brook the building which houses the Cherry Brook Recreation Centre. The longterm viability and success of the centre requires ongoing municipal funding.

#### *6.2 Install Flooring that Accommodates Para Sports*

- **Gym Floors:** Rubber gym floors pose barriers for persons using wheelchairs. Hardwood floors are a solution to this problem.

#### *6.3 Install, Maintain and Train Staff in using Pool Lifts*

- **Pool Lifts:** The quality of pool lifts throughout HRM varies from one pool to the next. Also, maintenance and repair of this equipment seems to be slow. Swimming is viewed by many as their preferred form of exercise and the pool lift is sometimes a barrier that stands in their way. If the equipment is broken, or if staff are busy or untrained on how to operate it then people can't access the pool.



#### *6.4 Increase Number of and Support Use of Ice Surfaces*

- **Staff Training:** Staff need to develop better skill in helping persons with disabilities use the oval services and equipment. (Also, someone mentioned that the hand-propelled bike is out of order and needs to be repaired.)
- **Accessible Rinks:** Increase the number of accessible rinks. Currently, only 1 of 8 rinks offers sledge hockey.

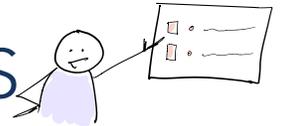
#### *6.5 Consult with Citizens Before Offering Programs and Building Facilities*

- **Consultations Before-the-Fact:** Participants noted that HRM should consult with citizens before they design recreation programming in order to determine what programming is needed and when/how that programming should be offered. HRM should also consult with citizens about what facilities they require before building new playgrounds, fields, etc.





# BUILDING RECOMMENDATIONS



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"There's no immediate fix when accessibility features are broken whether it's a pool lift or shower... There are two showers that have been two years in the 'fixing'."

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"Accessibility issues are found in even new construction. The Nova Centre, for example, has video screens but no Braille and it has upper level glass fire safety doors with no button."

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"The US Accessibility Act provides insight on where we can go from a legislative standpoint."

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## Building Codes: What Participants Said



### 7.0 Enforce Existing Building Codes and Ensure They Exceed Minimal Standards

#### *7.1 Ensure HRM Buildings Exceed Minimum Accessible Requirements*

- **High Standards:** Accessibility requires more than just a ramp. As a result, HRM should build/renovate facilities beyond minimum accessibility requirements. Many participants suggested HRM implement the Rick Hansen Foundation International Standards. Many participants held up the Lacewood and Dartmouth Terminals as models of accessibility. They give due HRM credit for this and suggest that the Scotia Square and Mumford Terminals be remodelled accordingly.
- **Safety First:** Participants noted that a person with mobility issues or using a wheelchair would be able to evacuate Alderney Gate in the event of a fire or other emergency. Narrow stairwells and doors that block evacuation make the building a fire trap.
- **"Before Thought":** Accessibility needs to be built into the design or renovation plans from the outset not after-the-fact. For example, the new



IWK elevators do not have Braille. Braille should have been automatically included in the design and, subsequently, installation.

- **Incentivize High Standards:** An app, for example, that allows users to input barriers they experience at businesses, parks, etc. throughout HRM would act as an incentive for businesses to provide inviting accessible spaces for persons with disabilities. Participants suggested that HRM find additional ways of incentivizing businesses to exceed accessibility codes.

### *7.2 Enforce Existing Building Codes*

- **Enforcement:** HRM should enforce existing building codes and hold businesses accountable for adherence to code. Participants noted that HRM has building codes in effect which are not enforced. The codes should work and, if they were enforced, many barriers would be avoided.
- **Smoking Bylaw Enforcement:** Many participants complained about having to inhale second-hand cannabis and tobacco smoke in bus shelters. They strongly recommended that HRM enforce its smoking bylaw more rigorously to protect transit users from this health hazard and to ensure that children are not sent a message that smoking is acceptable.

### *7.3 Improve Public Washroom Accessibility*

- **Public Washrooms:** HRM should make public washroom access a top priority: inaccessible washrooms are identified as a key interior barrier. From doors that swing the wrong way to stalls that are too small to maneuver in, participants noted that there should be a standard to which all public washrooms, buildings, facilities should meet.



## Auditing and Repairing: What Participants Said

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### 8.0 Develop an Auditing, Tracking and Reporting System for Repairs

#### *8.1 Track and Publicize Building and Equipment Repair Status*

- **Accountability for Repairs:** Participants noted that some pieces of broken equipment have, despite frequent calls to 311 or complaints to staff, taken many months to repair. One participant offered an example of how to address this issue: a label could be placed on the malfunctioning piece of equipment (door, pool lift, adult change tables etc.) indicating the date in which the malfunction was reported and that the label should in place until the issue is resolved. One participant noted that certain shower stalls have been broken for almost two years.

#### *8.2 Partner Early and Often with Persons with Disabilities to Perform Audits*

- **Consultants:** Many buildings in HRM are not accessible and decisions regarding accessibility are currently being made by able-bodied people. HRM should hire people from impacted communities to help with auditing (i.e. Government Accessibility Audit) and inspecting new builds and renovations. Providing members of this community with a seat at the table when talking about buildings and planning can help HRM save a lot of money and improve inclusion at the outset.
- **Transparency:** The results of these audits should be made available to the public so they know which buildings are accessible and what, specific, accessibility features they possess.



## Improved Housing: What Participants Said

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### 9.0 Improve Housing Conditions, Costs, Accessibility and Accommodation

#### 9.1 Control Housing Costs

- **Rent and Mortgage:** Participants in the ISANS sessions noted that rising rent costs made it difficult for them to manage their budget while transitioning to life in Canada. They suggested that HRM could control rent increases or partner with other levels of government to support home ownership. For example, could government support home ownership by creating a program which lets renters apply their rent to the ownership of a home?

#### 9.2 Improve Housing Conditions

- **Mice and Garbage:** ISANS participants described having to deal with mice, cockroaches, etc. in their buildings as well as issues with garbage collection. They recommend that HRM take a more active role in ensuring that apartment buildings and housing are clean and sanitary.

#### 9.3 Ensure Housing is Accessible

- **Accommodation for Disabilities and/or Large Families:** Participants also described being housed in apartments that were not accessible. For example, parents described being housed in a fifth floor apartment that was difficult to access for their disabled family member. They suggest that a family's needs (family size or family needs like children in wheel chairs, for example) be taken into consideration when locating them in their new homes. They also suggested that HRM should require that priority be given to families with disabled children and that the location of the housing be considered (first floor apartments for families with a disabled family member, for example).
- **Discrimination:** It was also noted that some landlords don't take people's needs seriously, particularly those with disabilities. HRM could also help newcomers advocate for their own needs more effectively by helping them read and understand lease agreements.





# OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS



## Employment with HRM

- HRM should make a concerted effort to be more inclusive in its hiring practices. Participants felt that persons with disabilities were not represented within the current workforce and decision making roles. Programs like “Ready, Willing, Able” were cited as programs to consider adopting in order to achieve this goal. Dalhousie University was cited as another example of an organization hiring African Nova Scotian candidates with potential even though they lack experience. HRM needs to do a better job of attracting and retaining young talent. Another way of achieving this goal is by “mapping” who does what and where. For example, a previous “map” revealed that of “500 Fire Fighters in Nova Scotia, only 4 were African Nova Scotians”.
- Participants also recommended that HRM share job postings with members of the inclusion community, offer more community outreach or conduct annual job fairs to ensure that individuals know about job openings and application procedures.
- Participants noted that the application process asks applicants to share their address, their race, etc. HRM should clarify what it does with this information. Some fear that screeners, for example, will judge them because of where they live.
- Participants also suggested that HRM should consult with the broader community to determine whether and how to include the question of race on application forms. “Visible Minority”, for example, could be broken down into sub-categories such as “African Nova Scotian”, etc. They also recommended a more flexible application process, one that accommodates special needs (i.e. literacy, ability to write).
- Participants also recommended that HRM should allow its staff to do more outreach without putting organizational or administrative barriers in their way.
- Participants noted that HRM’s list of qualified vendors should be expanded to reflect HRM’s diverse community.



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## Website and Social Media

- HRM needs to make its website more accessible by incorporating the following suggestions: a) ensure all web pages are 'readable' on Screen Readers (or other technologies used by blind/visually impaired citizens); b) provide closed captioning on all videos and photos that appear on HRM website and social media (one participant illustrated how easy it was to provide close captioning on Twitter photos); c) provide language translation options for HRM's website; d) post documents as PDF or word documents that can be read by speech reading software; e) ensure photos reflect HRM's diverse community.

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## Mail-Outs and Signage

- HRM Mail-outs should comply with the following CNIB Criteria: a) minimum 12 point font (preferably larger); b) Times Roman font (no scrolls and fancy fonts); c) black on white to provide good contrast;
- HRM signs should be posted at eye level, not behind a desk or other obstruction and they should be large enough for people with visual impairment to read and have good contrast (black on white).
- HRM's website and mail-outs are "very full of jargon" and loaded with "planning speak". Plain language principles should be followed in all correspondence, website and social media.

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## 311

- Those that use 311 speak of it very highly. Many in our sessions, however, had never heard of 311 before. This led to participants recommending that HRM do a better job of promoting the 311 service.
- Deaf or hard-of-hearing participants suggested incorporating text as a means of communicating with the 311 operators.
- Participants suggested training 311 staff to ensure they were skillful in working with citizens with cognitive disabilities and more knowledgeable about Access-A-Bus routes, schedules, protocols, etc.



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## Police

- Participants said that police officers need to be better trained to work with people who have suffered trauma, brain injuries and/or who have physical and intellectual disabilities. Participants also said that police should receive regular training on working with people with autism, including strategies for rescue (car accidents and fire).
- It was noted that Halifax Police conducted outreach to the African Nova Scotian community this year and the outreach efforts worked well because it offers a way of engaging with the community that is positive instead of punitive.
- Police should also receive ongoing training on cultural sensitivity.
- They also said that there should be more police officers who have ASL training.
- Participants also recommended that the current mental health and crises hotline needs to be improved. "10 - 4 is not sufficient."

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## Garbage Collection

- Participants said HRM should consider adopting a method of modified garbage collection for individuals with disabilities. This would require consultation with individuals with various forms of disability to understand their needs related to garbage collection. Additionally, the senior/older adult population should be consulted to have their needs assessed and addressed appropriately.
- HRM also needs to do a better job of garbage removal and rodent control in apartment buildings where rodents are a problem.
- HRM should also help residents understand how to sort garbage properly and why it is important.

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## Fire Services

- Several participants suggested that buildings should be fitted with flashing alarms or other devices that would alert blind and/or deaf and hard of hearing citizens that there was a fire/emergency or that police were at the door.



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## Press Releases and Ads

- Press releases and ads should be available electronically in accessible format (see 'Mail-Outs and Signage' on page 24).
- Ads for HRM events should use plain language and include pictures that indicate that a program or event is inclusive; the word 'accessible' should be very clear; and information on staffing (staff to participant ratio) should be included.
- HRM should book ASL Interpreters for HRM Events and mention this in the ad, press release, etc.
- As mentioned earlier, principles to follow include: good contrast, electronic format that can be accessed by speech reading software, and inclusive language (i.e. don't use language like "hearing impaired").

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## Other

- Most parking spots are too small for vans with a lift. HRM should ensure handicap parking spaces conform to a standard size.
- Provide more wheelchair accessible housing for low income citizens.
- Involve persons with disabilities in developing solutions. Ongoing consultation is key.
- Work with South House to collaborate on gender inclusive washrooms.
- HRM Council Meeting on Eastlink needs to be closed captioned and include ASL interpreters for citizens who are deaf and hard of hearing.
- HRM could lobby for increased minimum wage, more doctors, better and more affordable social housing, social assistance reform (ensuring that people transitioning to employment from social assistance aren't financially penalized) on behalf of its citizens.
- HRM should conduct frequent public consultations to help them act faster and in a way which reflects its citizens' needs.



# ★ Appendix A: Session Transcripts and Voting Results

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# 1.0 Sackville Sessions: February 28, 2018

- Attendance for 2:00 - 4:00 Session: 30 Participants
- Attendance for 6:00 - 8:00 Session: 10 Participants

## 1.1 Transportation

Based on your experience, what input can you offer to help HRM make our regular bus and Access-A-Bus service more accessible and inclusive? And what input can you offer to help HRM make our streets, roads and sidewalks more accessible and inclusive?

