

HALIFAX

**HRM Social
Policy**

May 12, 2020

Background

- Regional Council Motion in 2017 asking for the development of a “social policy lens”.
- An Information Report was presented to Regional Council in Spring, 2019 to provide an interim update.
- HRM’s Social Policy was drafted and is being recommended for Regional Council approval.

Context

What is happening in other municipalities?

- Various examples of municipal social policies, and the level of involvement falls on a spectrum.
- Common themes exist across social policies and they often reflect the needs and priorities of their communities.

What is happening at HRM?

- Two Council priority areas that relate directly to social policy: social development and healthy livable.
- Programs and initiatives have been developed and implemented that enhance the health and well-being of residents.

HALIFAX



Current Situation

- HRM has a number of existing strategies underway that identify action items related to social policy.
- Given the wide scope of social policy and the number of strategies that already exist, HRM's social policy will provide a framework to coordinate existing and future work.
- The role of HRM in collaboration with others is critical and the complexity of social issues will require the involvement of all sectors and engagement of those most affected.

Social Policy Objectives

- Provide a foundation for a more integrated, coordinated, and sustainable approach for social policy in HRM;
- Identify social policy areas of focus:
 - Connected Communities and Mobility
 - Food Security
 - Housing
- Clarify the roles of HRM, in conjunction with other stakeholders, in addressing social policy issues; and,
- Increase internal capacity to understand and influence social policy.

Next Steps

Short-term:

- Develop a social response plan to COVID-19.

Medium-term:

- Finalize and implement internal policy resource package for HRM staff.
- Provide assistance and support where necessary to increase policy capacity.

Long-term:

- Monitoring and evaluating social policy to ensure it is meeting the needs of HRM, and course correcting where necessary.