



Making Accessibility Accessible

Town of Trenton, Nova Scotia
Accessibility Plan
April 1, 2025 - March 31, 2028

Prepared by Trenton
Accessibility Committee,
Town Council and Staff

Approved by
Trenton Town Council on
April 8, 2025

Committee Chair Message

On behalf of the Town of Trenton's Accessibility Committee, thank you for reading the Town's updated 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. The development of the Town's Accessibility Committee and first multi-year Accessibility Plan (2022-2024) assisted in complying with provincial requirements while becoming a valuable resource in identifying, preventing, and eliminating barriers faced by people of all abilities, including those who identify as having a disability.

According to Statistics Canada, 37.9 per cent of Nova Scotians aged 15 years and older identify as having at least one disability. That is nearly 248,000 Nova Scotians, almost 2 in 5 living with a disability. This is the largest percentage of any Canadian province or territory. Nova Scotia also has a high percentage of adults aged 65 years and older at 22.2 per cent.

We will move forward continuing our commitment to identifying, preventing, and eliminating barriers faced by people of all abilities. We look forward to creating a more accessible and equitable community.

Sincerely,

Walter Smith
Chair of Trenton Accessibility Committee

Town Council Message

The Town of Trenton aspires to be an inclusive and equitable community where people of all abilities and backgrounds can actively participate and have a sense of belonging. The Town is committed to ensuring our municipal programs, services, initiatives, and facilities are accessible and available to all. While great strides have been made over the past several years, there is still much to accomplish. We will continue to support our Accessibility Committee and allocate appropriate resources toward identifying, preventing, and eliminating barriers faced in our community.

Respectfully,

Mayor Alec Dove
Councillor Scott Cameron
Councillor Nicole LeBlanc
Councillor Stephanie MacKinnon
Councillor Donald Cullen

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's 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." 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 for:

- promoting public awareness and consideration for accessibility issues of those facing barriers
- encouraging co-operation among all service and interest groups
- communicating with the Town Council in the making of recommendations on policy and legislation
- identifying and documenting relevant issues and concerns
- helping the community by providing information on initiatives that provide access to housing, transportation, education, recreation, and employment
- recognizing the needs of all people are constantly changing, growing and in need of refinement.

Glossary of Terms

From the Town's [Accessibly 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".

Equity – The quality of being fair and impartial.

Equitable – Fair and impartial

First Voice – These are typically under-valued and under-represented perspectives. They refer to the knowledge of persons with disabilities, and others who experience barriers to accessibility. First Voices emerge from lived experience, community connections, knowledge traditions, and scholarly activities.

Inclusive – To value, welcome and respect all people.

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:

- Some local businesses are not aware of tools, funding opportunities or organizations available to help them improve or address accessibility barriers.

Achievements:

- Live Streaming Equipment installed and accessible in the summer of 2024.
- The Monthly Town newsletter promotes services located in the Town.
- The Monthly Town newsletter is available for viewing on the Town's website and residents can request large font documents for more accessible viewing.
- Staff send tax/water bills by email to residents, upon request.
- Go Play, a recreational funding assistance program, designed to help individuals of all ages cover the financial costs associated with recreational activities, is available to residents in Trenton.

Proposed Action:

- Department Heads will continue ensuring accessible lens brought to plans for annual planning and budgeting.
- Staff will continue sending tax/water bills by email to residents, upon request.
- Committee can work with Staff to host community events to recognize Accessibility Awareness Week and International Day of Persons with Disabilities
- Work is being completed by the Pictou County Partnership to develop a Business Accessibility Toolkit to help businesses address accessibility barriers.
- The Committee will engage with residents either by survey or in-person for input on the current plan and future engagement sessions.

2. Information and Communication:

Information and communication 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:

- Many residents are still unaware of the Committee's activities and the current 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.
- All business cards purchased for Town Staff now include braille
- Accessibility news and updates included in the Town Newsletter

Proposed Action(s):

- Continue with 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:

- Lack of safe, accessible parking spaces.
- Many sidewalks and curbs are difficult to navigate

Achievements:

- The Town is now part of a 3-year Transit Pilot Program with the Towns of Pictou, Westville and Pictou Landing First Nation connecting into the fixed Transit Route with New Glasgow and Stellarton. The Pilot program offers a low rate of \$5 per day for every resident thanks to the subsidized rate provided by the Provincial government. Currently there are 3 locations available in Town with access 6 days a week to connect into the larger commercial sectors of New Glasgow and Stellarton.
- The Town has completed an Asset Management Plan which includes a review of streets, sidewalks, and curbs. This plan will continue to be reviewed and updated yearly by staff.
- The Asset Management Plan will be reviewed with each new Council at a public meeting.

Proposed Action:

- After the 3-year Pilot Transit Program concludes March 2027, the Town will undertake a review whether to continue with a fixed route. Will need to consider changing or expanding bus stops, permanent bus shelters, signage and benches.
- Continue working with the Traffic Authority to review and consider possible safe and accessible parking spaces.
- Continue to focus on Asset Management Planning for annual consideration of which roads, sidewalks and curbs to be replaced during the annual budget process.

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:

- There is not a fully accessible municipally owned building.

Achievements:

- Job postings continue to be posted on the Town Facebook Page, Town website, newspaper and at Town Hall.

Proposed Action:

- Offer meetings, interviews or other in-person interactions via virtual meeting if possible.
- Review and update of hiring policies and practices to encourage recruitment, interviews, and selection of qualified persons with disabilities.
- Review of policies and practices to ensure that employees who have a disability will have the tools and support they need to be successful in their employment and will be supported in their career growth.
- Work is being completed by the Pictou County Partnership to develop a Business Accessibility Toolkit to help businesses address accessibility barriers.
- Ensure continued focus on entrance to the Trenton Rink and Annex to make it more 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:

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

Achievements:

- Live Streaming equipment was installed in the Summer 2024 to allow residents to view Council meetings via their computer at home.
- The Town's Building Inspector completed an Accessibility Audit on all public buildings within Town limits that are accessible to the Public.
- With the help of approved funding from the Province, contribution from the Town and input from the tenants of the Express Yourself Café (newly situated on Main Street, Trenton) an accessible ramp was installed on the Trenton Caboose ensuring accessibility to patrons for years to come.

Proposed Action:

- Based on the Accessibility Audit ensure this information is used and an accessibility lens for all redevelopment projects or initiatives that involve Public Access.
- Have the Town's Building Inspector present the Accessibility Audit to the Committee for an understanding of current building status and challenges moving forward
- The Town will continue to apply for Accessibility grant funding made available by the Province that fits project needs within the Town and if approved, incorporate into yearly budget with approval from Council

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, 2026 (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.
- The 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.