

ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

August 24, 2023

The meeting was called to order by the Chair, at 7:00 p.m., in the Conference Room, in the Administrative Centre, in Barrington, N.S., with the following members present:

- Councillor George El-Jakl, Chair
- Mickayla Peters, Vice-Chair - Resident – Individuals and Organizations who Experience Disabilities Representative
- Councillor Shaun Hatfield
- Loretta Nickerson, Resident – Shelburne Association Supporting Inclusion Representative
- Denise Nickerson, Resident – NS Works and Southwest Employment Services Representative
- Warden Lindsay (Eddie) Nickerson – Arrived at 7:08 p.m.

- Chris Frotten, CAO
- Lesa Rossetti, Accessibility Co-ordinator
- Cameron Whiteway, Director of Public Works, Absent due to vacation.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Being duly moved and seconded that the agenda be approved as circulated.

Motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Being duly moved and seconded that minutes of the last meeting held May 11, 2023, be approved as circulated.

Motion carried unanimously.

PRESENTATION – TERRI LYNN ALMEDA, ACCESSIBILITY DIRECTORATE

Terri Lynn Almeda, Director of Programs and Services, Accessibility Directorate appeared before the meeting and provided information on the Nova Scotia Accessibility Act, Access by Design 2030, standard development, collaboration and support, etc. During her presentation she informed members that she will be staying in the area overnight and will be attending the Grand Opening of our accessible beach at Stoney Island, tomorrow.

Ms. Almeda, was thanked for her presentation.

A copy of her presentation is attached and forms part of the minutes.

PRESENTATION – DENISE NICKERSON RE: NS WORKS AND SOUTHWEST EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

Ms. Nickerson was asked to provide information to members on the roles and responsibilities of the organization she represents.

A copy of her presentation is attached and forms part of the minutes.

MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

AAC – Terms of Reference Re: Student Representative

Members were advised that Council has approved amendments to Policy 59 “Committees of Council” regarding the Terms of Reference for the Committee. Committee membership now includes a student representing people with disabilities or having a disability themselves. Schools in the municipality will be advised of this amendment.

GRAND OPENING OF ACCESSIBLE BEACH

It was reported that the Grand Opening of our accessible beach at Stoney Island is scheduled to be held on Friday, August 25, 2023. There will be a Ribbon Cutting Ceremony and planned beach games and activities.

AGENDA ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

There were no agenda items brought forward.

NEXT MEETING

It was agreed that the next meeting of the Committee be held on October 19, 2023.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7:44 p.m.

Chair

Secretary for the Meeting

Accessibility Act Update to the Municipality of Barrington

Accessibility Directorate

Terri Lynn Almeda

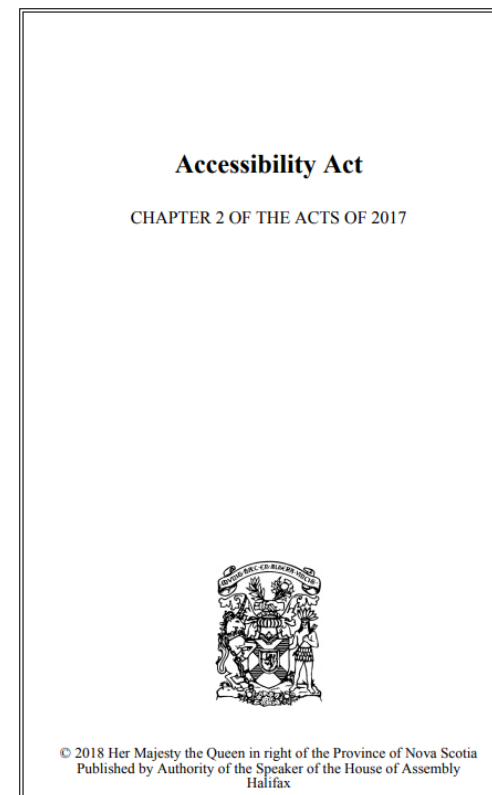
Director of Programs and Services

August 24, 2023



Nova Scotia Accessibility Act

- Passed on September 18, 2017
- 3rd province in Canada to have accessibility legislation
- Set a goal of an accessible province by 2030
- Prevent and remove barriers in:
 - Built Environment
 - Education
 - Employment
 - Goods and Services
 - Information and Communication Technology
 - Public Transportation and Transportation Infrastructure



