



Making Accessibility Accessible

Town of Trenton, Nova Scotia
Accessibility Plan
2022-2024

Prepared by Trenton
Accessibility Committee,
Town Council and Staff

Approved by
Trenton Town Council on
April 12, 2022

Welcome

On behalf of the Town of Trenton's Accessibility Committee, Town Council, and staff, I invite you to read the Town's first Accessibility Plan.

In 2017, Nova Scotia became the third province in Canada to pass accessibility legislation, committing to a more equitable and accessible province. The Accessibility Act recognizes accessibility as a human right and sets a goal to make Nova Scotia an accessible province by 2030. In September 2018, the province released the Government of Nova Scotia Accessibility Plan. This plan outlined specific actions for achieving an inclusive, responsive, and accessible workplace for Nova Scotia public Servants, and ensuring their services are accessible to all.

According to Statistics Canada, 30 per cent of Nova Scotians aged 15 years and older identify as having at least one disability. That is nearly 230,000 Nova Scotians. This is the largest percentage of any Canadian province. Nova Scotia also has among the highest percentage of adults older than 65 – currently 20 percent, or 1 in 5.

The Town of Trenton is committed to identifying, preventing, and eliminating barriers faced by people of all abilities including those who identify as having a disability, and ensuring our municipal programs, services, initiatives, and facilities in our Town are barrier-free. The plan has worked and will continue to ensure a first-voice approach for feedback and input from the community.

We look forward to the changes that this will bring, creating a more accessible and equitable community.

Sincerely,

Janice Hatt
Chair of Trenton Accessibility Committee

What We Believe

We believe in using first person experience to inform and guide what is needed for the Town of Trenton. Further, we believe in implementing best practices, proper research and bringing an accessibility lens to the decisions, policies, and progress in the Town. We also wish to ensure this plan is specific to Trenton's needs, present and future.

Trenton Accessibility Committee, which includes committee members who are First Voice, felt it was important to acknowledge the extensive discussions regarding the term "disabled" or "persons with a disability." Some members of the committee also sit on our local Pictou-Antigonish Regional Library Accessibility Committee where this was discussed meaningfully and extensively. We would like to acknowledge that people have many different abilities. There are others within the community who may, or may not, identify or prefer the terms "disability," or "disabled." Although we recognized that, we decided to use the term "those who identify as having a disability," because this is the most commonly used term at this point in time. We encourage the province to lead a discussion in the development of more respectful and barrier-free language.

Promoting Accessibility Awareness/Area of Focus

The Accessibility Committee is responsible to:

- Promote public awareness and consideration for accessibility issues for those facing barriers
- Encourage co-operation among all service and interest groups
- Communicate with Town Council in the making of recommendations on policy and legislation
- Identify and document relevant issues and concerns
- Create a community which provides access to housing, transportation, education, recreation, and employment
- Recognize the needs of all people are constantly changing, growing and in need of refinement

Glossary of Terms

From the Town's [Accessibility Committee Terms of Reference](#):

Accessibility - The design of programs, services, or spaces for persons who identify as having a disability.

Accessibility Plan - A document that reflects the goals of the Town to be responsive to the needs to people with various abilities.

Barrier - Anything that hinders or challenges the full and effective participation in society of persons of those as persons who identify as having a disability including but not limited to a physical barrier, an architectural barrier, an information, or communication barrier, a technological barrier, a policy, or a practice.

Disability - Includes a physical, mental, intellectual, learning, or sensory impairment, including an episodic disability; that, in interaction with a Barrier, hinders an individual's full and effective participation in society. *Please see note above in 'What we Believe' section where we address the decision to use the term "disability".*

The Committee recommends that the plan follows and where possible implements the [Canadian Standards Association B651-12 Accessible Design for the built environment](#) (and updated versions as available).

Areas of Focus

1. Goods and Services:

Ensuring that people of all ages and abilities have equitable access to the goods and services provided by the Town. This includes ensuring that there are policies, procedures, and tools to promote the accessible delivery of goods and services.

Issues:

- Council meetings on second floor of Town Hall are not accessible.
- Small font documents such as newsletter and tax/water bills.

Achievements:

- Have ordered Live Streaming Equipment to be installed in the 2022/23 Fiscal Year.
- Town newsletter promotes services located in the Town.
- Town newsletter is available for viewing on the Town website.

