



West Hants
something inspiring awaits

WEST HANTS REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY

Diverse, Equitable and Inclusive Communities Committee - Meeting Agenda

APRIL 13, 2026 - 6:00 p.m.

Windsor Council Chambers, 100 King St, Windsor, NS

Agenda is subject to change due to additions that may not be able to be reflected until after the meeting.

- 1) Call to Order
- 2) Land Acknowledgement
- 3) Attendance, introduction of new members and guests
- 4) Approval of the Agenda, including additions or deletions
- 5) Declaration(s) of Conflict of Interest
- 6) Announcements
- 7) Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes
- 8) Community building: The first time you remember participating in an action against an injustice.
- 9) Ongoing Business
 - a) Review of the Equity, Anti-racism and Accessibility Plan. Which of the 2025-28 actions are underway? Which need to be started? Next steps.
- 10) New Business
 - a) Support for letters and petitions about the construction of a self-storage facility on Panuke Road
 - b) Summer mowing at Panuke Park
- 11) Adjournment/Next meeting date: May 11, 2026

Strategic Action #1. Heal and rebuild relationships between WHRM, the Mi'kmaq, and equity denied communities. The RAD Report highlights the lack of trust between the public and the local politicians.

1.1

Create a plan and invest in ongoing engagement between WHRM, Glooscap First Nation and Sipekne'katik First Nation to help ensure the actions within this plan address their concerns and challenges the experiences of people living and working in West Hants who are Indigenous.

2025 - 2028 Municipal

Staff

STATUS:

1.2

Create an engagement approach that considers the local culture, history and practices that support reconciliation and healing.

2025 - 2028 Municipal

Staff

STATUS:

1.3

Provide culturally appropriate compensation, food, and address other barriers, such as child care and transportation when engaging with persons with lived expertise and equity denied communities.

2025 - 2028 Municipal

Staff

STATUS:

1.4

To fully adopt and implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as the framework for reconciliation (Call to action 43, TRC). Start by identifying actions and measures the municipality are already taking that may align with UNDRIP implementation goals and changes and new actions required.

2025 - 2028 Municipal

Staff

STATUS:

1.5

Deepen community connection pathways by developing indigenous and African Nova Scotian liaison positions to support the ongoing work needed to engage and work collaboratively with community members.

2025 - 2028 Municipal

Staff

STATUS:

Strategic Action #2. Create public spaces that promote diversity and history of the municipality. This can include work towards adopting anticolonial community planning and ethical space approaches when building and designing municipal spaces

2.1

Develop a framework* to integrate an intersectional and reconciliatory lens into planning for a more equitable and inclusive West Hants. Ensure equitable representation of Indigenous and African Nova Scotian community members in the development of the framework and examination of spaces via engagement.

2025 - 2028 DEICC

STATUS:

2.2

Critically examine the naming of existing municipal assets, establishments, and municipal spaces.

2025 - 2028

DEICC Municipal Staff

STATUS:

2.3

Update naming as appropriate. This process must follow the guidelines published by the Geographic Names Board of Canada.

2025 - 2028

DEICC Municipal Staff

STATUS:

Strategic Action #3. Through partnerships and funding opportunities, provide support (e.g., funding, resources, training) to community groups and local businesses in building, operating, and maintaining inclusive spaces and inclusive workforce.

3.1

Work with local organizations and businesses to develop a directory of existing safe and welcoming spaces in West Hants. Publicly share the list of partner organizations and inclusive community spaces.

2025 - 2028

DEICC Municipal Staff

STATUS:

Strategic Action #6. Create better supports for youth, in particular teens, by increasing youth engagement opportunities and creating safe and welcoming spaces for young people.

6.2

Actively promote safe community spaces through schools, community centers, social media, and other channels frequented by youth. Highlight the safety and inclusivity of the spaces, particularly for queer youth, African Nova Scotian, Indigenous, and new comer youth.

2025 - 2028

Municipal Staff Local Group

STATUS:

6.4

Engage with local schools as part of the accessibility and equity and inclusive communities committees and have a designated role for schools in this group.