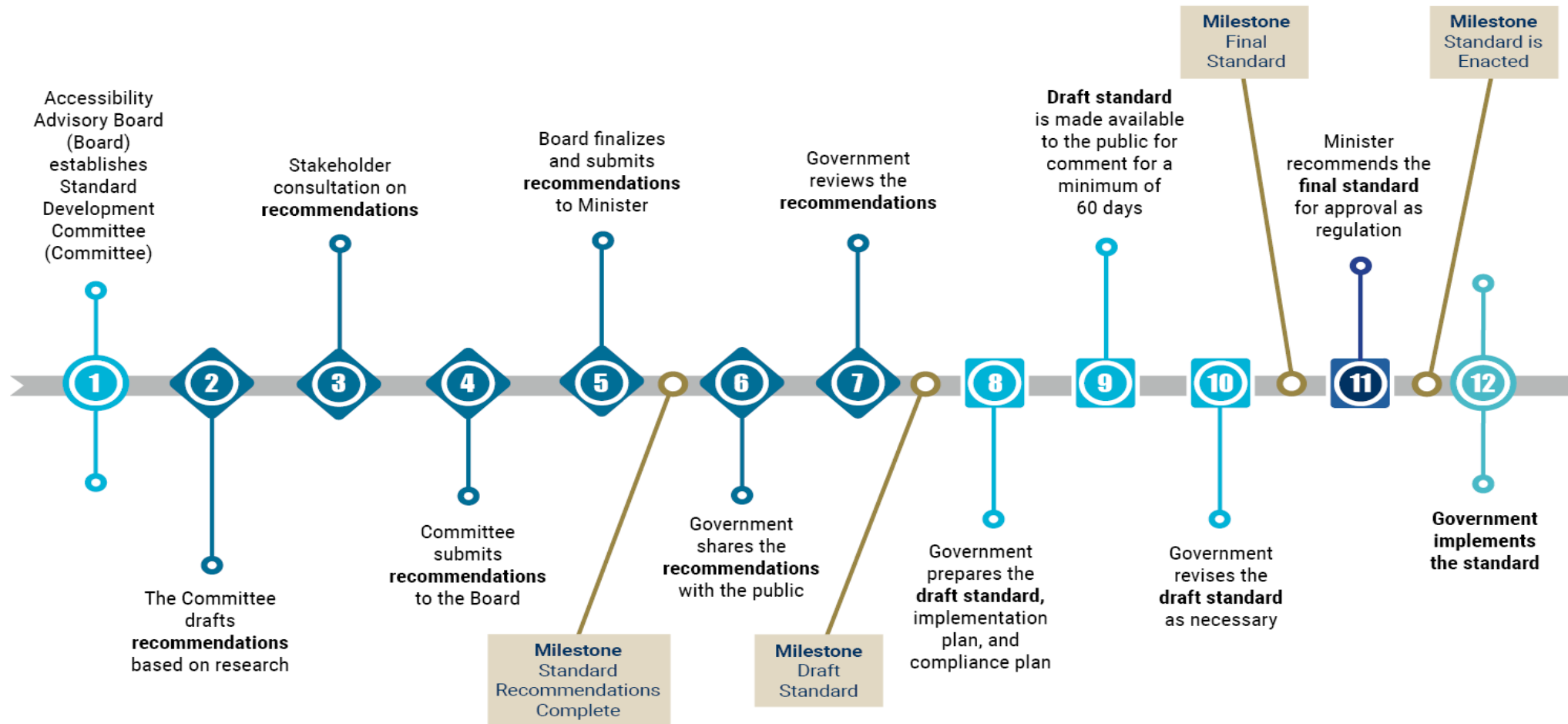
Access By Design 2030

The framework for how the province will achieve our goal of an accessible Nova Scotia by 2030 and identifies priorities for this work.

- Standards Development (6)
- Awareness and Capacity Building
- Collaboration and Support
- Compliance and Enforcement
- Monitoring and Evaluation
- Government Leading by Example



Standards Development & Implementation Process



Definitions


Standard - A set of rules that government, businesses and other organizations must follow.

Accessibility Advisory Board - A group of community members who have been appointed to the Board provide advice and recommendations to the Minister of Justice about ways to make Nova Scotia accessible. Most of the members are people with disabilities.

Standard Development Committee - A group of experts from the community and government who have experience in areas like architecture, urban planning, engineering, and accessibility. Most of the members are people with disabilities.