VOTES	SACKVILLE SESSION 1: TRANSPORTATION
5	Need a 'FRED': A 10-12 seat bus to link smaller areas without service / sidewalks
5	Look at existing codes. Ex ramp placements obstructed by parking / meters that are obstructing parking - and address the obvious. Apply common sense to code.
4	Regular bus - route that goes around Sackville without transferring
4	Lost bus connection with Bedford Commons and no sidewalk so need a bus here.
4	Regular bus - route that goes around Sackville without transferring
3	Put monitor on bus to assist people (tie down chairs, etc)
3	Visually impaired walkers: Snow removal esp. at bus stops a problem so remove snow in Sackville in a timely way.
3	Need better bus connections - Can't connect the 80 to 87 at Cobequid
3	Too many restrictions on Access-A-Bus - requires one week advance booking - need more Access-A-Bus'
3	No sidewalks in Lucasville. Require a greenway between Hammonds Plains Rd and Sackville Drive.
3	No service or sidewalks to Bedford Commons so difficult for businesses, staff and people in wheelchairs
3	Look at downtown link parking for wheelchair drivers - no parking available.
3	Recommended route: Cobequid Rd - Cobequid Hospital - Rocky Lake Rd - Sobeys Bedford - Hammonds Plains - Sackville Drive - Downsview Mall

2	Silver & Gold Club Sackville Community Center: Ask why they stopped the volunteer dialysis system – driver / volunteer burnout. You need 2 people on the service – A driver and a helper.
2	Cost discount for bus fares for people with CPP and disability
2	Increase transportation funding to secondary areas
2	STORY - for 40 years there was a light standard in a crosswalk - called 311 - within a year it was removed - ' amazing'
2	Address urban sprawl and demand that developers install sidewalks with new subdivisions.
2	Bike Lanes: Have a bike loop : Glendale - Beaverbank Rd - Sackville Drive - Cobequid
1	Story: Office at community center; Dial-A-Ride for dialysis and patient from Beaverbank needed money to access. In grey area for support.
1	Recommendation: HRM needs plan to serve Hubbards to Ecum Secum. How much are we willing to pay?
1	More parking at bus terminals.
	Is it reasonable for Access-A-Bus to walk long distances / physically assisted. Consider liability and expectations placed on people.
	No bus route on Connolly Rd - need one
	Good to see Councillors in the room - Need more decision makers in the room.

VOTES	SACKVILLE 2: TRANSPORTATION
4	Try to find more money in budget to keep stops free of debris, salting, keeping clear.
4	Regular buses: Scheduling is not accurate. People need to be able to trust and feel safe with the system because it is their main mode / connection
4	Sidewalks need to be clear, salted and accessible.
3	Wi-Fi for buses to access information from devices is huge benefit
3	Access-A-Bus scheduling is hindering. Find more money and a better system.
3	Crosswalks require auditory alarms. Perhaps in residential areas it is only triggered when the button is pressed.
2	All buses should be wheelchair accessible and leaning buses

2	Infrastructure needs to accommodate: Bus lanes; why so many breakdowns
2	Space along sidewalks to provide rest areas - recommend using the bus shelters with seats.
2	Sidewalk obstruction under construction activity: Notify users early (at previous intersection); ensure at least one side is open and clear; ensure a ramp gradient to transition
1	Funding for bus pass for low income (100% funding) and care providers for free.
1	Oral and written announcements on all buses
1	Train drivers to know how to hook in wheelchairs
1	Add system to know when the bus is coming - Apps for devices
1	Recognize cultural barriers to make feel inclusive: Language; Reach out to diverse communities; Always permit Hijabs
1	Affordability: HRM Implement a system to extend transfer for the entire day rather than an hour. In Toronto, transfer is ok as long as travelling in the same direction.
1	Autism client was refused to board the bus. Need Driver training of needs and recognition of need to be inclusive of population.
1	Audio announcement of bus departures at terminals.
1	Increased numbers bus shelters equipped with benches and heaters.
1	Accessibility is bike lanes, wide sidewalks, etc for a healthy and inclusive health-promoting lifestyle. Look for more opportunity.
1	Pedestrian access from Sackville to Bedford is currently only on the trail, which is not very accessible (and sometimes flooded)
	Getting to and from bus stops is also important to keep clear.
	Access-A-Bus: A healthy life needs spontaneity and this is lost when the service is not reliable.
	Address accessibility for non-literate person: how to get to stop / where to go after the stop. Set up voice readers.
	Program to support Access-A-Bus Users to transition to Regular Bus with comfort.
	Increase and put accessible taxis in the system.
	Entirely new laying down of sidewalk surfaces.

	For crosswalks not at lights: Driver may not see and person in wheelchair may not be as visible or as able to move out of the way. Need to address crossings.
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## 1.2 Parks, Recreation, Programs

Based on your experiences, what input can you offer to help HRM ensure that our new and existing rinks, playgrounds, and infrastructure for parks and leisure are more accessible and inclusive? And what input can you offer to help HRM ensure that our new and existing recreation programs are more accessible and inclusive?

VOTES	SACKVILLE 1: PARKS, RECREATION, PROGRAMS
5	Track on Metropolitan Ave is not accessible year round but should be.
5	Sackville Heights Community Center - We need an accessible elevator
4	All parks need wheelchair accessible swings (little platforms)
4	Need discounts for persons with disabilities
3	AT Trails - Transportation and Parks Departments conflict. Give parks money to build trails in parks. "Silo battle has to stop" HRTrails Assoc.
3	A lot of existing facilities are not accessible. Watch and see where improvements could be made. Ex. Library
3	More accessible playgrounds in general
3	Meetings like this every 6 months for an "unofficial 311"
3	Seniors can't access this (Sackville Sports Stadium) because the grade of the road is challenging from bus stop. Path floods in rain, icy, wet
2	Library (As visually impaired, I register for programs there) - New ramp but steps not painted and then painted off-standard. Requires fixing for visually impaired.
2	Eliminate barriers for kids at HRM Summer Camps - Limited number of assistants and now can only attend for 3 weeks.
2	Kids with Autism using pool- Need more specific times set aside to access resource.
2	One pool here in community is insufficient, especially for people with disabilities and rehab needs.
2	Sackville High has only one sidewalk. Needs one at the main entrance.
1	Berry Hill is not wheelchair accessible.

1	Define reasonable access to recreation areas. HRM needs policy to guide staff
1	Look at Hantsport Railway for purchase - for trail use potentially.

VOTES	SACKVILLE 2: PARKS, RECREATION, PROGRAMS
4	'Mobimats' at all HRM lakes to allow access to water in wheelchairs.
3	Make sure access to washrooms, especially outdoors, year round and gender inclusive.
3	Provincial Parks have washrooms but require larger space for an enclosed privacy area.
2	Adult sized change tables.
2	Amputees like to swim but can't get from change room to pool. Looking for trained staff to assist.
2	Family rates and other options to encourage people to come out.
2	More paved trails rather than only gravel.
1	Crystal Crescent Beach requires parking to make accessible.
1	Increase hours of operation of centers to improve accessibility and inclusivity.
	Oval in Halifax has accessible equipment and would like to see that expanded to other parks. Bathrooms are important. Wheelchair accessible important.
	Boardwalks at beaches need to be maintained and access to lakes available to access beaches.
	Affordability of HRM programs needs to be kept top-of-mind.

## 1.3 Buildings

Based on your experiences, what input can you offer to help HRM ensure that our new and existing buildings are more accessible and inclusive?

VOTES	SACKVILLE 1: BUILDINGS
4	Need HRM Policy re Senior Citizens' facility development. Need a senior's facility here that is not an old school (as is now). Get policies in place to support this.
4	Sackville Sports Center - No immediate fix available when accessibility features are malfunctioning. Need better maintenance than what we have (ex Showers are two years out of service)
4	New building with aging and disabled in mind. Community Rec Center.
3	Sackville Heights Community Center needs to be wheelchair accessible on both floors (elevator)
3	Despite building codes, still encounter problems with accessibility - eg MacDonald ramp was in drive thru - consider safety issues.

VOTES	SACKVILLE 2: BUILDINGS
5	Hold businesses accountable for adhering to business code for accessibility. Help them understand it is no longer an option.
5	Halifax would benefit from an App where users could input barriers at different sites for faster feedback, more specific feedback and expectations and to encourage businesses to comply.
2	If new buildings are being built to code but still have issues, then the building code needs to be revisited for safety issues.
1	HRM has a lot of old buildings that aren't accessible. Gain input from community for new buildings.
	Accessibility issues can be found even in new construction: Nova Center has video screens but no braille; Upper level has glass fire safety door with no button.
	Availability of accessible washrooms and all gender washrooms.
	Central library is a good example of an accessible HRM building.
	In Ottawa, businesses have simple wooden ramps to help business be more accessible.

	Require consultation with various communities. Look for innovative ways to have them part of the discussion.
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## 1.4 Services

Based on your experiences, what input can you offer to help HRM ensure that the way we communicate with our citizens is more accessible and inclusive? The specific aspects of our communication that we would like you to consider are: Mail-outs; website and social media; 311; press releases and ads; services such as fire and garbage collection; and employment.

SACKVILLE 1: OTHER   EMPLOYMENT   PRESS RELEASES & ADS   WEBSITE & SOCIAL MEDIA   311   FIRE   POLICE   GARBAGE
Wheelchair accessible housing for low income.
More integration of Rec Programs with other programs - Senior Programs, Health Programs, Youth Interests
Make handicap parking standard size as I have a handicap van with a lift and most spots are too small.
Most parking spaces not wide enough - need a standard measure for parking space width (with ramps - side loading)
Accountability - 6 months follow up update on how many of these ideas are implemented and introduce a report back to the community.
Handicap stickers: Is there a way to indicate on stickers that a wider location for parking is needed.
People Parking in disability spots when shouldn't be using space.
Casual opportunities. If you are on CPP you can earn approx. \$5,000/year. Who is going to hire you when you have appointments, sick days, etc. If you could work some intermittently would be better than not at all.
Empowerment: Reconsider
MLA Office not wheelchair accessible. Building manager said to code but measured but off by 9 ft. Code is there but interpretation is off.
We need more day programs for persons with disability
Decrease cost of ambulance service for low income earners
More frequent registration for programs and programs in shorter duration allowing an opportunity to try without investing in longer programs they find they can't do.
24 hour hospital service

Biggest challenge until you change attitudes there won't be major improvements.  
Expired stickers - Enforce Rules. Promote awareness

(Check sticky) New Subdivisions build sidewalks; We need 10 AIT

Database for people with impairments willing to visit sites for input.

People are trying but not enough knowledge. Make us part of solution - bring in to try before finalizing.

Is there an app for HRM programming to more easily select your program / area/ Price / times / etc Booklet is good but a bit behind the times.

Reduce Mail Outs - Save Paper / Get more Social Media

Easier Access to Disability Services. More User Friendly.

RCMP - We need 10 more officers - One for each high school. We are desperate for Community Officers

Love App: Good up to date information which I can check for my pickups. Advertise this more.

SACKVILLE 2: OTHER | EMPLOYMENT | PRESS RELEASES & ADS | WEBSITE & SOCIAL MEDIA | 311 | FIRE | POLICE | GARBAGE

Bridging the gap employment programs for individuals with disabilities or from diverse backgrounds to support equitable employment - HRM Program

Designated employment or volunteer positions for persons with a disability

Canada Post & door-to-door delivery. Super boxes can be too far to walk to.

Inclusivity: New comers, LGBTQ community, senior groups, etc: When thinking about buses, streets, etc - always reach out to special interest groups to get their thoughts for how to make our community welcome and inclusive. For social media, websites, etc adverts - make it representative of these populations.

Overall comment: Intersectionality - Culture is woven in through an inclusion lens; not dividing in to a homogeneous lens.

More offered in ASL

User contributed Accessibility App for building information. Allow users to identify barriers or truly accessible venues

Can be info dense. Simply explain the information with easy language.

This is a great service. I used it several times and commonly with great results. Given a ticket # for the request, these are occasional times when it seems to have disappeared into the ether.

Diversify method of press releases - Print; online; Electronic media (TV/Radio)
All buildings be fit with flashing alarms.
ASL training for cops (visited yearly) Mental health training for situational defusion.
½ sized green bins for easier curbside delivery by tenants.
Return to door service for identified community members.
I love the App!
Hands-on to learn to sort real life stuff.

## 2.0 Dartmouth Sessions: March 1, 2018

- Attendance for 2:00 - 4:00 Session: 20 Participants
- Attendance for 6:00 - 8:00 Session: 6 Participants

### 2.1 Transportation

Based on your experience, what input can you offer to help HRM make our regular bus and Access-A-Bus service more accessible and inclusive? And what input can you offer to help HRM make our streets, roads and sidewalks more accessible and inclusive?

VOTES	DARTMOUTH 1: TRANSPORTATION
6	Snow Removal: Currently may work for pedestrians but not for those in wheel chairs, those with guide dogs or those with walkers.
5	Huge issue finding accessible taxis. Currently only two at any time and they don't prioritize wheel chairs. The % of accessible taxis should match the % of the population so they can better service.
5	Taxis: Clients are repeatedly refused because of guide dogs and calls to 311 are getting no results. Recommend that dispatch would record drivers that are refusing clients and penalize.
3	Buses: Better Signage because those with low vision can't see them. Bring down lower, higher contract and larger print
3	Access-A-Bus: Currently is too difficult to get a reservation. Recommend a non-judgmental survey of users to get feedback.
2	Review and implement design principles for continuity with curb cuts and sidewalks, including consideration for young and old. Put a lot more money to fix sidewalks.
1	In downtown Dartmouth, cuts get missed or filled in again
1	Move revenue from parking ticket enforcement to enhance curb cuts.
1	Have accessible parking spots that are regular spots but regular clients pay and accessible clients are granted a parking pass.
1	Improve Curb Cuts: Spring Garden Road is ok but Dresden Row is not; Higher than they should be because of storm water concerns. Match all to the universal standard for curb cuts. At busy intersections they often make all one cut but not consistent - Make sure it is one big wide cut rather than two.
1	Called 311 for parking enforcement but don't see them enforcing. Recommend that they enforce parking and more accessible parking spots.