2025 - 2028

Municipal Staff AAC DEICC

STATUS:

Strategic Action #7. Improve safe accessible transportation infrastructure across West Hants. Connectivity and transportation challenges were communicated throughout the engagement process across all groups, and previous reports and engagements (including the RAD consulting report). Transportation and connectivity issues impact equity-denied communities to a greater degree. Addressing these infrastructure challenges will support greater equity and accessibility for all groups throughout the province.

7.1

Actively support community-based transportation providers including West Hants Dial-a-Ride and the Windsor Senior Citizen Bus Society.

2025 - 2028

Municipal Staff

STATUS:

7.2

Increase support to enhance West Hants Dial-a-Ride to increase transportation capacity in the community.

2025 – 2028

Municipal Staff

STATUS:

Strategic Action #8. Improve access to municipal activities and programs. This can include implementing culturally relevant and targeted recreation activities/programs through joint partnership efforts with equity-denied groups including Indigenous community, African Nova Scotian community, and vulnerable youth.

8.1

Review overall fee structure of municipal aquatics programs and explore equitable fee structure to reduce barriers for families and community members.

2025 - 2028

Municipal Staff

STATUS:

8.2

Increase awareness of municipal programs and services targeted to equity denied communities, this could include create a publicly available list of programs.

2025 - 2028

Municipal Staff

STATUS:

8.3

Find opportunities to provide transportation to free municipal events, programming and engagement targeting underserved and underrepresented communities.

2025 - 2028

Municipal Staff

STATUS:

8.7

Work with Mi'kmaq partners, especially Glooscap First Nation, to support Indigenous athletics and support longterm athletic development (see calls to action 87-91).

2025 - 2028

Municipal Staff

STATUS:

Strategic Action #9. Amplify community history and support opportunities share and celebrate diverse cultures. This action is intended to focus on fostering community cohesion, celebrating diversity, and building a stronger sense of belonging. This can include highlighting events that are already going well (e.g., community groups, community festivals)

9.1

Work with Glooscap and other indigenous communities to create an awareness campaign focused on the Aboriginal rights holders in the region within which WHRM exists.

2025 – 2028

Municipal Staff

STATUS:

9.2

Work collaboratively with communities, local artists, and groups to promote intercultural understanding and celebrate the histories, experiences, and cultures of diverse communities.

2025 – 2028

Municipal Staff

STATUS:

Strategic Action #10. Improve street scapes across West Hants including street lights, side walks, ramps. There should be a specific focus and target on improve accessibility for equity-denied communities such as Three Mile Plains.

10.3

Develop a sidewalk/crosswalk remediation plan and plan for new street scapes elements with timeline and budget according to updated provincial standards.

2025 - 2028

Municipal Staff AAC DEICC

STATUS:

10.6

Create public education campaign on safe practices regarding sidewalk-less communities.

2025 - 2028

Municipal Staff AAC DEICC

STATUS:

Strategic Action #11. Develop and Implement Anti-Hate and Accessibility Education and the public. This should include a hub where learning resources and tools are made available and shared to increase awareness and understanding of all forms of hate, including for example, Anti-Indigenous Racism, Anti-Black Racism, misogyny, homophobia, transphobia, antisemitism, Islamophobia and white supremacy.

11.1

Develop an anti-hate and accessibility education resource hub where information on anti-racism, discrimination and hate can be made available for community members and local businesses.

2025 - 2028

Municipal Staff DEICC/AAC Local Groups

STATUS:

11.2

Identify existing resources that can be used and develop new resources with community organizations and groups for the resource hub.

2025 - 2028

Municipal Staff DEICC/AAC Local Groups

STATUS:

11.3

Create resources and tools to support business owners and business management in deepening their anti-hate and accessibility competencies and application of anti-hate practices within the workplace. These resources should be co-designed by engagement with local businesses and community.

2025 - 2028

Municipal Staff Local Groups

STATUS:

11.4

Create resources for public to recognize, address and respond to hate, creating a shared language around racism, discrimination and hate.

2025 - 2028

Municipal Staff

STATUS:

Strategic Action #12. Develop and Implement Anti-Hate and Accessibility Education and Training for municipal staff. This should include learning resources and tools are made available and shared to increase awareness and understanding of all forms of hate, including for example, Anti-Indigenous Racism, Anti-Black Racism, misogyny, homophobia, transphobia, antisemitism, Islamophobia and white supremacy.

