



# Eastern Shelburne County Accessibility Plan



## Contents

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Introduction.....	1
Awareness.....	6
Goods & Services .....	7
Information & Communication.....	8
Transportation .....	9
Employment .....	10
Built Environment.....	11
Implementing the Plan.....	12

## Appendices

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- A Accessibility Advisory Committee Members
- B Community Engagement
- C Unit-Specific Action Plans

# INTRODUCTION

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## What We Believe

The Province of Nova Scotia, through the Department of Justice, recognizes accessibility as a human right. The Municipality of the District of Shelburne, the Town of Shelburne, and the Town of Lockeport are committed to fostering a culture of accessibility and inclusion throughout Eastern Shelburne County. We recognize accessibility as a human right and are committed to promoting accessibility awareness and ensuring equitable opportunity to participate in community life is supported for all members of the community, regardless of their abilities. We will achieve this by identifying, removing, and preventing barriers to accessibility within our communities and by satisfying the requirements of the *Nova Scotia Accessibility Act*. These barriers may be attitudinal, systemic, physical, or within the design of information communication, and technology systems.

This plan communicates the commitment of the three municipal units to ensuring inclusive access and participation within municipally owned and operated facilities, services, and programs; specifically, as they relate to the areas of awareness, goods and services, information and communication, transportation, employment, and the built environment.

## Promoting Accessibility Awareness

We recognize the value in making meaningful changes in our communities to work toward achieving the provincial goal of an accessible Nova Scotia by 2030. Bringing together diverse perspectives and experiences to achieve this goal will not only help to improve the quality of life for the 30% of Nova Scotians with a disability, but it will also create the opportunity to increase accessibility awareness and promote the rights of persons with disabilities and draw attention to the benefits of an inclusive and accessible society for all.

## How to Read this Plan

The Accessibility Plan is broken down into this Introduction, six (6) chapters covering the areas of focus, and three (3) appendices. Chapters outlining each of the six (6) areas of focus are broken down under identical headings which provide the information outlined in this section. Lastly, the appendices provide additional material to help provide a more complete understanding of the Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee structure, the community engagement process, and individual Action Plans for each municipal unit.

## Eastern Shelburne County Accessibility Plan

**Our Commitment:** The Towns/Municipality's commitment to accessibility in the areas of focus.

**Policies:** Recommended principles that the Towns/Municipality use as a basis for making decisions.

## Individual Action Plans

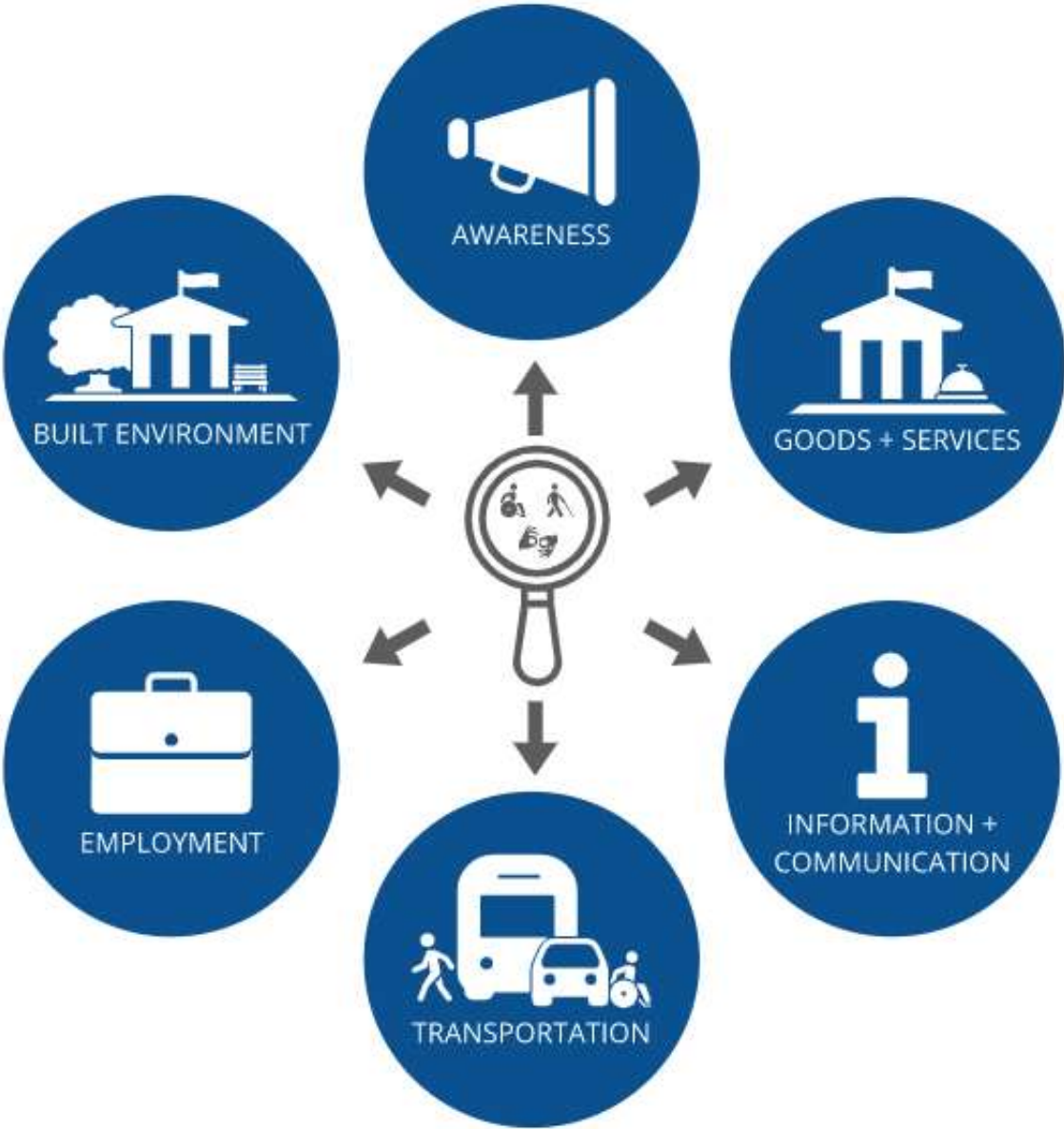
**Overview:** An overview of the current situation in the Towns/Municipality.