	Consider us when they do snow removal
	Snow Removal: Have coordinated effort when doing tenders for a three year period so that the drivers have experience and know area
	Buses: Not all have a display, which is required for various groups. Recommend similar technology as airport screens.
	Recommend higher priority of enforcement because it is disgraceful that people are infringing on access spots.

VOTES	DARTMOUTH 2: TRANSPORTATION
4	Educate city workers to appreciate various basic challenges for general understanding of practices. If they deal with the public, they should understand both physical and intellectual disabilities.
4	Access-A-Bus will only look up several time slots and then say they are busy. Recommend providing taxis at Access-A-Bus rates (other cities do this); The lack of spontaneity is an issue; In BC, they provide a number of tags monthly for taxis. In Ottawa, if the bus is not available they are responsible to provide the user with a taxi. In New York, a free bus is offered if Access-A-Bus is not available.
3	Improved Bus Routes: Barrington St has lots of service but other areas have no service; Review to add / remove routes.
2	Increase the amount of stops because multiple stops/transfers are difficult. Increase the length of the bus and increase number of stops in high employment areas.
2	Access-A-Bus: difficult to get bus; varying schedules. Drivers are great people but accessing the service is very challenging. Have online form for application; website clarification needed; 311 operators need to know how to explain; Access-A-Bus application portion that requires doctor sign off for online applications would need coordination.
1	Crosswalk Safety: Once a week nearly hit when crossing with dog; People aren't paying attention and seems to be getting worse; Looking for better policing, better education (licence renewal) and increase funding. Not always a driver issue.
1	Training provided for bus users with accessibility issues so that people are comfortable boarding with scooters and equipment. There is a handbook.
1	Training for drivers so they can appreciate how users feel.
1	Bus Training through transit to teach users the routes. Assignment to users for their specific routes to increase comfort and decrease bad experiences.

1	Bus: Lacewood and Dartmouth terminals are great for visually impaired so look to roll out to others such as Scotia Square and Mumford to reconfigure.
1	Reopen the debate on dogs on ferries and buses. Should be able to take dog to Halifax on ferry on non high traffic times rather than having to drive. Animals should be allowed on bus for anxiety issues / panic disorders.
1	T1000 is taxi by-law and needs to change. Push was for 100% accessible but that was not feasible. Accessible Roof Lights were being handed out with no area restrictions. Recommend a number of Accessible Licenses need to cover specific areas as Accessible Drives.
1	Curbs to enter Sidewalks: Designed for wheel chairs but for low vision persons, it can easily take people on to street. Set Tactile Markers into curve. Inglis and South St. is a good example.
1	Sidewalk Signal Buttons: Make sure pavement goes to the button for cross walk signaling and make standard for low vision clients.
	CNIB Offers training for visually impaired using buses but bus drivers need to refer to the service.
	Halifax Regional Police (HRP) involved in running saliva test (Cannibinoid / THC) Pilot; Drivers are scared to take medications because the THC may register on the saliva test. Recommend HRP start talking about it and run tests and to separate recreational vs medical use.
	Sidewalks: When repairing cutouts, fix one side at a time during construction.
	Restaurant Patios: Infringement on sidewalks is a hazard for visually impaired. Fix issues: a) allow preplan a block ahead; b) need way to notify public.
	Currently lots of issues with taxis arriving but can't accommodate the client. Taxis need to be aware of the equipment guidelines / requirements.

## 2.2 Parks, Recreation, Programs

Based on your experiences, what input can you offer to help HRM ensure that our new and existing rinks, playgrounds, and infrastructure for parks and leisure are more accessible and inclusive? And what input can you offer to help HRM ensure that our new and existing recreation programs are more accessible and inclusive?

VOTES	DARTMOUTH 1: PARKS, RECREATION, PROGRAMS
4	Improve accessible facilities for Para Sports. Rubber floors in gyms are barriers for wheelchair sports and hardwood floors is a solution.
3	Beaches should be more accessible. Birch Cove, Lake Banook and Kearney Lake are great; others can be equipped with MobiChair; Promote which are accessible.
2	Make interpreting services for deaf available for HRM programs.
2	Improve wheelchair access to trails by a) online rating system for wheelchair accessibility and b) provide signage at trail head to indicate grade (similar to signage on ski hills)
2	School playgrounds (ex. Hawthorne): Accessibility should be a leading thought rather than an afterthought; Instill the principles.
2	Add more benches to trails for clients with walkers and canes. Example: Saltmarsh Trail only has their first bench 1km into the trail.
2	Understand that persons with disability face a lot of extra barriers and implement policies for extended terms and special consideration (such as loans and grants)
2	Train more support workers for HRM programs.
1	Require more leash free areas in HRM
1	Better support for education for persons with disabilities: A prerequisite to getting a job is proper schooling but often can't access and the cycle is discouraging; provide support and remove barriers to further education
1	Fix disconnect between schools so they know accessibility considerations.
	Ice Hockey Rinks: Ensure there are no big steps onto the ice surface to make more accessible for Sledge Hockey. BMO Rink is Sledge Hockey Friendly but Burnside Rink is not.

VOTES	DARTMOUTH 2: PARKS, RECREATION, PROGRAMS
4	Food Security: Make community gardens accessible and promote awareness. Gardening program should be open to everyone. At NS Hospital Community Garden we asked to have our plot moved to allow easier access. Overall, need space allocated.
4	Playgrounds: Need to think multi-sensory, wheel chair accessible and other disabilities considered. More wheel chair swings and climbing apparatus' for physical disabilities, such as contrast for low vision and use metal slides due to the static issue with plastic. APSEA is a good model.
2	Parks: Offer programs such as teach-to-fish, learn-to-camp and nature walks for disabled clients. Consider offering at no charge for low-income as this is a disability in itself. Provide fishing rods at Albro Lake, etc and allow people to reserve and use the gear to better enjoy the water and parks. Bedford Learn to Fish.
2	Both National Programs and HRM Programs should be made available. Adventure Earth Center (an HRM Rec Center in Halifax) has a fantastic program to roll out to all centers. Funding is made available from the Green Child Fund which is separate from the center but should be available to all centers to provide support for accessibility funding and low income funding. Learn-to-Hike and other programs to be more accessible, especially for children.
2	Add an Inclusion Coordinator to help make programs accessible. At least one easy contact in HRM or one per each center.
2	Gardens are important for mental health. BC has medicinal type gardens and we should explore.
1	The Oval Rink is great but for low vision, require markers around the rink to mark borders; Need adult sized push supports to help skating mobility
1	Bus Routes: Add a bus on the Waverley Rd to allow access to Laurie Park
1	Enhance park accessibility, including washrooms, in the winter. Don't use non-dog friendly salt.
	Expand programs for adults
	Make write ups on Parks and Trails tactile for Low Vision and have auditory available, similar to that in museums.
	Training accessibility among landscapers for accessibility and skill development.
	Important to have benches on trails.
	Play equipment needs different textures to enhance low-vision experience. Ensure it is not all cold metal.

## 2.3 Buildings

Based on your experiences, what input can you offer to help HRM ensure that our new and existing buildings are more accessible and inclusive?

VOTES	DARTMOUTH 1: BUILDINGS
5	Accessible computers in Halifax Libraries: In Halifax, located under giant sunroom and should be moved; In Dartmouth, only one computer with Zoom Text and someone was using the larger screen for games. Ensure enforcement so they are available for accessibility users.
4	About 75% of HRM Buildings are not accessible. Decisions are currently being made by able-bodied persons. Recommend hiring individuals from impacted communities. Recommend implementing GAA (Government Accessibility Audit) whereby disabled persons are trained and hired to do certification.
4	US Accessibility Act provides insight on where we can go from a legislation standpoint; many types of disability to address.
3	Explore Buildings in HRM and enter audit results in a website.
3	Ensure new buildings are accessible. Example: multipurpose room on the top floor but don't have an elevator access to the top floor / not accessible.
3	Refer to American and Ontario Acts so we don't reinvent the wheel; we know what works.
2	Each apartment building should have 1 or 2 units on the ground floor for accessibility
2	Restaurants and buildings: Even new builds have issues where the restaurant is accessible but the washrooms are not; Same issues for hotels; Personnel think they are very accessible but they are not; reinforce the importance from the tourism side.
1	Renovations are not providing access in areas such as width of doors and aisles; Users should be consulted; Like the idea of an audit.
1	Apartments for Seniors: All new buildings should have a ratio of accessibility
1	Consult disabled clients because there are many more components than just width for access
1	Accessible Washrooms: The washroom may be accessible but access to get there is prohibitive, especially in provincial buildings. Items to consider: doors need to swing out , dispensers for paper towel easy to operate.

	Need funding to support equipping apartments for low income with fire alarms that provide visual as well as auditory notification to accommodate deaf individuals.
	Cafes: Address challenges of accessibility and of outdoor patios. Recommend stopgap.ca for 1 & 2 step entrances whereby 30 ramps for \$3,000 with benefit of removable, paintable, simple and impactful.
	Large print and braille menus
	Bus Stops: Revisit glass structures; should be molded plastic or larger cement

VOTES	DARTMOUTH 2: BUILDINGS
4	Education: Encourage what people can do; Abilities Week Awareness Program.
2	All buildings, not just HRM, require an accessibility by-law
2	Think accessibility at the outset, not later. Ex. New elevators at IWK don't have braille.
2	Washroom accessories need to be accessible and working properly.
1	City needs to look at buildings for low vision: a) research lighting. Glare is a huge issue. Too much or too little is an issue. Special filters and blinds are available for windows; b) floor and wall surface considerations and c) flat paint / colour considerations.
1	Sound in buildings can be a barrier to participation. Be aware and adjust
1	Provincial buildings need to be accessible. Example: Stairs at Dartmouth General by the bus stop are a barrier.
	Lighting can trigger seizures.
	CNIB has document that provides guidance for low vision: contrast black and white; eye level; raised letters; braille.
	Fix buttons on automatic doors.

## 2.4 Services

Based on your experiences, what input can you offer to help HRM ensure that the way we communicate with our citizens is more accessible and inclusive? The specific aspects of our communication that we would like you to consider are: Mail-outs; website and social media; 311; press releases and ads; services such as fire and garbage collection; and employment.

DARTMOUTH 1: OTHER   EMPLOYMENT   PRESS RELEASES & ADS   WEBSITE & SOCIAL MEDIA   311   FIRE   POLICE   GARBAGE
<p>GAA: Government Accessible Audit: Job idea created by Ryan Shay. NS government is to provide small training workshops to eligible persons with a disability in order to become a GAA. Once you become a GAA you are certified to go around the HRM and audit/log accessibility data about the business in HRM. How it will help: a) Give persons with disabilities employment opportunities; b) Help us understand accessibility; c) help with a more accessible future. Possible monthly allowance to come out job. GAC (Government Accessible Consultant): Job idea created by Ryan Shay. Same amount of training as GAA except in different category. GAC's will be hired by NS to sign off on the accessibility of all new construction projects.</p>
<p>Other/Police: Provincial Legislation V Municipal Legislation April 2016</p>
<p>Linguistic Barriers (*French; MicMaq): Ensure signage and promotion of accessibility services in both official languages.</p>
<p>Not Accessible: Zoom Text and Screen Readers; Must be very plain text because Zoom Text often loses functions</p>
<p>Garbage/Recycling in public areas is daunting for visually impaired.</p>
DARTMOUTH 2: OTHER   EMPLOYMENT   PRESS RELEASES & ADS   WEBSITE & SOCIAL MEDIA   311   FIRE   POLICE   GARBAGE
<p>Equity hiring clause</p>
<p>Job sharing. Fatigue is an issue for many disabled.</p>
<p>We have a lot of capable folks who are under-employed in the city, but for which could effect positive change. It would be great to have a "call for submissions" type of program where citizens could propose programs / initiatives.</p>
<p>Better support for local business / social enterprise would also be ideal and would reduce the burden (financial especially) on the government while promoting positive change.</p>
<p>Change legislation so low vision individuals can ride bikes on sidewalks.</p>

There needs to be a way / card system to grant access to services to ensure the YRE(?) not taken advantage of.

Criteria considered: Font no smaller than 12 point; Times Roman font (no scrolls and fancy fonts); black on white; use good contrast when creating documents (CNIB have a handout); signage eye level, not behind a desk or obstruction when you can't access up close.

Ask individuals which format they would prefer: mailout, print, large print, electronically.

available electronically in accessible format (speech readers)

How to know if police or fire service at your door

Public consultation and education on saliva test

Up policing / establish volunteer positions to tackle reckless driving / crosswalk safety. Better education is needed.

More strict enforcement of garbage rules! Adopting more progressive waste management policies has been successful in other areas in the province (Valley Waste) and around the world.

A way to let people know garbage is rejected

## 3.0 Halifax Sessions: March 5, 2018

- Attendance for 2:00 - 4:00 Session: 41 Participants
- Attendance for 6:00 - 8:00 Session: 20 Participants

### 3.1 Transportation

Based on your experience, what input can you offer to help HRM make our regular bus and Access-A-Bus service more accessible and inclusive? And what input can you offer to help HRM make our streets, roads and sidewalks more accessible and inclusive?