12.3

Develop and implement mandatory antihate and accessibility orientation for all elected council members and municipality staff.

2025 - 2028

Municipal Staff

STATUS:

12.4

Develop and implement anti-hate and accessibility mandatory annual training for elected council members and municipality staff. Tailor training to role and function with a trauma informed approach.

2025 – 2028

Municipal Staff

STATUS:

Strategic Action #13. Strengthen the capacity of community organizations and local businesses to continue to promote hate-free communities. Nonprofits, community groups, grassroots organizations, such as Posse, and in some cases local businesses are doing work to end racism, discrimination and other forms of hate in order to make West Hants a welcoming safe hate-free place

13.2

Help create an inventory of available grants for community organizations that target anti-racism and anti-hate initiatives.

2025 - 2028

Municipal Staff DEICC Business Associations and Networks

STATUS:

13.3

Create system navigation support for community organizations and businesses with barriers to help; them access and navigate grants that respond to dismantling systemic racism and hate.

2025 - 2028

Municipal Staff

STATUS:

13.6

Work with community to create public education around visuals that contribute to systemic racism, bias and prejudice (e.g., confederate flags, symbols of white supremacy).

2025 - 2028

Municipal Staff DEICC

STATUS:

Strategic Action #14. Provide support for those experiencing hate in the community and create protocols and mechanisms to report these incidents. Acts of hate (including discrimination) undermine community cohesion and inflict significant harm on individuals and groups. This action focuses on strengthening both the response to and the accountability for such acts

14.1

Implement community response protocol and non-police reporting mechanisms for reporting various hate incidents in West Hants. Work with other municipalities to support this work.

2025 - 2028

Municipal Staff Local Groups AVRCE

STATUS:

4.2

Work with community organizations to establish supports for community members experiencing discrimination and hate.

2025 - 2028

Municipal Staff Local Groups

STATUS:

14.4

Implement orientation and ongoing training for front-line staff and elected council members on how to safely manage incidents of discrimination or hate in municipal spaces.

2025 - 2028

Municipal Staff Local Groups

STATUS:

14.6

Establish municipal code of conduct and guidelines for all municipal staff, Council, and community members to follow and create training and education for all municipal staff around this action.

2025 - 2028

Municipal Staff

STATUS:

14.7

Create practices and guidelines that consider the safety of staff and the public when addressing acts of hate in the community.

2025 - 2028

Municipal Staff

STATUS:

14.8

Work with other levels of government including Mi'kmaq governments like Glooscap First Nation to support and address violence against Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQIA+ as outlined in the Call to Justice in the Missing Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Report.

2025 - 2028

Municipal Staff DEICC

STATUS:

14.10

Establish and train staff on intervening within facility - based issues with identified repercussions.

2025 – 2028

Municipal Staff

STATUS:

Strategic Action #15. Improve planning, zoning and how resources are allocated and shared in order to advance equity and address environmental racism and systemic injustice in our community.

15.3

Develop and implement an engagement strategy with Three Mile Plains community members to discuss and address current issues of environmental racism and inequity. Work with the Environment Unit (based in Halifax) to provide expertise on these engagements.

2025 - 2031

Municipal Staff

STATUS:

Strategic Action #16. Increase representation of equity-denied communities across municipal positions, including positions of leadership to create equal employment opportunities for all (this include all employment types, including part time, internships, etc).

16.1

Develop and implement an equitable employment and talent management policy and strategy that prioritizes equitable hiring and culturally appropriate recruitment and retention efforts.

2025 – 2028

Municipal Staff (HR)

STATUS:

16.4

Work with equity denied communities to champion the recruitment and retention of these community members into municipal positions. This can include examining and removing barriers for equity denied communities applying positions, and allowing self-identification of demographic information upon hiring.

2025 – 2028

Municipal Staff (HR)

STATUS:

16.5

Undertake an anonymous survey to establish a baseline employee demographic and track the number of employees with disabilities, both diagnosed and self-identifying, with the intention of reflecting the diversity of the Municipality in the municipal workforce.