**Achievements:** The Towns/Municipality's achievements to date in identifying, removing, and preventing barriers in policies, programs, practices, and services.

**Barriers:** Barriers in the Towns/Municipality that hinder or challenge the full and effective participation in society of persons with disabilities.

**Actions:** Recommended actions the Towns/Municipality take to improve accessibility.

# Areas of Focus





# Glossary of Terms

**Access:** A place that is easily reached, an environment that is easily navigated, or a program or service that can easily be obtained.

**Accessibility Act (2017):** The law enacted by the Province of Nova Scotia to achieve accessibility by preventing barriers to accessibility, developing and implementing provincial accessibility standards, and defining the role of an accessibility directorate in supporting and advancing accessibility initiatives and broader disability-related issues.

(<https://nslegislature.ca/sites/default/files/legc/statutes/accessibility.pdf>)

**Accessibility Lens:** A tool for assessing programs and services to ensure that persons with disabilities have equal access to and equitable inclusion in programs and services.

**Accommodation:** The personalized adaption of a workplace to overcome the barriers faced by persons with disabilities.

**Active Transportation:** Using your own power to get from one place to another. This includes walking, biking, skateboarding, in-line skating/rollerblading, jogging and running, and non-mechanized wheel chairing.

**ASL:** American Sign Language

**Barrier:** Nova Scotia's Accessibility Act defines a barrier as "anything that hinders or challenges the full and effective participation in society of persons with disabilities, including a physical barrier, an architectural barrier, an information or communications barrier, an attitudinal barrier, a technological barrier, a policy or a practice."

**CART:** Communication Access Realtime Translation

**Disability:** Nova Scotia's Accessibility Act defines a disability as "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."

**Eastern Shelburne County:** The Municipality of the District of Shelburne, the Town of Shelburne, and the Town of Lockeport.

**Equity/Equitable:** A commitment to fairness. Equitable access is different from equal access. Equality means each individual or group is provided with the same resources or opportunities. Equity recognizes that each person has different circumstances and allocates the exact resources and opportunities needed to reach an equal outcome.

**Plain Language:** Language that is clear and easy for the reader or listener to understand.

**Retrofit:** To add features that were not included in the original design.

**RHFAC:** Rick Hanson Foundation Accessibility Certification. (Learn more at [www.rickhansen.com/become-accessible/rating-certification](http://www.rickhansen.com/become-accessible/rating-certification).)