VOTES	HALIFAX 1: TRANSPORTATION
18	Access-A-Bus: Six weeks ago, a group met with Mayor around issues and recommend opening transportation to private sector bids, either through Taxi Commission or other. Should have transportation at beck-and-call. Need better alternatives.
17	Change requirement for Access-A-Bus to allow more time to accommodate work. Currently cannot use at all because change requirements are too high. Taxi fees are too high and therefore need a person to drive.
16	Halifax Transit buses should go to every recreation facility with easy access to the facility.
14	Taxis: Should be a requirement for accessibility. ie, In New York, 50% must be accessible; HRM the requirement is 0%
11	Improve tie-down system on regular buses.
9	Accessible Vans: Should be SUV Vehicle available when full. Solution is to buy a special SUV Van (ex New York City) rather than just a regular van that is retrofitted. Buy proper vehicles (Between 10 and 20 vehicles) and compel them to be available on a 24 hour basis.
8	Buildings: New builds need sidewalk from bus stop to front door. Ex. WalMart doesn't have this and you need to climb over snow banks to get to entrance. Add a by-law for large residential and commercial builds.
8	Snow Removal: Prioritize sidewalks for Vision 0 data because it affects people with disabilities more) Vision 0 includes accessibility data.
5	Bike lanes may be same height as sidewalk (Example at Almon St.): Needs to be at street level to allow access for getting out of vehicles

5	Bike lane: For people with vision loss, they step down from sidewalk to road. Need the lane at street level or require tactile indicators to mark from lane to road.
4	Communication: Bus drivers don't get out of bus and visually impaired don't see bus, so poor communication leads to missed drives.
4	Make all trails accessible.
3	Regular Bus: Increase the number of accessible spots from the current two.
3	Rails to Trails: HRM Transit should be linked to trail system with bus stops close by.
2	Cannot access Regular Bus or Access-A-Bus because not less than 1,000 feet from the bus stop. Access-A-Bus needs to be separate from the regular system because they need accessibility.
2	Sidewalks: Add cutouts on side streets by accessible parking spots.
2	Bus: Thought requirement was for foldable strollers. Implement here as well.
2	Access-A-Bus: Use small companies (such as Bay Rides in Tantallon) to service outlying areas. Expand this service.
2	Accessible Vans provided by Taxi Companies: Requirement was to call the driver rather than dispatch and was not cost effective for drivers to service. Need to align transit and taxis.
1	Tie Downs on Bus: They were looking at mechanical tie-downs which would be \$20-\$30MM but was shut down and rightly so. Should involve impacted groups for input and first hand research for options that work and requests can be simple.
1	Access-A-Bus: Review document needs to be released so public can review. (Overdue)
1	Sidewalks: Red Book needs to prioritize widening sidewalks on streets under construction.
	Access-A-Bus ridership is going up while regular bus ridership is going down so require better accommodation.
	Regular Bus: Parents with strollers are taking up Wheelchair spaces on bus so need to limit the number of strollers in same manners they limit number of wheelchairs.
	Bus: Lacewood Terminal has display screens at each spot but also a big one inside. Save money and just go with one big one inside.

	Notification on Trails to guide back if lost or misdirected and link to HRM Transit.
	Regular bus that is accessible for mothers with strollers and for wheelchairs.

VOTES	HALIFAX 2: TRANSPORTATION
12	Bus Drivers need training on handling wheelchairs and straps. Better training for drivers as they sometimes leave stops before seated.
11	Access-A-Bus: Same day booking; Make it so you don't need to book 7 days in advance. Want to book as a continuous user (ie student) and currently need to book each trip.
10	Sidewalks: Mornings for pedestrians an issue. Roads are cleared but sidewalks are not. Clear sidewalks earlier for morning commute.
9	Need support or subsidy for cab drivers so they can service.
9	Snow Removal: At end of Sidewalk, plows only goes in one direction leaving mountains to climb and need to go two blocks further so cut out left and right at every direction. Also can't see over these mountains when driving so need to shave banks at corners.
8	Taxis and Access-A-Bus: Converge the two systems and provide some subsidy to taxis.
7	Bus Passes: Incredibly expensive. Should be options for subsidy, especially if you don't have a job or are low income.
5	Sidewalks: Summer St portion is up a good 3 inches and doesn't blend smoothly; should be a smooth transition.
5	Access-A-Bus: Online booking option was supposed to be available last year. Make it available.
5	Access-A-Bus: Currently name is put on waiting list and have to keep going back to confirm bookings. Increase number of buses from 16 to 32.
2	Accessible cabs need to be booked a week in advance whereas colleagues only require five minutes. Remove booking requirements.
2	Bus terminals are hazardous for low vision. Expand the model used in Dartmouth: Tactile markers, pull up/pull out system; better marked; better organized; space to stay warm. Follow Dartmouth and Lacewood Models.
2	Placement of Crosswalk buttons: Important for new installs to have consistency of placement

2	Crosswalks: White should be changed to yellow with better lights, etc to improve overall visibility of crosswalk.
1	Bus: The exit areas at the third door are not cleared. Ensure all exit areas / door levels are clear.
1	Bus: Stop indicators and announcements don't work or too close to stop. Recommend better indicator and route map on every bus.
1	Access-A-Bus: Need other booking options for improved booking options for better efficiency. Offer electronic options.
	Bus: Regular bus and drivers are fabulous but got off bus at Bayers Rd & Dublin and slipped on snow at bus stop. Need sidewalk clearing to also do bus stops.
	Bus: At Woodside, witnessed an incident where teens were running to the bus and the door closed on them and left. Requires driver sensitivity training to show respect. Shocked with incident because if teens can access, then not accessible for anyone.
	Audible and visual displays on buses are great.

### 3.2 Parks, Recreation, Programs

Based on your experiences, what input can you offer to help HRM ensure that our new and existing rinks, playgrounds, and infrastructure for parks and leisure are more accessible and inclusive? And what input can you offer to help HRM ensure that our new and existing recreation programs are more accessible and inclusive?

VOTES	HALIFAX 1: PARKS, RECREATION, PROGRAMS
15	Beaches: Have one beach that is accessible by transit (for visually impaired and others)
12	Parks: Every new park/rink/etc should have accessibility for all
11	Family Washrooms: Important for parents with adult children. Increase the number of those available.
9	Programs: Offer access at times where noise levels are low (Autism). Better funding of programs that are currently offered so they can expand for better accessibility.
8	Oval Rink: Need help / employee training to support clients in using services and equipment.
5	Oval Rink: Hand propelled bike was out-of-order; Get spare
5	Change tables at Canada Games Center: Require change tables and support so can safely transfer adults to change table.
4	Programs: Recommend smaller classes for similar groups, such as those with autism who may have meltdowns and disturb the regular group.
3	Rink: Dartmouth/Burnside Rink is not an accessible surface. In HRM, only 1 of 8 ice surfaces is accessible for sledge hockey
3	TAB (Temporarily Able Bodied) - anything can convert any one of us to disabled so we need to view accessibility as an insurance. Recommend taking a wide ranging, default approach to make the city better. Need to recognize the benefits for a free future.
2	Parks and Rec inclusion for French. Applies to promotional material. Offer services and promote in a way so people can find you. Ex. Swim lessons are offered in French but very difficult to find in the document.
1	Ensure that programs are readable and have been reviewed by target audience. (CACL)
	Parks: Terrified of dogs so recommend one dog-free park

	Parks: Point Pleasant Park should have WiFi access to allow GPS for trigger points to allow access.
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VOTES	HALIFAX 2: PARKS, RECREATION, PROGRAMS
12	Programs: Need access to people that can run the program. Issues finding volunteers (ie Paddling); grassroots programs to get involved and access to volunteers or trained.
11	Accessible and all gender washrooms at all parks.
10	Beaches: Inverness Beach Be made accessible with chairs / Mobi Chairs. Incorporate in local HRM beaches for water access.
8	Promote accessible features for parks / rec on an 'accessible' website. A lot of issues with websites (to be highlighted in website section of comments)
6	Parks: Tactile markers to indicate areas; accessible swings; various textures and contrast (Oval is very white so pylons help). Looking for skating aids for Adults too.
6	Trails: Make all trails fully accessible for participation.
4	Playground equipment in Musquodobit has been broken for the past 4 years. Maintain all equipment regularly.
3	Programs: Slowly getting more inclusive but a long way to go. More programs for various needs. Not all on one organizations.
3	Trails: Mobility devices available for persons to use to fully participate.
3	Clubs that offer Day Programs are limited with Programming because buses only accommodate up to 4 spaces.
2	Summer Picnic at Oval: HRM hosted with disability community. Support shifted due to insurance. It was one time felt inclusive so should reinstate.
2	Bylaws: Adults not allowed to bike on Sidewalks but for persons with low vision, it is not safe to bike on road (need to use it to gain access to the trails for biking). Recommend revisiting by-laws.
1	Enhanced programs between school and programs.
	Oval: Great job to ensure variety on available equipment.

### 3.3 Buildings

Based on your experiences, what input can you offer to help HRM ensure that our new and existing buildings are more accessible and inclusive?

VOTES	HALIFAX 1: BUILDINGS
19	Washrooms: Change tables; Need buttons to get in or it is not considered accessible. Larger size rooms beyond code to accommodate caregiver and individual using a wheelchair; Move accessible washroom to the front of the public washroom; sliding doors on washrooms.
14	Refer to Rick Hansen Foundation International Standards: Different levels based on function. HRM to look at levels: Halifax Library is a Gold Standard.
14	Provide incentive for private companies to exceed code, such as jump ahead in queue and decreases in development fees.
10	Accessible vs. Inviting: Buildings should be inviting for all vs needing to jump through hoops.
5	Standards: Make sure not (?); Need regular review, enforcements and upgrades. Maintain and enhance standards.
2	Washrooms: Not accessible for power chairs; need access to washrooms larger and fold down tables for adults.
2	Accessible vs Barrier Free: ex In order to get a power chair through a door, it required repeated backup; Standards in HRM are required so more leaning in.
2	City Hall: Side entrance is accessible but door locked daily at 4pm and intercom signage is not clear about after hours access. Add a sign for after hours access. Should be open for all.
2	Barrier Free Design: Many Buildings are visitable but not accessible. Add this category - Just because you can get in is not accessible.
1	Double Doors: Make sure enough space to get the next door open.
1	50,000 Francophones in HRM: Looking for all signage in HRM in both languages.

VOTES	HALIFAX 2: BUILDINGS
16	Hire people who are disabled to help design/build rather than only hire able bodied persons. Better understand by consulting various communities that require accessibility at outset.
11	Washrooms: Require universal standards but not male/female.

10	Curb Cuts: At Halifax Forum, the only spot to cross is at Almon & Young St. Decrease the distance so it is not so difficult to access the Forum. There is a ramp at Liverpool St but can't get to it. Many other examples in the city.
6	Sidewalk corners require repair in many areas.
6	Audits through Hansen Foundation to determine level of access in each building and then develop plan to implement improvements.
5	Elevators: Shocked at number of buildings that you can't enter. City is built vertical but can't get up.
5	Hill from Harbour to Citadel: Connect downtown core with underground tunnel (Broader than the current WTCC tunnel)
4	HRM Should be checking all buildings for access. DQ in Dartmouth Crossing doesn't have a button - force access entrance. Enforce bylaws.
2	White on black contrast and braille as universal standard for signage
1	Pedway from Scotia Square is great. Increase the scope from waterfront to other areas.
	Washrooms: Recommend using universal standards for Male/Female signage rather than other terms.
	Halifax Library: Issues with lighting in elevator and no braille.

### 3.4 Services

Based on your experiences, what input can you offer to help HRM ensure that the way we communicate with our citizens is more accessible and inclusive? The specific aspects of our communication that we would like you to consider are: Mail-outs; website and social media; 311; press releases and ads; services such as fire and garbage collection; and employment.

HALIFAX 1: OTHER   EMPLOYMENT   PRESS RELEASES & ADS   WEBSITE & SOCIAL MEDIA   311   FIRE   POLICE   GARBAGE
Do not require applicants to have a driver's license
Public Gardens employees vs concrete / Roads employees: Maybe more desirable job - all white employees.
Accessible parking: Passes should be distinguished by need and accessibility: Persons with wheelchairs / assistive devices should have closer spots to doors/ramps/buildings than for passes for ex for persons with a pass for cardiac conditions but perhaps don't need to be <u>as</u> close to the door/ramp. Also larger spots for chairs/devices than for accessible spots that don't need devices and just need to be a bit closer to a location. Example: Blue Pass for chair or device needs high assistance and very close access and wide spot; Green Pass for cardiac or health condition and needs to be close enough to location as to not be harming to condition/person at hand; Red Pass for expectant mothers etc need to be close/ has a device but not disabled.
Work with South House to collaborate on gender inclusive washrooms. Inclusive language, not just a restroom for other.
Ensure all web pages are easily read by tech for the blind.
When talks like this take place, ask for email addresses so we can receive more information on issues that matter and especially further discussions.
Website (events page) needs to be updated more regularly
Pdf for rec programs is accessible but not user friendly. If organized by headings such as locations or activity to as 'Headings' then it will be easier to use.
Use dyslexic font.
Accessible pdf to email instead of paper mailouts (option?) ex for rec programs and tax bills.
When you call the number, the message is too long to find out which number you need to press; provide shorter recorded message.
More operators - many times on hold for too long.
Plain language information; pictures that show a program to be inclusive; the word accessible very clear; information on staffing (staff to participant ratio)

Station 2: 100 year old building doesn't need to be compliant. No community center / not really an accessibility concern. Rather see the money go elsewhere which more people will use.