2025 - 2028

Municipal Staff (HR)

STATUS:

Strategic Action #17. Increase representation of equity-denied communities across all municipal committees to build capacity and ensure all voices are included.

17.1

Complete a review of all committees to examine if recruitment and membership includes adequate diverse representation (e.g., youth, African Nova Scotian communities, Mi'kmaq, and 2SLGBTQIA+ representation). Also focus on barriers to participation for these groups – including travel, compensation, child care, etc.

2025 - 2028

Municipal Staff

STATUS:

17.2

Dedicate seats for Mi'kmaq and Black/African Nova Scotians on all municipal committees, and support targeted recruitment for these seats.

2025 - 2028

Municipal Staff

STATUS:

17.4

Explore opportunities for other diverse representation, including new Canadians, for Diverse and Inclusive Communities Committee

2025 - 2028

Municipal Staff (HR)

STATUS:

17.5

Create a more accessible intake processes across all committees to recruit more diverse membership.

2025 - 2028

Municipal Staff (HR)

STATUS:

17.6

Develop streamlined processes ensuring committees work does not delay or stall due to municipal elections (e.g., October 2028, October 2032, etc.)

2025 - 2028

Municipal Staff

STATUS:

Strategic Action #18. Review and update policies, procedures, guidelines, and communications through an anti-hate, equity, and accessibility lens

18.1

Develop a policy, procedure and guideline review tool and process to support ongoing reviews of existing and future policies from an anti-racist and equity perspective.

2025 - 2028

Municipal Staff

STATUS:

18.2

Conduct a full review of municipal policies through an anti-racism lens and implement changes based on policy review process developed. This should include reforming all policies, strategies and municipal documents that continue to rely on concepts used to justify European sovereignty over Indigenous peoples and lands (Action 47, TRC). Begin this work early and continue to make improvements throughout the plan.

2025 - 2028

Municipal Staff

STATUS:

18.4

Review current communications (e.g. websites, newsletters, social media, printed materials etc.) to identify where gaps in visual representation of racialized, 2SLGBTQIA+, and other diverse groups of people exist. Develop a plan to perform this sort of review on a regular basis.

2025 - 2028

Municipal Staff

STATUS:

18.6

Create a policy (and implement) to ensure the use of Mi'kmaq language.

2025 - 2028

Municipal Staff

STATUS:

Strategic Action #19. Commemorate, honour, and/or celebrate heritage and diversity dates/months, such as African Heritage Month, National Indigenous People Day, Treaty Day, Mi'kmaq History Month, etc. Honouring these dates is an opportunity to reflect on the dangers of hate, increase awareness, celebrate heritage, culture and the achievements and contributions diverse groups.

19.1 Create a list of commemorative dates to be publicly acknowledged*.

2025 - 2028

AAC DEICC

STATUS:

19.2

Invite community leaders to provide recommendations for short-and longterm initiatives they see as appropriate to commemorate these dates.

2025 - 2028

AAC DEICC

STATUS:

19.3

Co-develop an annual calendar to honor or celebrate the commemorative dates. The calendar should include public campaigns and other tangible actions (e.g., providing funding or support for planning and hosting events and celebrations).

2025 - 2028

AAC DEICC Municipal Staff

STATUS:

19.4

Allocate resources from existing municipal budget to execute the calendar activities.

2025 - 2028

Elected WHRM Council

STATUS:

19.5

Establish a municipal proclamation for recognition of African Heritage Month.

2025 - 2028

Elected WHRM Council

STATUS:

Strategic Action #20. Build capacity within the municipality to act on, communicate, and review this plan.

20.1

Hire a designated communication staff to support the development of a communication strategy in alignment with this plan and support ongoing community awareness of municipal programs and services.

2025 - 2028

Municipal Staff

STATUS:

20.2

Amend communications plan to support the ongoing communication of the plan and its action items.

2025 - 2028

Municipal Staff

STATUS:

20.3

Hire an Accessibility and Inclusion Coordinator position within the municipality to oversee responsibilities related to inclusion, equity, diversity, and accessibility.