**Tactile:** Related to the sense of touch.

**WCAG:** Web Content Accessibility Guidelines. (Learn more at [www.w3.org/WAI/standards-guidelines/wcag](http://www.w3.org/WAI/standards-guidelines/wcag).)

# AWARENESS

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## Our Commitment

We will create a culture of accessibility across our three municipal units. This includes increasing public awareness about the rights of persons with a disability, barriers to accessibility, and celebrating the contributions of our community members with disabilities.

## Policies

The Municipality of the District of Shelburne, Town of Shelburne, and Town of Lockeport will:

- Promote social inclusion in municipally led programming and events.
- Increase disability representation in promotional materials.



# GOODS & SERVICES

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## Our Commitment

We will ensure that people of all abilities have equitable access to goods and services provided by the Municipality of the District of Shelburne, the Town of Shelburne, and the Town of Lockeport. This includes ensuring that there are policies, procedures, and tools to promote the accessible delivery of services.

## Policies

The Municipality of the District of Shelburne, Town of Shelburne, and Town of Lockeport will:

- Ensure no individual is denied services because of a disability
- Commit to deliver all goods and services without bias, making them accessible to all .

# INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION

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## Our Commitment

We will ensure that all people of all abilities can receive, understand and share information and communication provided by the Municipality of the District of Shelburne, Town of Shelburne, and Town of Lockeport.

## Policies

The Municipality of the District of Shelburne, Town of Shelburne, and Town of Lockeport will:

- On request, provide information in an accessible format or with communication support that considers a person's individual need, at no additional charge.
- Ensure that all public meetings are as accessible as possible to all members of the public by offering material in various formats and offering support to facilitate equitable participation.
- Train front-line staff in effective methods for communicating with people of all ages and abilities.
- Provide information in an accessible format when requested.

# TRANSPORTATION

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## Our Commitment

We will support local organizations and businesses in the Municipality of the District of Shelburne, Town of Shelburne, and the Town of Lockeport that provide transportation to ensure equitable access for people of all abilities.

## Policies

The Municipality of the District of Shelburne, Town of Shelburne, and Town of Lockeport will:

- Continue to support the Sou'West Nova Transit Association as it provides a valuable service to residents throughout Eastern Shelburne County.
- Strive to support safe infrastructure for active transportation (e.g. walking, rolling, cycling).

# EMPLOYMENT

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## Our Commitment

We will remove barriers to employment for persons with disabilities who seek employment with the Municipality of the District of Shelburne, Town of Shelburne, and Town of Lockeport. We will make our employment practices and workplaces accessible for both new and existing employees of all abilities.

## Policies

The Municipality of the District of Shelburne, Town of Shelburne, and Town of Lockeport will:

- Offer accommodation during recruitment, if needed.
- Offer accommodation to employees of all abilities. This includes providing assistive devices so that employees can succeed at their jobs.
- Provide educational opportunities for employees to build an understanding of the value of accessibility and inclusion.
- Ensure that an accessibility lens is applied when reviewing or developing programs or processes relating to employment.

# BUILT ENVIRONMENT

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## Our Commitment

We will ensure that all new infrastructure (public buildings, streets, sidewalks, and public spaces) within the Municipality of the District of Shelburne, the Town of Shelburne, and the Town of Lockeport will be accessible to people of all abilities.

## Policies

The Municipality of the District of Shelburne, the Town of Shelburne, and the Town of Lockeport will:

- Establish a plan to assess all municipal infrastructure based on the accessibility requirements (Schedule “C”) in the most recent version of the Nova Scotia Building Code.
- Strive to achieve RHFAC Gold Standard for all new public buildings and facilities. Ensure that new public buildings and facilities meet or exceed the standard set out in the Canadian Standards Association (CSA) B651-18, Accessible Design for the Built Environment.
- Strive to ensure that existing sidewalks, curb cuts, and crosswalks are upgraded and ensure that newly constructed meet the standard set out in the Canadian Standards Association (CSA) B651-18, Accessible Design for the Built Environment.
- Aim to ensure that accessible detours are available when a sidewalk or shoulder is closed for or affected by construction.
- Provide basic access for people of all ages and abilities to public buildings, public washrooms, and outdoor public spaces such as parks and beaches.
- Promote grant programs for accessibility upgrades to local businesses and organizations.

# IMPLEMENTING THE PLAN

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## Responsibilities

### Accessibility Advisory Committee

- Provide ongoing feedback and recommendations to the three municipal councils.