Standard Development – Built Environment

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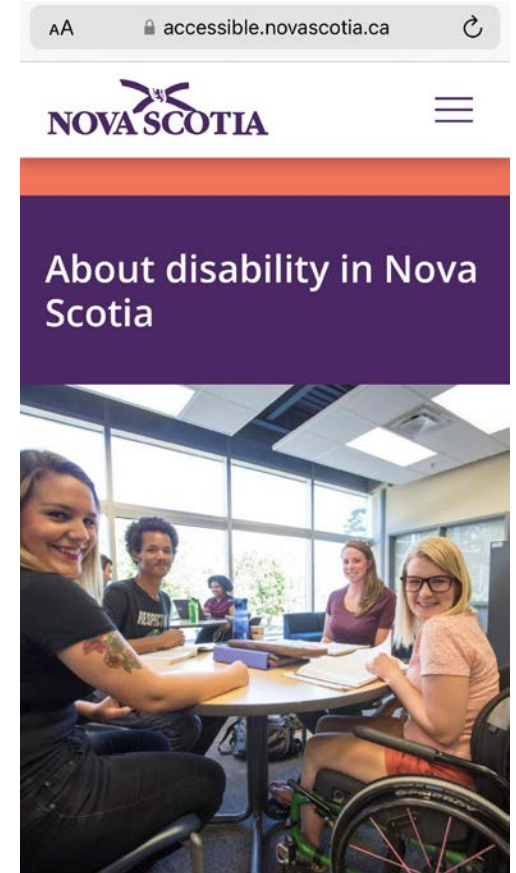
- 2019 - 2021: Standard Development Committee prepared recommendations in two phases
- 2020 & 2021: Recommendations were submitted to the Minister of Justice for development into an accessibility standard.
-  ➤ 2021 - 2023: Interdepartmental Working Group drafting standard, implementation plan, and compliance plan
- Late Summer 2023: Post publicly for comment (min. 60 days)
- 2024 onward: Standard is enacted and implemented.

Standard Development

- 2. Education** Standard Development Committee submitted recommendations to Minister in two phases: 2020 and January 2023. Government beginning to review the recommendations.
- 3. Employment** Standard Development committee established and working on recommendations. Consultations on draft recommendations planned for this fall.
- 4. Goods and Services** Standard Development Committee membership was announced and meetings began in June.
- 5. Public Transportation and Transportation Infrastructure** – research work has begun and SDC recruitment will begin this year.
- 6. Information and Communications** – research work has also begun.

Awareness and Capacity Building

- Stigma and attitudinal barriers
- ***Access includes everyone*** public awareness campaign
- Increase awareness of accessibility, barriers and human rights
- Media
 - Television
 - Social media
 - Digital media
- Website: ***accessible.novascotia.ca***
- Photography campaign



Awareness and Capacity Building

- Resource Hub:
[https://*accessible.novascotia.ca/resources*](https://accessible.novascotia.ca/resources)
- Working together to promote:
 - Access Awareness Week (May/June)
 - Disability Employment Awareness Month (October)
 - International Day of Persons with Disabilities (December 3)
- Evaluation and planning



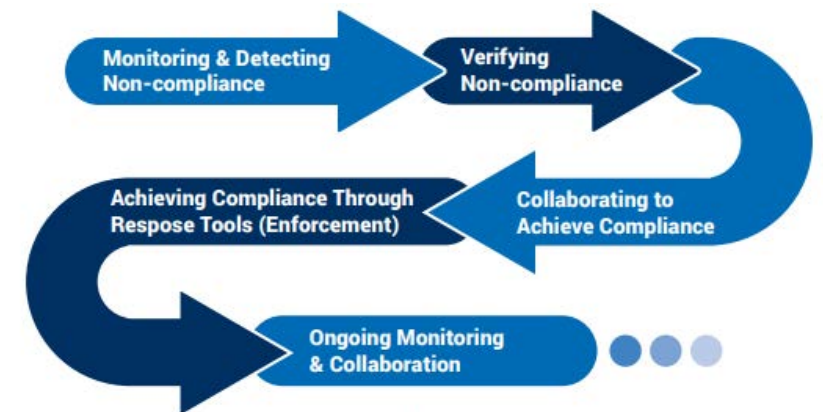
Collaboration and Support

- Virtual Gatherings and Resources:
 - Introduction to Disability
 - *Introduction to Accessibility Barriers*
 - Disability in the Workplace
 - Engaging with Persons with Disabilities
 - Accessibility Foundations Training
- Grants to support capacity building
 - MSVU and NSCC
 - AMANS – Municipal Accessibility Coordinator
 - Disability Partnership – Easter Seals NS
- Funding opportunities
 - Accessibility-specific as well as other opportunities
 - Supporting other initiatives – Communauto, Nova Ramp Up



Compliance and Enforcement

- Accessibility Act includes requirements to monitor and enforce compliance
- Compliance Framework **developed collaboratively**
- Emphasis on **education and awareness**
 - Supporting organizations to comply
- Enforcement measures may be used :
 - If collaborative efforts do not result in compliance
 - Orders, Administrative Penalties, Summary Conviction