2025 – 2028

Municipal Staff

STATUS:

20.4

Appoint a designated diversity and accessibility lead position per area/department to provide accountability, oversight and leadership to the equity, anti-racism and accessibility efforts of the municipality, ensuring the advancement and monitoring of this strategy.

2025 - 2028

Municipal Staff Elected WHRM Council

STATUS:

20.5

Develop a structured evaluation plan with metrics to accompany the equity, antiracism and accessibility strategy, ensuring ongoing reporting, monitoring and communication of this strategy.

2025 - 2028

Municipal Staff

STATUS:

Strategic Action #22. Build awareness, educate and promote equity and accessibility among children and students.

22.1

Advocate and promote early and ongoing education about the history of the region and diverse culture and history of West Hants.

2025 - 2028

Municipal Staff DEICC/AAC Schools

STATUS:

22.2

Advocate for the continued promotion of equity and diversity within local schools (e.g., Vibe).

2025 - 2028

Municipal Staff DEICC/AAC Schools

STATUS:

22.3

Equip teachers with resources and training to examine their own biases and promote equity within their classrooms and respond to children’s questions about equity and accessibility.

2025 - 2028

Municipal Staff DEICC/AAC Schools

STATUS:

22.4

Provide training and resources for municipal summer staff in camps and recreation staff to promote equity and respond to children’s questions about equity and accessibility.

2025 - 2028

Municipal Staff

STATUS:

Strategic Action #23. Conduct meaningful engagement with people with lived or living experience to assist in building out supports for people impacted by homelessness.

23.1

Create an advisory group of people* with lived or living experience of homelessness to provide input/context on community policy, program development, or evaluation.

2025 – 2028

Municipal Staff

STATUS:

23.2

Develop a strategy for the municipality to prevent, address and end homelessness in alignment with the Provincial Strategy.

2025 - 2028

Municipal Staff

STATUS:

Dear Mr. Hong, Councillor Francis, and Mayor Zebian,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed development agreement application to permit a self-storage facility in conjunction with an existing residential dwelling at 185 Panuke Road in Three Mile Plains.

This proposal is not appropriate for a quiet, established residential neighbourhood, and is especially concerning given its location within a historic African Nova Scotian community. Introducing a commercial self-storage operation into this setting represents a clear incompatibility with the character, safety, and intended use of the area.

Residents already experience ongoing concerns related to traffic and infrastructure capacity along Panuke Road and surrounding routes. A self-storage facility will inevitably increase vehicular traffic, including larger trucks and frequent short-trip movements, further impacting road safety, noise, and the overall livability of the community. These cumulative impacts must not be minimized.

More critically, this proposal must be viewed through the lens of environmental racism and planning **equity**. Environmental racism refers to the disproportionate burden of undesirable land uses, and environmental risks placed on historically marginalized communities. African Nova Scotian communities across the province have repeatedly experienced land use decisions that erode community integrity, displace residents, or **as in this case, introduce incompatible developments**.

West Hants Regional Municipality itself has acknowledged these realities. The West Hants Equity, Anti-Racism, and Accessibility Strategy was informed by input from more than 200 residents and explicitly commits the Municipality to dismantling racism, fostering inclusion, and advancing equitable decision-making. **Approving a commercial development of this nature in a historic African Nova Scotian residential community would directly contradict both the spirit and commitments of this plan.**

Additionally, the Municipality's previous engagement work through the RAD Consulting community engagement process highlighted the importance of meaningful consultation and responsiveness to community concerns in shaping equitable municipal decisions. Proceeding with this development despite clear and foreseeable community impacts risks undermining that commitment and eroding public trust.

This is not simply a question of land use. It is a question of whether West Hants Regional Municipality will uphold its stated values around equity, anti-racism, and community respect in its planning decisions.

Self-storage facilities are more appropriately located within designated commercial or industrial zones where infrastructure, traffic patterns, and land use policies are designed to support such uses. Placing this type of development within a residential and historically significant community is inconsistent with sound planning practice and equitable governance.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Municipality to deny this development agreement application and **ask councilors to vote NO**. Planning decisions must protect residential neighbourhoods, address existing community concerns, and honour the historical and cultural significance of African Nova Scotian communities; not contribute to their ongoing erosion.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Lisa Bland