Training for police to deal with people who have brain injuries and/or intellectual disabilities

Police to be better trained for mentally and physically challenged.

Their ... (?) support people trust are with them.

HALIFAX 2: OTHER | EMPLOYMENT | PRESS RELEASES & ADS | WEBSITE & SOCIAL MEDIA | 311 | FIRE | POLICE | GARBAGE

Inclusive Hiring

Equity hiring clauses

Educate public about myth about hiring individuals with disabilities

Have to do a better job of hiring people with disabilities into management positions. Have targeted hiring, internships and mentorships.

Keep stats on numbers by disability type, level of classification and severity of disability.

Don't just put blurb about inclusive employment because we don't see ourselves represented in HRM or Provincially

Disabilities are not always visually obvious so you can't always assume there is not representation

Need to have persons with disabilities in decision making roles to affect policy

Make HRM Welcoming: We don't see ourselves reflected in the workforce so if serious about this effort, HRM should make hiring a priority as an employer that represents its community.

Government to be transparent and show us the number, type and severity of disability.

Not much of a cost to hire mild to moderate disability but when costs are higher we are leaving a lot of people out - People who want to and should be able to be included.

Education: Require partnership with universities and colleges.

HRM Council Meeting on Eastlink needs to make the program closed captioning and have ASL interpreters for deaf and hard of hearing.

When deaf or hard of hearing use the video relay service to call HRM, the HRM Staff should accept the call and not ask for the relay operator to sign a confidentiality form (third party)

Bike lanes
Physically accessible daycares, (sleltes?), doctor examination tables.
Try to have some of the website information in ASL (Sign language) (VLOG) for deaf people.
Videos: Make sure captions are available. Twitter: There is the ability to put captures when you post photos using a settings feature for those who are visually impaired.
Hard to find social accounts: If you search HRM you cannot find them- it's buried if you search Halifax since they are branded HFX .. need to be publicized better.
Pre-recorded videos should all have ASL interpretations and captions.
All images should include image discriptions.
All Web material should be compatible with screen readers.
Website should use colours that are plain; clean background images.
Font should be appropriate font size or be able to be increased in size.
Font colours need to be plain, dark colours
There should be guidelines established for contrast ratios on web materials.
Compatible with screen readers
I tweet daily and had not been able to find the HRM twitter account for a long time. @hfxgov is not publicized enough and you cannot search to find it. Halifax is not in the heading so it is impossible to find if you search Halifax or HRM
Good contract for print material (black on white background)
Clear simple fonts such as Times Roman- not fonts with small curvy letters.
No water marks in background
Offer individuals the option of medium (?) text
Use PDFs or Word that can be read by speech reading software.
Offer texting
Call 311 - Can't because of smartphone should have 10 digit number for 311 to call for information..
Book ASL Interpreters for HRM Events and Mention in Flyer or Press Release etc that interpreters or any other accessibility services are available.

Good Contrast; electronic format that can be accessed by speech reading software, watch language that is used so it is not exclusive ex don't use language like hearing impaired.

Should book professional interpreter, not signer due to statement or internet

Organic bins in rural areas should be picked up each week from May to October 31<sup>st</sup>

Electronic system available to report to consumer why garbage has not been picked up

## 4.0 Tantallon Session: March 7, 2018

- Attendance for 2:00 - 4:00 Session: 1 Participants
- Attendance for 6:00 - 8:00 Session: 0 Participants

### 4.1 Transportation

Based on your experience, what input can you offer to help HRM make our regular bus and Access-A-Bus service more accessible and inclusive? And what input can you offer to help HRM make our streets, roads and sidewalks more accessible and inclusive?

VOTES	TANTALLON: TRANSPORTATION
1	Sidewalks: When private citizens are responsible there will be issues. Recommend in initial plan, involve people who are most drastically impacted to provide input at outset.
1	Organized voice to feed in through advisory group.
1	Transit: Not everyone has access. Many areas are not serviced. Problem especially for aging and low income populations outside downtown core.
	Buses: Level of assistance by driver is not consistent. They don't always meet client needs. Some are fabulous, others not.
	Bus: Announce stops for both vision and hearing impaired.
	Training and evaluation for drivers - need to monitor
	Need defined process to file experiences with 311 so it can be tracked and responded to. Let clients know how to because citizens deserve to know recourse when service fails them.
	Bus: Ensure drivers are supported.
	Community can provide input into specific areas to support clients that have need.

## 4.2 Parks, Recreation, Programs

Based on your experiences, what input can you offer to help HRM ensure that our new and existing rinks, playgrounds, and infrastructure for parks and leisure are more accessible and inclusive? And what input can you offer to help HRM ensure that our new and existing recreation programs are more accessible and inclusive?

VOTES	TANTALLON: PARKS, RECREATION, PROGRAMS
1	Western Commons Master Plan: 1 <sup>st</sup> trail is started. Trail should be accessible and barrier-free (grade no greater than 5%). This trail is not but need to recognize and promote to set expectations accurately. Understand items such as hand rails, rest spaces, surfacing and typography.
1	Build casual pool of inclusion support workers through community of support (HRM structure or not)
	Aspirational goals vs. achievable solutions: Communicate accurately which can easily be overlooked if clients not consulted at the outset.
	Swimming Instructors: Mainly youth; HRM Rec Centers have better access to support staff than non-HRM pools and centers. Provide HRM Staff to improve inclusion support.
	Voice of community that requires inclusion to open doors to make them feel invited. Feels intrusive for centers to go directly to ask individuals. Would be great to have a group that would provide input (General information available through HRM)
	Parks & Beaches: Require support to reach these places.

## 4.3 Buildings

Based on your experiences, what input can you offer to help HRM ensure that our new and existing buildings are more accessible and inclusive?

VOTES	TANTALLON: BUILDINGS
	Voice from community at table when talking about buildings, planning and codes. Can save a lot of money if planned at the outset. Adds inclusion if feel involved at outset.

## 4.4 Services

Based on your experiences, what input can you offer to help HRM ensure that the way we communicate with our citizens is more accessible and inclusive? The specific aspects of our communication that we would like you to consider are: Mail-outs; website and social media; 311; press releases and ads; services such as fire and garbage collection; and employment.

TANTALLON: OTHER | EMPLOYMENT | PRESS RELEASES & ADS | WEBSITE & SOCIAL MEDIA | 311 | FIRE | POLICE | GARBAGE

Does HRM reach out specifically to organizations that represent the accessibility community to recruit? Such as job shadow, youth interns, co-op work experience, work with employment services to find work for IA/Disabled clients of the province.

Do their job postings / info sessions get communicated to the inclusion community?

Is it accessible for hearing and vision impaired

Is it promoted through inclusion organizations

Collect data through those calls to plan for improvement broadly - not just band-aid solutions.

Are they Braille or multi-lingual

Citizen email list to allow us to sign up for all of the releases or categories / tags as we choose - choice directed information.

## 5.0 Fall River Sessions: March 22, 2018

- Attendance for 2:00 - 4:00 Session: 1 Participants
- Attendance for 6:00 - 8:00 Session: 1 Participants

### 5.1 Transportation

Based on your experience, what input can you offer to help HRM make our regular bus and Access-A-Bus service more accessible and inclusive? And what input can you offer to help HRM make our streets, roads and sidewalks more accessible and inclusive?

\*The participant who attended the Fall River session between 2:00 - 4:00 did not offer any suggestions regarding transportation.

VOTES	FALL RIVER 2: TRANSPORTATION
1	Transportation to After School Programs: Eliminate the need to book Access-A-Bus one week in advance.

### 5.2 Parks, Recreation, Programs

Based on your experiences, what input can you offer to help HRM ensure that our new and existing rinks, playgrounds, and infrastructure for parks and leisure are more accessible and inclusive? And what input can you offer to help HRM ensure that our new and existing recreation programs are more accessible and inclusive?

VOTES	FALL RIVER 1: PARKS, RECREATION, PROGRAMS
1	Indoor Aquatics: Lifts are currently embarrassing to use as an entry to pools and those who need assistance need to introduce themselves to staff and wait, which creates an entry barrier and restricts inclusion. Everyone should be able to enter and exit with the same level of staff interaction.
1	Aquatics Centers: New facility design focuses on high usage of windows which creates a barrier because of a difference in level of undress between patrons and passerbys. A large portion of the population are uncomfortable with this and it is not currently quantified on a design checklist.

1	<p>Poolpod is a lift that allows independent transfer so patrons can be in charge of entrance / exit without reliance on staff or requiring transfers. From a staff perspective it is far safer because safety requires a 2 year training course so it is difficult for teenage staff to properly train. The transfer happens in the aquatics change room with no extra transfers. It can be used by anyone, not just those requiring wheelchair access. Cost is approx. \$70,000</p>
1	<p>Provide more information about what exists at each center / location. Websites currently have fancy pictures but limited detail. Google Streetview through the building. Advertise features and recruit clients and newcomers. Don't make assumptions that people know about the facility.</p>
1	<p>Community Outreach based on Youth Engagement Study in 2011 and ADAM (African Diaspora Association of the Maritimes) - Removing financial barriers is huge as it can completely change a life path if youth have a safe place to hang out. Allow Staff to have autonomy to issue passes, trusting staff to be fair and not abuse.</p>
1	<p>Pool: provide an outdoor or indoor pool in the Fall River Area because lakes are not contained</p>
1	<p>'Playing and Learning Together Program': Expand program offerings in partnership with HRM to include after school programs and expanded summer programming and promote through the Rec Program Catalogue. Current Rec Opportunities for Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) are limited and the 'Playing and Learning Together' After School Program is extremely expensive for parents - it is a rec program and should be encompassed in regular rec programs - shouldn't be more expensive than regular rec programs.</p>
	<p>Mobility Egress Situation: No real infrastructure on beach areas. Birch Cove and Kearney Lake are best for water access via hard surface. Recommend to have soft surface pedway to egress to beach. Parks are ok for crusher dust and hard surfaces with egress through them.</p>
	<p>Community Outreach: There is a significant benefit to keeping people mobile so recommend donating a season's pass at no charge and offer private lessons at the same cost as group rates to enhance inclusion and participation.</p>

	<p>Additional requirements for inclusion at aquatic facilities that is not currently on the design criteria: 1) Reduce the number of windows or frost them; 2) Reduce / eliminate fees for those on limited income; 3) Drainage on pool deck - eliminate bird bath drains by moving the lateral drains close to the pool deck to provide drainage and a cue for those with visual impairments; 4) Change rooms should have lateral rather than singular drains; better floor surfaces and appropriate sink heights for wheelchairs; 5) Train staff using a wheelchair exercise to enhance understanding of accessibility barriers; 6) Power change tables to adjust the height and accommodate different weights in accessible bathrooms; 7) watch pitch for wheelchair ramps into pools because of speed and lack of control.</p>
	<p>Softwalk: Use in spraypad/splashpad areas, pool floors and aquatic environments because it has a high anti-slip rating, takes abuse, has high traction and has a 'head injury criterium score'</p>
	<p>Make access to all pools free. Community recreation should be a free service that is accessible and inclusive to everyone in the community regardless of socioeconomic status.</p>
	<p>Program registrations: Current programming system show attendance numbers, not support requirements. Recommend giving private lessons at the same price as regular lessons so it is tagged in the system, instructors can be better paired with clients, enhance results (ie parents are happier because gained ability to swim outweighs the group social environment) and more comfortable environment. Offer on a first-come/first-serve basis to manage expectations.</p>
	<p>Door handles: Use lateral handle rather than knobs (greater accessibility but difficult to contain children)</p>
	<p>Train staff about inclusive terminology: Example: Ride a wheelchair, not "in a wheelchair"</p>
	<p>Execute a public campaign for not pushing accessibility buttons on doors to reduce the wear and tear.</p>

1	<p>Top of mind awareness that allows specific expertise for specific circumstances. Enlisting advise to enhance experience prior to building and starting projects.</p>
	<p>FALL RIVER 2: PARKS, RECREATION, PROGRAMS</p>
	<p>Nature Access: Expand accessible trail systems to allow ability to be in nature because the busy roads are dangerous for people with ASD</p>
	<p>Ice Surface: provide an additional ice surface in the Fall River Area</p>

	<p>Continue the great programs in HRM such as: 1) Sledge Hockey at the Oval Rink; 2) Summer Camps for children with ASD (preferred over Autism NS Camps) and 3) Playgrounds. There is an opportunity for more programming of this nature</p>
	<p>Playgrounds: soft surfaces are great; special play equipment is beneficial for not only physically challenged but also children with motor impairment and ASD; fencing is good to have.</p>
	<p>Continue to grow infrastructure to allow all individuals to have recreational experiences.</p>
	<p>Would love to have sidewalks in subdivision of Oaken Hills</p>
	<p>Ice Surface in Fall River</p>
	<p>Rec Programming is worthwhile and shouldn't cost more for inclusive programming than other programming.</p>

## 6.0 Spryfield Sessions: March 26, 2018

- Attendance for 2:00 - 4:00 Session: 12 Participants
- Attendance for 6:00 - 8:00 Session: 8 Participants

### 6.1 Transportation

Based on your experience, what input can you offer to help HRM make our regular bus and Access-A-Bus service more accessible and inclusive? And what input can you offer to help HRM make our streets, roads and sidewalks more accessible and inclusive?

