

WEST HANTS REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY
Accessibility Advisory Committee Meeting Agenda - AMENDED
July 24, 2025, 6:00 p.m.
Council Chambers, 76 Morison Drive, Windsor, NS
Agenda is subject to changes up to and including during the meeting
This meeting is open to the public. It will not be livestreamed on YouTube



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1. Call to Order
 2. Attendance and Introductions (Two new members)
 3. Announcements
 4. Approval of the Agenda, including additions or deletions
 5. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes – May 29, 2025
 6. Unfinished Business
 - a) Work Plan
 - b) Video Project
 7. New Business
 - a) Alternate Meeting Location(s) Discussion
 - b) **New Website Preview**
 8. Next Meeting Date / Meeting Adjournment

WEST HANTS REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY
Accessibility Advisory Committee Draft Meeting Minutes
July 24, 2025, 6:00 p.m.
Council Chambers, 76 Morison Drive, Windsor, NS



Present:

Michel Bourgeois, Resident Member	Roseanna Boyd, Resident Member
Denise Long, Resident Member	Kathy Johnston, Manager of Recreation & Community Engagement
Councillor Chrystal Remme	Jordan Stephens, Resident Member
Tina McKay, Building & Fire Official	Katie Rose, HR Manager
Melissa MacAskill, Resident Member	Jennifer Davison, Resident Member
Carmen Dewar-Miller, Admin Assistant	Vanessa Stephens, Resident Member
Brielle Payette, Active Living Coordinator	Mark Phillips, CAO

1. Call to Order – Chair Bourgeois called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.
2. Attendance and Introductions (two new members) - Quorum was reached. New members, WHRM Active Living Coordinator Brielle Payette and Resident Member Vanessa Stephens were introduced.
3. Announcements including Land and Cultural Acknowledgements and a Code of Conduct statement. There were no other announcements.
4. Approval of the Agenda, including additions or deletions
The committee agreed to amend the agenda under New Business to include a municipal website update from Staff Member Johnston. The agenda was accepted as amended.
5. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes – May 29, 2025
The minutes were accepted as presented.
6. Unfinished Business
 - a) Work Plan
Since the last committee meeting, Chair Bourgeois has met with different staff members to determine if this draft work plan is overlapping with any current or planned initiatives. One example would be accessible curbside parking – Public Works is currently working on this, so we can tie their efforts in with our plan.

Chair Bourgeois reviewed the updated work plan document with the committee. The target date for getting a supporting information report to Council would be for the October 2025 Committee of the

Whole meeting. This would keep the work plan in line with budget planning for the 2026-27 fiscal year. Categories reviewed included:

- Inventory and Assessment of Accessible Parking Spaces
- Include Accessibility in Report Template
- Provide Guidance and Recognition for Local Businesses, Community Groups and Events
- Inventory and Assessment of WHRM Facilities
- Create Ongoing Information/Training Opportunities for Staff (HR to take the lead)
- Update All Municipal Documents, Website and Correspondence to Plain Language/ Accessibility Standards

Common threads throughout the draft work plan – staff time and capacity, committee assistance, synergies with current and planned staff initiatives, budget support and adherence to standards.

Discussion points as follows:

- Exploring the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) as a tool for navigating, interpreting and communicating. Not in a replacement capacity.
- Engaging someone with Rick Hansen certification or training staff accordingly. There is a need to determine the standard, what we are trying to achieve and how we get there. Rick Hansen training should be added to the work plan.
- Considerations include capacity, fixed costs, labour.
- Include an accessibility dashboard on the municipal website. Recommendations stemming from the work plan would live on the website. This keeps accountability at the forefront and residents stay up to date.
- More community engagement. A crowdsourcing component for identifying/inventorying items like accessible curbside parking spaces. People can reach out to us to advise where spaces are missing needed.
- A pre-tender review is currently in place. Ensure that it is a formalized process with a specific checklist and sign-off. As part of this process, determine what qualifies as a relevant accessibility impact. It was noted that the City of Ottawa has a very comprehensive checklist.
- Regarding inventory and assessment of facilities, we should include which buildings should be assessed first. High traffic areas should be identified and done first.
- The Special Events Committee should include a staff member from this committee.
- Come up with a plain language accessibility starter kit for providing guidance to local businesses.

- Clarification on the parking standard – B61 is the standard used by Rick Hansen. In alignment with the provincial standard as well. This will be put in our manual.
- Sports Complex accessible parking was cited as a place to capture some statistics. Signage has been requested.
- It was suggested that the work plan be written in plain language. Provides an immediate example to Council and staff. Chair Bourgeois will circulate the plan next week for plain language assistance from committee members.
- There was a suggestion to create a video on navigating the website.
- There is a need to create an email address for the Accessibility Committee.

b) Video Project

Staff Member Johnston provided an update. May 2026 will be Accessibility Month in West Hants. This is an opportunity to launch a video series which will create awareness and help launch other initiatives such as the Business Recognition program and program recommendation package.

Work has begun on a script for the initial 40-second video. Following daily throughout the month of May will be a series of shorter videos. These will be based on things that people in the community can take ownership of.

We have begun filming in the community. Local businesses have been wonderful, willing to help and eager to receive feedback. To date, the project team have visited the West Hants Sports Complex, Tim Hortons on Cole Drive and Aunt Lisa's Ice Cream Parlour.

Staff Member Johnston presented some options for a logo to be associated with the business recognition program. Discussion ensued on including the WHRM branding, having different levels of compliance/participation, and the different types of accessibility symbols that might be used. We have time to make decisions and feedback is welcome. It was mentioned that events signage should include a symbol so that people can know the event is safe for them.

There was a question as to whether we were working with the Township, utilizing resources such as their newsletter. That is the vision but we are not that far along yet.

7. New Business

a) Alternate Meeting Location(s) Discussion

Suggested locations included:

- Hants Aquatic Center
- GFL Arena
- Municipally maintained fire halls

- Southwest Hants Fire Hall
- Community Halls (Sweets Corner was mentioned)

The committee will continue to explore holding off-site meetings as a regular occurrence (possibly every third meeting). As part of the meeting the committee could offer an accessibility audit, providing valuable feedback.

It was suggested that the committee should reach out to each Councillor to see where we can meet in their district. The Councillor would be invited to attend. Councillor Remme will include this suggestion in her report to Council. We can start this in her district. This will offer meeting access to more people.

Off-site meetings are not accounted for in the budget. The cost of hall rentals should be included in future budget planning.

b) New Website Preview

Staff Member Johnston presented the committee with a look at the new website design. Feedback was positive, still in the development stage with a targeted launch of September 2025.

8. Next Meeting Date / Meeting Adjournment

September 25 was proposed as the next meeting date. Councillor Remme will book a space in her district (3) and advise Carmen.

Chair Bourgeois called for a motion to adjourn.

Moved by Resident Members Davison and MacAskill that the meeting be adjourned.

Motion Carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:11 p.m.

X

Committee Chair

X

Municipal Clerk