Proposed Action:

- Department Heads ensuring accessible lens brought to plans for annual planning and budgeting.
- Long-term barrier free Council Chambers.
- Staff can send tax/water bills by email to residents, upon request.

2. Information and Communication:

Information and communications delivered by the Town of Trenton will be clear and accessible for people of all ages and abilities. We will take steps so people understand accessibility and barriers to participation and will increase awareness about the accessibility rights of people of all ages and abilities.

Issues:

- With the Committee being new, many residents are unaware of the Committee's activities, or the proposed and active Accessibility Plan.

Achievements:

- Information is made available on multiple channels and in-person: the Town Facebook page, Town Newsletter, Town website and at Town Hall.

Proposed Action(s):

- Explore braille business cards for any future business cards purchased.
- Regular updates in the Town newsletter from Accessibility Committee to be submitted by Chair.

3. Transportation:

We will ensure that people of all ages and abilities have equitable access to publicly funded services and/or regulated transportation services.

Issues:

- No fixed bus route in the Town.
- Lack of safe, accessible parking spaces.

Achievements:

- The Town has started the process of an Asset Management Plan which will include the review of street, sidewalks, and curbs. This process will be reviewed and updated yearly.

Proposed Action:

- Proposed study to be completed in the Fall of 2022 by the Chair of Pictou County Transit to add neighboring Towns in the current Public Transit System. Town of Trenton to be included in this study.
- Annual review of parking spaces and curbs/sidewalks.
- Asset Management Plan in review and to be completed over a 2-year period.

4. Employment:

We will remove barriers to employment for people of all ages and abilities who seek a career with the Town of Trenton. We will make our employment practices and workplaces more accessible for new and existing employees of all ages and abilities.

Issues:

- Town Hall is not accessible on the second floor

Proposed Action:

- Development of business toolkit to support employers in the Town and make them aware of programs, policies, language, and funding to make their establishments accessible.

5. Built Environment:

Making public buildings and shared spaces accessible to people of all ages and abilities. We will also encourage citizens and the business community to make other public and private spaces accessible.

Issues:

- Town Hall is not fully accessible to the Public. Currently Council Chambers is not accessible. No elevator to second floor.
- Washroom space on main floor of Town Hall is not wheelchair accessible.

Proposed Action:

- Live Streaming equipment to be installed to allow residents to view Council meetings via their computer at home.
- Accessibility lens for any major redevelopment projects or initiatives that involve Public Access.
- Accessibility Audit to be completed.

Achievements:

- Job postings are posted on Town Facebook Page, Town website, newspaper and at Town Hall.
- Live Streaming equipment purchased and to be installed in the year 2022/23.
- Accessibility Audit being conducted and will be completed by June 2022 on all buildings within the Town of Trenton that are accessible to the Public.

Implementing the Plan:

Responsibilities:

- Town Council is responsible for adopting and overseeing the Trenton Accessibility Plan.
- The Chief Administrative Officer is responsible for reviewing and implementing the plan.
- The Trenton Accessibility Committee is responsible for giving feedback and recommendations to the Town Council.
- The Committee along with the Town will be soliciting feedback from first-person experience and those in the community through survey(s) and in-person consultations.

Schedule:

- All Top Priorities in this plan will be implemented by March 31, 2025 (the end of the fiscal year). Other priorities will be implemented by 2030.

Monitoring/on-going assessment:

- The Trenton Accessibility Committee will prepare an update for Council by March 31 of each year (the end of the fiscal year). This report card will measure the performance of the policies and actions in this plan. The Committee may also make recommendations to improve the plan.
- The update will be a public document. It will be posted on the Town's website and available in-person at Town Hall.

Responding to Questions and Complaints:

- Anyone can lodge a complaint, pose a question, or express a concern about accessibility in the Town of Trenton.
- Council may refer any appeal to the Trenton Accessibility Committee for additional review and recommendations before issuing a final response to the complainant.
- The Chief Administrative Officer will keep a record of all complaints, questions, and concerns submitted, and will provide summary updates to the advisory committee on a regular basis. These updates will become part of the Accessibility Committee's continual review of the Accessibility Plan and may inform future changes.