VOTES	SPRYFIELD 1: TRANSPORTATION
12	Access-A-Bus: Currently need to try to book 1 week ahead; Bookings starts at 7am. First 10 minutes is busy and then held in queue. Recommend that need a new scheduling system to enhance flexibility (not currently accessible)
8	More Access-A-Bus services to be provided: number of seats, time of day, services.
5	Access-A-Bus: Language is a huge issue given language and literacy levels. Recommend have an interpretation service.
4	Increase the number of Accessible taxis; need a better business model for taxis.
3	Snow removal is huge for visually impaired who are reliant on regular bus. Increase commitment to snow removal; we need to do better.
3	Improve Access-A-Bus scheduling
3	Sidewalks: White tips/balls on White Canes are destroyed because of poor maintenance of sidewalks.
2	Snow clearing needs to be improved for bus stops and sidewalks. Enhance plan to enhance access.
2	Accessible taxis to supplement access-a-bus.
2	Accessible Taxis: Priorities is for persons with disability but there is a need to enforce this.
1	Access-A-Bus: Given a window but they don't operate within that window of time.
1	Bus stops: Accessibility for canes and wheelchairs is difficult when the stop is on an inclined surface (ex. George St by RBC); Stops should be on a flat surface.

1	Promote 311 to report concerns (or call Leo McSween) to enforce plans.
1	Call back service required for persons waiting to schedule Access-A-Bus
1	New Developments: Offer complete services within community; ensure a complete community.
	Prioritize clearing of sidewalks and bus stops for active living.
	Accessible Transit: When regular stops are moved or changed, it affects Access-A-Bus and adds a barrier for those requiring service. Need to revisit stops for Access-A-Bus to capture all.
	Provide training to support accessibility and ridership on regular buses. Mentorship Training (? Status of this HRM program)
	Language barriers for Access-A-Bus need to be removed. Current scheduling system cannot support accents. Requested information needs to be more simplistic to tolerate variances in language and improve flexibility.

VOTES	SPRYFIELD 2: TRANSPORTATION
3	Summer Camps (Autism Nova Scotia): Participants use Metro Transit to teach life skills but there is a need for better education in regular transit
3	If a child with mobility issues requires a wagon or non-traditional mobility device, understand and recognize that these aids should be accommodated for enhanced inclusiveness. We need to look for ways to safely include.
3	Autism Groups experience sensory overload. We need to recognize that there could be challenges and we need to recognize in order to accommodate
3	Training is available but it requires a willingness to learn and given a priority within entity to affect long term systemic change.
2	Rural communities have limited access and we are looking for transparency on decision making to better understand why some communities have bus service and others do not.
1	Stakeholders currently need to initiate. It would be great to have HRM lead the collaboration.
	Our son is 7 and we are starting to look at programs and services available.
	Better transit system, particularly outside of city center (Waverley / Fall River)
	Interested in Integrated Mobility Plan (especially for East Preston)
	Looking for platforms for both regular bus and Access-A-Bus for better access (get on / get off)

	Need to think outside of buses to make community living more accessible.
	Lawrencetown: If there is no access, how do we improve access and inclusive communication.
	Use messaging on buses to encourage all to be respectful and understanding of others.
	Independent Community transportation services: Recommend that HRM Transit provide liaison to successfully collaborate and pair client to service.

## 6.2 Parks, Recreation, Programs

Based on your experiences, what input can you offer to help HRM ensure that our new and existing rinks, playgrounds, and infrastructure for parks and leisure are more accessible and inclusive? And what input can you offer to help HRM ensure that our new and existing recreation programs are more accessible and inclusive?

VOTES	SPRYFIELD 1: PARKS, RECREATION, PROGRAMS
9	Tailor programs for accessibility, such as wheelchair yoga
9	Require awareness that persons with disability can speak for themselves and are experts on the topic. HRM can do a lot more to engage through organizations.
8	Refugees WHI Pass is granted for 1 <sup>st</sup> year to access transit and programs. It activates on Day 1 and it takes a few months to settle in. Recommend: Free recreation and transport for anyone who need it. (Remove the 1 year limit)
6	Look at creation of better partnerships between HRM and different organizations representing persons from different groups. Often people are speaking on behalf of marginalized groups.
6	Playgrounds: Why aren't all playgrounds accessible? Make sure all are accessible. Put accessibility lens on up front.
5	Rec Programs for adults is limited so increase emphasis on availability.
4	>60% of persons with disability rely on income assistance in Nova Scotia. There is nothing in the amount provided for recreation. Recognize that free access may not be an option but need to look at options to support.
4	Public Gardens / Point Pleasant Park: Gravel is difficult for a white cane; grass can be bumpy that makes mobility a challenge: Smooth (paved) surfaces are preferred.

2	Transitional Programming (from high school to work): Much is not accessible; Identify accessible and inclusive offerings; Compare Rec Guide to ensure more accessible options are available.
2	Booking system / brochure for RecConnect could be plain language and translated for enhanced accessibility, especially for those with English as a second language. le Kiddie Kickers is difficult to know what program is.
1	Affordability: RecConnect process to waive fees can be challenging; Helpful to know what programs can have fees waived up front to increase coordination between groups booking on behalf of clients.
1	Improve footing to access parks and trails (often too much gravel or too much salt)
1	Chocolate Lake Rec Center: People doing snow removal require better understanding of enforcement of details of work, with needs of persons with disabilities in mind.
1	Awareness and education in HRM to help better understand needs: Opportunity to engage organizations that provide services (those already up and running)
1	Disability partnership with executive directors: often don't directly have representations from impacted communities.
1	Access Card through Easter Seals (ACCESS 2 Entertainment Card): Make available to broader group and add more services. Partnership or a similar program adopted by HRM
1	Increase partnership between camp inclusion and allied health profession students.
	HRM should be at the table when researchers / groups are meeting to identify needs for marginalized groups.
	Beginning of any project, make sure consultations with different groups are always present at the table.
	Never see persons with disability that have ethnic backgrounds at the table. Need to include better representation, recognizing challenge to get participation.
	Need to encourage people to participate.
	Chain of Lakes Trails is a good one because it is paved.

VOTES	SPRYFIELD 2: PARKS, RECREATION, PROGRAMS
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3	More programs available in the community. More variety in locations and have availability in all centers
3	Educate staff through frontline training. If on spectrum, more variety in programs and help meet individual needs for success.
3	Playgrounds: Fenced in playgrounds important for safety. We have kept our child to play at home because don't feel safe in many open areas)
3	Pamphlets to tell parents about what is available: One spot for all information.
3	Cost effective programs with wider availability and recreation programs.
3	Make sure that children that don't have access are given priority to be included to recreate - HRM should focus on those who need it.
2	Playgrounds: Currently community fundraises for inclusive playgrounds. Municipality should fund and require that all playgrounds are available and inclusive (often not-for-profits struggle to raise necessary funds)
1	Make programs easier to find online and in programs
1	Swimming pools / beaches / rec centers to ensure calm, quiet spaces for children who are over stimulated - designated friendly spaces with aware staff (example Halifax Central Library)
	HRM Staff are doing a fantastic job and get it.
	There have more programs offered and that is great.
	Don't forget outlying areas.
	East Preston: Public access to the lake is required.
	Improve infrastructure at (outlying) public areas
	HRM has inclusion support available on programming. HRM has inclusion support but families are not always aware.
	Ensure families are encouraged to exchange information in registration process to ensure success.
	Location for inclusive playgrounds is critical and we don't accommodate to the degree needed.
	Natural playgrounds: Love nature but haven't been examined for all groups. They allow more children to learn about nature but do they work together?
	Slides built into natural landscape to avoid need for stairs (works well) however stumps may introduce barriers so require balance to be inclusive of all ages and stages to feel comfortable.

	Environmental design in new buildings but also available in other buildings - bathroom is not the best space.
	Florescent lights are not appropriate for persons with autism - if required, they need to find space for breaks. More awareness required around sensory processing requirements.
	Platform for programs: Innovative programs are being offered by organizations so make them available to broader audience. Look at what models work and toll out across the province.
	Can't be everything to everyone but if want to service, need to change approach if inclusiveness is important.

### 6.3 Buildings

Based on your experiences, what input can you offer to help HRM ensure that our new and existing buildings are more accessible and inclusive?

VOTES	SPRYFIELD 1: BUILDINGS
9	Consult up Front: Washroom indicators: Size of signage/Braille. In Paul O'Reagan Theater, seats are retractable; no railing to go down aisles - makes it difficult to socialize and sit with friends; Halifax Library: Had to repaint step indicator from pale grey to brighter colour; add braille to elevator buttons.
7	Needs to be change in mindset to realize accessibility is more than a ramp and a handle.
6	Provide awareness, engagement and education to increase cohesion and buy-in (non-profits, etc)
4	Better use of schools: Engagement to ensure all groups feel welcome; create space by facilitating conversations with groups to understand how best to support.
2	Location (Clayton Park / Fairview): Offer programs in the community where people are; Canada Games Center is not fiscally accessible and there are satellite facilities that could be used such as schools and churches.
1	Upper Tantallon: HRM Soccer program is one of the only programs; rent space in the community to offer more programs and better utilize existing space.
	When new centers are on-boarded, don't remove existing facilities.

	Parking: Look for creative solutions. In Chocolate Lake Rec Center, accessible spot was far from main entrance. Talked to staff and they put in an additional spot.
	Wider Wheelchairs and scooter are requiring wider entrances to buildings.
	Encourage persons to take initiative to make improvements.

VOTES	SPRYFIELD 2: BUILDINGS
3	Signage: Communicate using visual aids in buildings (similar to road signs) to look at how public buildings can improve accessibility. Messaging supports all patrons and provides reminders.
2	Sensory Friendly buildings are important. IWK is not sensory friendly. Need to acknowledge that people are overwhelmed and incorporate in design.
1	If we want more accessible Nova Scotia, reinstatement of Council to look at disabilities in a more formal way.
	Front desks: Both humans and desk need to be accessible.
	Staff be able to communicate effectively with all people
	We are further ahead understanding and accomodating physical disabilities- Map out an inventory of where we are at and where we need to get to.

## 6.4 Services

Based on your experiences, what input can you offer to help HRM ensure that the way we communicate with our citizens is more accessible and inclusive? The specific aspects of our communication that we would like you to consider are: Mail-outs; website and social media; 311; press releases and ads; services such as fire and garbage collection; and employment.

SPRYFIELD 1: OTHER   EMPLOYMENT   PRESS RELEASES & ADS   WEBSITE & SOCIAL MEDIA   311   FIRE   POLICE   GARBAGE
Youth leadership programs include more people with disabilities and newcomers, that way they will be able to find employment through HRM easier.
Better reflective of community: promote jobs through disability networks, ISANS, etc in order to recruit and hire more diverse applicants.
How do they accommodate visual impairments?
Options for translations in different languages.

I know HRM is working on the website however there are many broken links to documents.

Explore a method of modified garbage collection for individuals with disabilities. This would require consultation with individuals with various forms of disability to understand their needs related to garbage collection. Additionally, the senior/older adult population would be consulted to have their needs assessed and addressed appropriately.

Promote Cadet program for youth to newcomer kids in order to bring more diversity.

SPRYFIELD 2: OTHER | EMPLOYMENT | PRESS RELEASES & ADS | WEBSITE & SOCIAL MEDIA | 311 | FIRE | POLICE | GARBAGE

Summer programs offer respite for families

Workforce is younger.

Ensure regular training of autism, including strategies for rescue (car accidents and fire)

Vulnerable persons data

Endure regular training and updating the ASD online training of law enforcement officers.

Consider indicating disabilities on one's identification, especially for people with invisible disabilities.

Partnering with programs like 'Ready, Willing and Able' to ensure inclusive hiring practices.

People with disabilities want to see people with disabilities reflected in the workforce, especially in the public sector. This is currently not happening.

Establish targets on DI for hiring practices.

Procurement privacy favours diversity in the process.

Important

Access-A-Bus could be the ones to deliver to clients

Use more visuals and less clicking.

Be succinct in language.

Use Plain Language.

Watch use of language, can be offensive.

Very difficult to read website - almost needs to be bolded (low vision)

All websites need to be done to international standard.

More communication on this service may be helpful
Enhanced 311 with what'sapp / photo uploading / geocoded photos
Two way communication for people with cognitive disabilities (ie people with Alzheimers); How to avoid confusing support communication (ie phone tree, automation)
Having a human voice as entry and training operators
311 Staff need to be more aware of where the buses can deploy ramps on conventional transit routes.
See diverse ads. Not just culturally diverse. People with all disabilities (autism)
Fully accessible, fully available
Problematic

## 7.0 Mi'kmaw Native Friendship Centre Sessions: November 1, 2018

- Attendance for 2:00 - 4:00 Session: 2 Participants
- Attendance for 6:00 - 8:00 Session: 0 Participants

### 7.1 Transportation

Based on your experience, what input can you offer to help HRM make our regular bus and Access-A-Bus service more accessible and inclusive? And what input can you offer to help HRM make our streets, roads and sidewalks more accessible and inclusive?