### Accessibility Coordinator

- Work with the Accessibility Advisory Committee to identify and provide advice on removing accessibility barriers in new policies and programs.
- Receive and respond to public concerns, complaints, and suggestions in their respective jurisdictions.

### Council

- Municipal councils are responsible for adopting and overseeing the Eastern Shelburne County Accessibility Plan in their respective jurisdictions.

### CAO/Staff

- The Chief Administrative Officers for the Municipality of the District of Shelburne and Town of Shelburne, and the Town Clerk for the Town of Lockeport is responsible for implementing the plan in their respective jurisdictions.

## Schedule

All priorities in this plan will be implemented by 2030.

## Monitoring

- The Accessibility Advisory Committee will prepare an annual Accessibility Report Card for the councils of each municipal unit. The Accessibility Report Card will measure the performance of the policies and actions outlined in this plan.



- The Accessibility Report Card for each municipal unit will be a public document and will be posted on the individual website of each municipality.
- The Accessibility Advisory Committee will review new accessibility standards, directives, and guidelines from the province as they are released to determine if any updates to the plan are required.

## Evaluating

The Accessibility Advisory Committee will lead a review and evaluation of the plan every three years.

## Responding to Questions and Complaints

- Anyone can lodge a complaint, pose a question, or express a concern about accessibility in Eastern Shelburne County. These should be directed to the Accessibility Coordinator.
- The Accessibility Coordinator will respond within a reasonable amount of time. Before responding, the Coordinator will consult with the staff person responsible for the area of inquiry. The Coordinator's response will contain reasons for the decision.
- Anyone can appeal to the Council of their municipal unit if they are not satisfied with the response from the Accessibility Coordinator. Council may refer any appeal to the Accessibility Advisory Committee for additional review and recommendations before issuing a final response to the complainant.
- The Accessibility Coordinator will keep a record of all complaints, questions, and concerns submitted to them, and will provide summary updates to the Accessibility Advisory Committee regularly. These updates will become part of the Accessibility Advisory Committee's continual review of the Accessibility Plan and may inform future changes.

# APPENDIX A

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## Accessibility Advisory Committee Members

## Community Members

Terry Stacey

Bil Atwood

Holly Perry

Sylvia Snow

Wanda Buchanan

## Council Members

Kent Balish, Town of Lockeport

Ben Nickerson, Town of Shelburne

Ron Coole, Municipality of the District of Shelburne

## Staff Support

Frances Scott, Community Coordinator, Town of Lockeport

Robin Smith, Executive Coordinator, Town of Shelburne

Adam Dedrick, Director of Recreation & Parks, Municipality of the District of Shelburne

## Past Members

Thank you to the following past committee members for their contributions:

Elizabeth Chute (Community Member)

Ron Coole, Municipality of the District of Shelburne (Council Member)

# APPENDIX B

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## Community Engagement

Community engagement is an essential component of the development and ongoing review of the Accessibility Plan. In developing the Accessibility Plan we reached out to a wide range of project stakeholders including Shelburne County Senior Safety & Services, Shelburne Association Supporting Inclusion, Shelburne County Community Health Board, Shelburne County Mental Health & Wellness Association, Roseway Manor, Surf Lodge, and Sou' West Nova Transit Association to inform them of the efforts of the Accessibility Advisory Committee and request that communications about engagement opportunities be passed through them to target audiences.

A project website was launched in September 2021 to host the Eastern Shelburne County Accessibility Survey, which gathered both general and specific feedback about barriers to accessibility across all six areas of focus. The survey remained open for public comment from September 29<sup>th</sup> to November 2<sup>nd</sup> (2021). In addition to the survey, an open house was held to provide the opportunity to participate in person on November 2, 2021, from 3 pm until 7 pm at the Shelburne Community Centre.



# Accessibility Plan

## Community Engagement Open House

The Eastern Shelburne County Accessibility Committee is working on an Accessibility Plan to address the identification, removal, and prevention of barriers in the policies, programs, practices and services of the Municipality of the District of Shelburne, the Town of Lockeport, and the Town of Shelburne.

**Date:** November 2nd, 2021

**Time:** Drop in anytime between 3-7pm

**Location:** Auditorium, Shelburne Community Centre, 63 King St.

Proof of Vaccination is Required

Please contact us if you would like to participate through a paper survey or online.





# APPENDIX C

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## Action Plans