Votes	Mi'kmaw Native Friendship Centre 1: Transportation
2	Extend services on major bus route after midnight.
1	Parking is a big issue in HRM.
1	Timeframes/frequency of buses. More frequency of buses.
1	Widen streets and arteries.
1	Expand route of buses to allow services in broader neighbourhood.
1	Snow removal improved.
1	Communication of delays on bus route (develop app); Copy for employer.
1	Downtown is congested area, businesses lose clientele and make more affordable parking or easier access.
1	Bus lanes!
1	Reroute buses to improve flow.
1	Children need to be able to get on bus for camp - provide transit to get to camps (i.e. Chocolate Lake at 4:00).
1	School buses are parked for summer so use them for summer programs.
	Parking spaces need to be bigger.
	More bus terminals.
	Allow buses to pull off street to stop.
	Elders - Reserve bus seats by door.

Votes	Mi'kmaw Native Friendship Centre 1: Transportation
	Restrict street parking to allow flow.

## 7.2 Parks, Recreation, Programs

Based on your experiences, what input can you offer to help HRM ensure that our new and existing rinks, playgrounds, and infrastructure for parks and leisure are more accessible and inclusive? And what input can you offer to help HRM ensure that our new and existing recreation programs are more accessible and inclusive?

Votes	Mi'kmaw Native Friendship Centre 1: Parks, Recreation, Program
2	Playgrounds require renovations/cleaned/maintained - needles found on playground; spotlights on playgrounds to make them safe.
1	Public areas more accessible to children with special needs.
1	Have program start/end times extended to make user-friendly for parents.
1	Make programs free for low income families/children.
1	Increase availability of programs in spaces where high demand so not on wait list.
1	Increase communication on funding options - Jordan's Principle/Social Services available online at registration.
1	Public beaches need more life guards on duty to extend hours (beyond 4pm).
	Training for people in service industry.
	Reimbursement on tax for low income to encourage participation of adults/ children.
	Provide security at rinks and pools.
	More available rinks for hockey programs so children are not up at 5am.
	Availability for program, on PD/snow days.

## 7.3 Buildings

Based on your experiences, what input can you offer to help HRM ensure that our new and existing buildings are more accessible and inclusive?

VOTES MI'KMAW NATIVE FRIENDSHIP CENTRE 1: BUILDINGS	
2	More availability for accessibility.
1	Ability to pull up beside HRM building.
1	Snow days: If something closed, everything should be closed (standard).
	Legalization of marijuana - increased noticeability of smell (common sense for families/children).
	Better signage, i.e. "slippery ice", etc.

## 7.4 Services

Based on your experiences, what input can you offer to help HRM ensure that the way we communicate with our citizens is more accessible and inclusive? The specific aspects of our communication that we would like you to consider are: Mail-outs; website and social media; 311; press releases and ads; services such as fire and garbage collection; and employment.

OTHER   EMPLOYMENT   PRESS RELEASES & ADS   WEBSITE & SOCIAL MEDIA   311   FIRE   POLICE   GARBAGE
WEBSITE AND SOCIAL MEDIA:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Get an app with notifications for all services.</li> <li>● Bigger social media presence.</li> <li>● Improve apps for various services. Shift from phone to online.</li> </ul>
POLICE:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Improve response time for 911 or call for assistance.</li> <li>● Increase cultural training in policing.</li> </ul>
EMPLOYMENT WITH HRM:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Under-represented in the HRM system at all levels and all Departments (on unceded territory).</li> <li>● Education to help community understand how they can be part of Government.</li> </ul>

OTHER | EMPLOYMENT | PRESS RELEASES & ADS | WEBSITE & SOCIAL MEDIA | 311 | FIRE | POLICE | GARBAGE

- Public relations to the reserves to recruit and promote workplace opportunities.

OTHER:

- Increase frequency of public consultations to gain feedback for faster action.
- Move programs and services in all areas; cheaper rates.
- Mental health hotline needed.
- Mental health hotline and crises line needs upgrading. 10 - 4 is not sufficient.
- Should leave history in past and focus on moving forward.

## 8.0 Black Cultural Centre: November 7, 2018

- Attendance for 2:00 - 4:00 Session: 7 Participants
- Attendance for 6:00 - 8:00 Session: 8 Participants

### 8.1 Transportation

Based on your experience, what input can you offer to help HRM make our regular bus and Access-A-Bus service more accessible and inclusive? And what input can you offer to help HRM make our streets, roads and sidewalks more accessible and inclusive?

VOTES	BLACK CULTURAL CENTRE 1: TRANSPORTATION
5	Sidewalks and crosswalks are essential. There is a systemic issue in our communities, especially in established communities, where these are not provided.
4	Helpful to make bus routes in all communities.
4	Transit time slots need to enhance schedules, especially to expand weekend and late night time slots.
3	Require more bus routes to gain access to community. There are currently no routes / no access to Lucasville / Hammonds Plains Community.
3	Africville: Museum in the middle of the city is not accessible by transit; Make a bus route to service Museum.
3	Lucasville: Need sidewalks vs shoulders. The population increase in the area makes the road very busy and dangerous, especially for children. This is not specific to Lucasville - Also Cherrybrook, North Preston, Preston (in places, the sidewalk mysteriously ends.)
2	Increase the number of Accessible Taxis
2	Improve bus accessibility: Lighting at stops, Seating provided while waiting; Increase number of seats.
1	Recommend to have more Recreation Buses and to have taxi chits for youth and seniors.
1	Provide HRM Funding for our community to access similar service to 'Must Go' in Musquodobit.

VOTES BLACK CULTURAL CENTRE 1: TRANSPORTATION	
1	Bus stops should be near well lit spaces at night and close to doorway to provide safety for women.
	Go further into the community with transit. For example, in North Preston the houses beyond the Church require access.
	East Preston is currently more limited than North Preston. The lower numbers are because they are not accommodating them.
	Reduce wait times for taxi and have them show in a timely manner. Currently waiting for 30-45 minutes for a taxi.
	Reduce the cost barrier to taxi
	Lucasville: Improve transit access. Currently no form of bus route despite easy access via Hammonds Plains and Sackville Drive. People are forced to leave community because of lack of transit.
	Need a sidewalk connection for Africville along Novalea / Barrington to make it safe to visit.

VOTES BLACK CULTURAL CENTRE 2: TRANSPORTATION	
5	The sidewalks stop in this area. They should be on each side of the highway.
3	East Preston bus stops need to improve as per frequency.
2	New buses have plastic seats so they're slippery in certain situations. This is a big concern for those with a disability.
1	Bus shelters - required on both sides of Parkland Drive.
	Alderney Landing - Man stumbled at Bay 2 due to uneven surface. The sidewalk needs to be levelled off for safety.
	Bus schedules: Regarding the old #4 route (Farnham/Dunbrack) - there needs to be a bus for Farnham Gate area rather than both on Parkland Drive.

## 8.2 Parks, Recreation, Programs

Based on your experiences, what input can you offer to help HRM ensure that our new and existing rinks, playgrounds, and infrastructure for parks and leisure are more accessible and inclusive? And what input can you offer to help HRM ensure that our new and existing recreation programs are more accessible and inclusive?

VOTES	BLACK CULTURAL CENTRE 1: PARKS, RECREATION, PROGRAMS
7	Reinstate Community Rates (vs. Standard Rates) and get rid of restrictions because we are losing people.
4	North Preston Sportsfield needs to be accessible. Currently on a hill with massive boulders close together. This is a new facility that is not accessible by wheelchair.
4	Increase promotion in marginalized communities and have people in the community to build relations.
4	Do programming in consultation with the community so that programs are relevant and what people want, rather than after the fact.
3	YMCA Policy 'No one should be turned away' should be adopted by HRM. If people want to come, they should be accomodated..
3	Communities are based on relationships. Host events between communities to build relationships, even if it takes time to build.
2	Preston requires a facility with a Library and Recreation Center similar to Cole Harbour Place to increase opportunity in the community.
2	Needs to be recognition that people in the community can't afford to pay.
2	Online registration / information can be intimidating or not accessible. Some people don't have a computer. For some the information is confusing, such as 'Little Ducks' vs. Swimming Lessons. Focus on less content and get straight to the point so it is easy to understand.
2	North Preston: Swim lessons in Cole Harbour is pricy. Need a pool in the community or nearby in HRM. In the interim, HRM can make an arrangement with Cole Harbour Place to subsidize, similar to Sackville Sports Stadium. Increase awareness of available programs in the community.
1	Equitable access to programs and subsidize marginalized communities.
1	Preston: A lot of children would benefit from pools and libraries.
1	Support the community holistically. If it is not tangible, people won't participate.

VOTES BLACK CULTURAL CENTRE 1: PARKS, RECREATION, PROGRAMS	
	Want to see ourselves reflected in the facilities, with more than one type of activity provided.
	Beaches: Haven't seen lifeguards at Crystal Crescent or Rainbow Haven. Increase lifeguard services available at all beaches.
	Facilitate participation out of community such as a bus from Hammonds Plains to Bedford.

VOTES BLACK CULTURAL CENTRE 2: PARKS, RECREATION, PROGRAMS	
6	Promote services that are available. Jump Start is available for accessibility as well as youth. Assessment to qualify and put on file for free services for a year.
6	Better signage at 4-way intersections.
6	Cherry Brook: Playground in the area but no kids because can't walk there. Provide facility for children in the area. Programming should be consistent with other areas (8.5 hours)
6	Consult with community before putting playgrounds and facilities in place. (Our kids don't want to go to Cole Harbour Place because they're followed. Needs to be more training (race training, cultural sensitivity training) to make everyone welcome.
5	Can increase equipment to support special needs.
5	Windsor and Cunard is difficult area to cross.
4	Many buildings are older so new buildings should be inclusive.
3	Spryfield (Captain Spry Centre) - Lavender Walk/Greystones - the trail to Kidstone Lake should be improved. It's a kid-friendly lake but hard for people to access.
2	Bike lanes should be safer.
1	HRM does a great job with accessibility/inclusion.
1	Allow people to access programs for free to try for first few months.
1	Pedestrians often need more time to cross (Windsor/Kept Road is dangerous).
	Hire people trained for people with special needs.
	Some trails are complicated and meet dogs (not on leash always). Maintain area so feel safe. Enforce.
	Make swimming more affordable (or free).

VOTES BLACK CULTURAL CENTRE 2: PARKS, RECREATION, PROGRAMS	
	Quinpool/Jubilee: Better visibility to make it safer to cross (only turn on flashing green, for example).

### 8.3 Buildings

Based on your experiences, what input can you offer to help HRM ensure that our new and existing buildings are more accessible and inclusive?

VOTES BLACK CULTURAL CENTRE 1: BUILDINGS	
3	Cherrybrook Rec Center: HRM gave building but require funds for ongoing operations. Provide funding.
2	North Preston Cenitaph: Ramp to be built.
	Make interior of older structures wheelchair accessible, such as the George Dixon Center.

VOTES BLACK CULTURAL CENTRE 2: BUILDINGS	
3	Enforce 'No Smoking' laws around bus stops and HRM buildings.
2	Alderney - Stairs are very narrow/dangerous. The door opens into staircase. There's no signage for stairs. Elevator wasn't working. Improve fire safety in buildings.
1	Heritage Buildings need to be revisited to make culture and heritage accessible/ shared. Removable ramps, automatic doors.
	McNab Island: HRM in consultation with Friends of McNab to improve the building maintenance and cleaner water.

## 8.4 Services

Based on your experiences, what input can you offer to help HRM ensure that the way we communicate with our citizens is more accessible and inclusive? The specific aspects of our communication that we would like you to consider are: Mail-outs; website and social media; 311; press releases and ads; services such as fire and garbage collection; and employment.

OTHER   EMPLOYMENT   PRESS RELEASES & ADS   WEBSITE & SOCIAL MEDIA   311   FIRE   POLICE   GARBAGE
MAILOUTS:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Very full of jargon and hard to understand. Loaded with “planning speak”. Plain language writing, Braille, more readable fonts.</li> </ul>
FIRE:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Smoke detectors would trigger frequently. Can HRM supply detectors that can detect only smoke, not humidity?</li> </ul>
EMPLOYMENT:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● If the question is asked on the application form, then there needs a purpose for it.</li> <li>● Clarity on how HRM screens applicants in and out; dispel myths and share how applicants are screened/rated. (i.e. people may be reluctant to state address on application for fear of being judged.)</li> <li>● HRM should survey whether or not to include question on race on application form.</li> <li>● HRM should be more diverse at its own higher levels.</li> <li>● HRM needs to give its staff more freedom to do outreach. Instead of experiencing barriers, we should be encouraged to do it. (This applies to all Business Units especially if we want to achieve accessibility.)</li> <li>● When you apply online, it asks you to self-identify but it only permits candidates to select one option - “visible minority”. Should be broken down into sub-categories such as African NS, Indigenous Community Member, etc.</li> <li>● Build cultural, community capacity, i.e. young student who’s interested in a career in policing to participate in a tangible experience, internship in that field.</li> <li>● One of the best practices is like Dal’s: Their focus on African Nova Scotians will allow them to hire individuals without experience as a means of helping people gain the experience.</li> <li>● HRM gives recent grads work, but it’s always on contract. They lose those talented individuals. HRM builds them up but loses them.</li> </ul>

OTHER | EMPLOYMENT | PRESS RELEASES & ADS | WEBSITE & SOCIAL MEDIA | 311 | FIRE | POLICE | GARBAGE

- We're losing young people/potential political leaders. Internships are treated as a "project" out of CAO office. But it should be out of, connected to HR, a business case could be made to keep them.
- You have to give people a chance, particularly of African decent. We need to attract, retain this talent.
- In 2014 in internship program there was only 1 African Nova Scotian.
- HRM needs to do an annual Job Fair to reach out to those who don't need a Harvard Degree.
- Competency-Based Interviewing Practices is not something that's well known and it is intimidating to applicants.
- HRM has to do a map of who they employ and where they are. I.E. Fire Department found that there were 4 African Nova Scotian Firemen out of 500. They made an effort to reach out to the community.
- More community outreach (job fair, educational piece to make it more accessible, simplify the language).
- We should be able to accommodate people - diversify the way people apply (i.e. help people complete the application).
- Pay scale doesn't reflect the high degree of qualifications required.
- Some jobs don't need a degree but they ask for one.
- Hiring practices have to change so they don't block out candidates because they don't have degrees, for example. Find other measures of a candidate's qualifications.

GARBAGE:

- Perishable food, reusables... HRM should take it all.
- Rules should be more clear so residents know what to put out and when.
- Make garbage collection, dates, details more accessible and ensure information is correct.

POLICE:

- This year Police did outreach recruitment and they need to continue to do that. Decision makers need to be active and intentional in their recruitment.
- Police/leadership need to engage the community well before it goes to Council.

OTHER | EMPLOYMENT | PRESS RELEASES & ADS | WEBSITE & SOCIAL MEDIA | 311 | FIRE | POLICE | GARBAGE

- Engagement with Police is in form of stops, punishment... negative service with purpose of enforcement. Current strategy needs to be offset. Build relationships.

WEBSITE:

- Let Business Units manage their own websites, i.e. why can't Youth Advisory Counsel operate its own platform?
- Friendly faces, friendly spaces - to get youth out from broader communities instead of same ones, needs to be outreach. It's a lot of work for 1 person to do that (Joe). HRM is closest to ground in hierarchy of Government. They need to do this.
- Promote HRM's free services at bus stops, for example.
- Pictures on HRMS's ads need to reflect HRM's diverse community, everybody.

OTHER:

- Procurement: When HRM outsources, you're only able to access vendors on "the list". Expand it to wider range of vendors.
- Need an educational piece about Municipalities - use, Municipal Government.
- Andreas needs to get on City Council and/or speak to HRM leadership.
- When roads are being repaved, there needs to be a mail-out to residents in advance.
- HRM should be more considerate of intersectionality. The issues that affect rural HRM residents, various socioeconomic groups and other barriers to access. Many community organizations are operating and can provide information and build partnerships with HRM staff.
- When snow plows fill driveways in, it's a big challenge. So accommodation could be made for some people.
- HRM could help train newcomers on how to read, navigate their way through their lease.
- 1 year apartment leases are difficult to break; 3 - 6 month leases would be more manageable.
- In UK, parents can't smoke in public in front of kids. Bad role modelling, and they can't consent. Parents can't do many things here but they can smoke in front of their kids.
- Complaints of smoking in some apartments. HRM should enforce smoking bylaw in apartments.

## 9.0: Immigrant Services Association of Nova Scotia, November 21, 2018

- Attendance for 1:00 - 4:00 Session: 8 Participants
- Attendance for 6:00 - 9:00 Session: 18 Participants

### 9.1 Transportation

Based on your experience, what input can you offer to help HRM make our regular bus and Access-A-Bus service more accessible and inclusive? And what input can you offer to help HRM make our streets, roads and sidewalks more accessible and inclusive?

VOTES	ISANS 1: TRANSPORTATION
6	Improve scheduling flexibility for Access-A-Bus so don't have to call every day for the following week. Should be able to book a month ahead for multiple appointments and call for any cancellations.
4	Child in wheelchair and route changes removed all three bus stops that were nearby. This was the reason the neighbourhood was chosen and now need to go 10-15 minute walk to reach a stop. This is especially concerning as a winter issue. Have received no follow up to date and ask that it is taken very seriously as if it happened in your family. Recommend to deal with complaint.
3	For wheelchair users: They should have free access to any bus at any time.
3	Need better and faster snow removal and salting.
3	Access-A-Bus is a great idea but worry that will miss making a booking one day and it will cause issues. Need to improve scheduling.
2	Winter Issue, especially for persons in wheelchairs and elderly: Clean sidewalks better. Have broken electric wheelchair twice because stuck in snow and ice.
1	We need an Emergency Access Bus Stop for persons with disability. For anyone in wheelchairs, the bus should stop in front of house.
1	Need follow up on Bus Passes. Have been waiting four months.
1	More bus shelters with chairs.

VOTES	ISANS 2: TRANSPORTATION
10	Improve driver politeness and patience, such as: stop for people running for bus; wait for people to be seated; respect the rules of the road, including yields. More women drivers.
8	Bus drivers require training and discipline when clients are not treated respectfully.
7	Increase frequency of bus service, especially during peak times.
6	Bus stop at Harlington Cres.: Route changes to #17, #18, #31 need to restore service at this stop because the next closest stop is too far to access for disabled, especially in winter conditions.
5	Wider shelters and wider seats in shelters, especially given bad weather conditions.
4	Improve access to buses for wheelchairs in bad weather, including the ramps.
4	Improve adherence to bus schedule
3	Improve bus shelters, such as in the area of Joseph Howe / Mumford Rd.
3	Add more buses for Bayers Rd. Location, including restoring Route 17
3	Crosswalks need to be closer together because people are crossing streets in regular traffic; safety issue.
2	More regular snow removal and better clearance by bus stops.
2	Make Access-A-Bus accessible to people with short term disabilities; if available, improve communication of availability of service.
1	There is confusion around route changes so it requires clarification and better communication.
1	Improve bus cleanliness and clean up any incidents promptly.
	Bus Routes: Route 4 was replaced by Route 28 - Restore Route 4 Schedule.
	Improve cleaning and maintenance of bus shelters.
	Improve downtown parking access because parking on hills is not manageable for people in wheelchairs.

## 9.2 Parks, Recreation, Programs

Based on your experiences, what input can you offer to help HRM ensure that our new and existing rinks, playgrounds, and infrastructure for parks and leisure are more accessible and

inclusive? And what input can you offer to help HRM ensure that our new and existing recreation programs are more accessible and inclusive?

VOTES ISANS 1: PARKS, RECREATION, PROGRAM	
10	More gender-specific programs such as those offered at the Canada Games Center.
5	Improve conditions when dogs are bullying and scaring children (and adults) in parks.
4	Programs for diverse communities should provide translators. Utilize services of people within our community to make people more comfortable.
4	I wish more parks and a swimming pool were close to my home.
3	Make a simple playground within Point Pleasant Park
2	Programs have two key benefits: 1) Exercise; 2) Opportunity to interact to learn English
	Make programs and days special to our needs
	Should make parks more accessible and more available in our community. (Reference to Bayers Road)

VOTES ISANS 2: PARKS, RECREATION, PROGRAM	
8	Passes for Swimming Pool should be given to children with disabilities (free or discounted); Currently they have difficulty participating even when paying so make pools more accessible.
6	Improve tourism with Caravans / Kiosks for Ice Cream, Snacks and Novelties. Not only would this create jobs but makes the parks more fun! (Common in other countries)
5	More seats, shelters and security guards in parks - An example for improvement is Lacewood
5	Government should lease shops at low fees to create an International Plaza. This has been suggested by many in our international community.
5	Require laws to respect that children are afraid of dogs in parks.
3	Make soccer programs free or at a reduced fee to better increase activity.
2	More amusement parks in the city.
1	Swimming pools should have adult supervision because parents need to supervise disabled child so require someone to supervise their other children.
1	Playgrounds require softer footing such as sand.
	Parks are beautiful but require playgrounds.

VOTES	ISANS 2: PARKS, RECREATION, PROGRAM
	Wheelchair accessibility to get to beach (MobiMats)
	Herring Cover Lighthouse: The beach was stinky this summer.
	More BBQ Grilling locations in parks.
	Improve illumination on Halifax streets.
	Reinstate bus passes to Canada Games Center. We used to be able to travel there free-of-charge but we now have to pay.

### 9.3 Buildings

Based on your experiences, what input can you offer to help HRM ensure that our new and existing buildings are more accessible and inclusive?

VOTES	ISANS 1: BUILDINGS
5	Housing Support Funding should go towards loan payment for purchase rather than rent so there is an opportunity to own your home.
4	Every building should have a 'Wheelchair' Button to Access the front door
3	Accessibility features (Handles / Supports) for Bathrooms; Make Wheelchair Accessible
3	Landlords should take people's needs seriously and shouldn't be allowed to discriminate.
3	Provide better sanitation / Garbage Removal / Mice Control for better living conditions.
3	People with disability should be given priority on wait list for housing.
2	Provide housing support on the main floor of buildings for safety / Emergency Exits. There should be a HRM bylaw for priority for first floor for people in wheelchairs.
1	Government should provide housing.
1	Require caregiving support for child with disability so can go out to work.
	Require more preparation to welcome newcomers with special needs.
	Have doors open to the outside
	Government needs to better prepare for newcomers with disabilities.

VOTES	ISANS 2: BUILDINGS
7	Government to give priority for housing to support families with disabled children because they need to look after child.

VOTES ISANS 2: BUILDINGS	
4	Enforce sanitation and hygiene standards around buildings, as well as garbage storage and collection. Educate about the Standards.
3	Require housing to accommodate larger families.
2	Increase the hours of Public Libraries on weekends.
1	Wait list for public housing is 3-4 years and we are looking for options.
	City buildings are very well equipped but it is difficult to find accessible housing. Houses should be equipped to the same standard as city buildings.
	Improve standards of cleanliness in bathrooms in Bedford Waterfront Park; Improve safety along water edge because the distance between the blocks is dangerous.

## 9.4 Services

Based on your experiences, what input can you offer to help HRM ensure that the way we communicate with our citizens is more accessible and inclusive? The specific aspects of our communication that we would like you to consider are: Mail-outs; website and social media; 311; press releases and ads; services such as fire and garbage collection; and employment.

OTHER | EMPLOYMENT | PRESS RELEASES & ADS | WEBSITE & SOCIAL MEDIA | 311 | FIRE | POLICE | GARBAGE

EMPLOYMENT:

- Helping newcomers with employment
- HRM has to provide jobs for people with disability or for parents with people with disability
- It is better they hire people from different countries in service because there are more immigrants arriving and they can't speak French or English
- Create more jobs
- More job opportunities

POLICE:

- Police should be nicer and stop discrimination
- Police should play a better role in deterring crime
- Police should be more vigilant during school break time

OTHER | EMPLOYMENT | PRESS RELEASES & ADS | WEBSITE & SOCIAL MEDIA | 311 | FIRE | POLICE | GARBAGE

GARBAGE:

● Better service with the garbage and mice control

● Speeding up garbage collection

WEBSITE AND SOCIAL MEDIA:

● Most people have lack of language so it is better to add more languages for them to understand

OTHER:

● Increase minimum wage

● Public housing

● Control the rise of rent

● More family doctors

● More volunteers at schools to help with the language (kids will have better understanding of the topics)

● More new government housing especially for people with disabilities and newcomers

● Library accessibility on weekends (longer hours)

● Allow people to keep welfare when transitioning to employment as people feel like they are penalized if they try to work. They will take almost the same amount of money if they work (as the welfare is going to be stopped, wages will be minimal to support)

# APPENDIX B: ENSURING AN ACCESSIBLE CONSULTATION PROCESS

The public consultation process was designed to ensure that every HRM citizen who attended would be able to do so in a barrier-free, welcoming environment. We took the following steps to achieve this goal:

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## 1. Wheel Chair Accommodation

We left at least 2 tables per session free of chairs to accommodate participants who used wheelchairs.

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## 2. Seeing Eye Dog Consideration

We devoted one table per session for participants with Seeing Eye Dogs. The dogs could rest comfortably under the table.

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## 3. Sign Language Interpretation

Each session provided sign language interpretation for the duration of the focus group.

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## 4. CART

Each session provided CART transcription.

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## 5. Multiple Text Formats

Each table was provisioned with participant information in multiple formats, including enlarged font and Braille texts.

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## 6. Guide Assistance

HRM staff supporting the focus groups were provided with guide training to help them assist participants during the sessions.

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## 7. Inclusive Large Group Discussion

At least 60 minutes of each session was conducted in large group format with one facilitator leading the discussion and one facilitator recording participant comments on flip chart paper. Each person's comments were verbally restated as they were captured on the flip charts.

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## 8. Multiple Modes of Participation

Participants were given an opportunity to work on their own to develop individual input for a variety of HRM services (Fire, Garbage, Police, 311, HRM Website and others). Participants had the option of writing their comments on Post-It notes for placement on flip chart paper located throughout the room. Alternatively, participants could choose to take part in a one-on-one interview with HRM staff who recorded their comments in an interview template. The variety of participation formats gave everyone an opportunity to take part in a way that best accommodated their specific preferences.

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## 9. Multiple Means of Voting

The final exercise of the consultation process asked participants to consider all of the input offered by all participants and identify the recommendations they believed to be most important for HRM to follow. Individuals were given an opportunity to either cast ballots on their own or to have HRM staff assist in this process.

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## 10. Food and Networking

Each session provided catering by Stone Hearth Bakery. HRM staff served participants and ensured that coffee, tea, etc. were replenished for participants throughout the two hours.