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Compliance and Enforcement - Accessibility Plans

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- Cohort 1 (90 prescribed public sector bodies)
 - 70 Municipalities, 11 Post-Secondary, 9 Libraries
 - 81 (90%) have developed accessibility plans
 - 9 (10%) have not completed plans
- Cohort 2 (15 prescribed public sector bodies)
 - 4 (27%) have developed accessibility plans
 - 11 (73%) have not completed plans

- The Accessibility Directorate is following up in September to check on plan status

Update as of August 22, 2023



Evaluation and Monitoring

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- Accessibility Act Review Report
 - released May 17, 2023
- Quality of Life Index – Nova Scotia League of Equal Opportunities and Engage Nova Scotia
- PPSB Evaluation Tools – MERL Working Group
- Annual Public Opinion Survey Results
 - <https://accessible.novascotia.ca/sites/default/files/2023-05/Disability-and-Accessibility-in-Nova-Scotia-2023.pdf>
- Minister's Annual Reports on Accessibility



Government of Nova Scotia – Leading by Example

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- GNS Accessibility Plan 2018-2021
 - 5 priority areas
 - 23 commitments
 - 8 departments involved
 - Accessibility Directorate - 11 commitments
- Highlights of completed commitments
 - Training for government staff and managers
 - Accessibility Audit Handbook and pilot audits
 - Electronic booking for in-person Access NS
 - Provincial Parks website / Accessible beaches
 - Bluenose II ramp



Government of Nova Scotia – Leading by Example

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- Government of Nova Scotia Accessibility Plan 2022-2025 – released in December 2022
 - 8 priority areas
 - 6 government wide commitments
 - 47 individual and joint commitments
- Highlights of commitments
 - Embed accessibility into govt policy and planning
 - Accessibility in public housing, schools, buildings
 - PSC employment systems review
 - Remove barriers to govt programs and services
- Accessibility Interdepartmental Committee



Questions and Discussion

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novascotia.ca/accessibility

Email: accessibility@novascotia.ca

Phone: 902-424-8280

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Southwest Employment Services (SES), A Nova Scotia Works Employment Centre

- There are 16 agencies (48 locations) across the province that offer the same services
- SES serves all of Shelburne County, the Municipality of Yarmouth & Town of Yarmouth
- In July 2016 three local organizations (West Nova Inclusive Employment Society, Career Resource Center & Black Employment Resource Centre) merged to form Southwest Employment Services

Mission - Southwest Employment mission is to provide pathways to meaningful, inclusive employment for all. We do this by helping job seekers navigate the job market and by helping employers meet their human resource needs.

Nova Scotia Works Centres:

- Help all Nova Scotians meet their full employment potential
- Help Nova Scotians understand, prepare for, and fill the needs of the province's job market.
- Help businesses recruit, manage and develop the talent they need to be more productive here at home and around the world.
- Help communities develop well-balanced local labour markets

Services for Job Seekers:

Self-serve

Self-serve employment services are those that can be accessed by a participant/client who is able to self-navigate to access information at a center and use the equipment and resources at the Centre with little or no assistance from staff

Case Managed Clients

- Job Search services and resources (cover letter and resume development, interview prep)
- Client assessment services
- Case management services including Return-to-Work Action Plan development, management and follow-up
- Career Counselling
- Diagnostic Referral
- Job Coaching, Job Development
- Job Maintenance
- Labour market information
- Workshops
- Support to apply for funding and programs

Employment Programs (Funded by Employment Nova Scotia)

- **Skills Development** - A provincially managed employment program that provides financial assistance to unemployed eligible participants who require specific skills training to access employment opportunities



Southwest Employment Services

- **Fast Forward** - This program provides an opportunity for individuals who are in receipt of regular Employment Insurance benefits to attend approved training
- **Job Creation Partnership** - Is an employment program designed to support projects that will provide eligible participants with meaningful work experience that will improve their employment prospects
- **Self Employment** - provides entrepreneurial support and financial assistance to eligible unemployed participants starting their own business.
- **START** - is an employment program that encourages employers to hire unemployed Nova Scotians requiring work experience resulting in good jobs for Nova Scotians and good employees for employers.
- **Support for Apprentices is also available through Employment Nova Scotia.**

Services for Employers:

- Guidance in creating job descriptions & hiring plans
- Post job vacancies online and in-house
- Guidance and support in identifying recruitment and retention strategies
- Skills Development/Training
- Provide materials related to Human Resources
- Identify and aid in the organization of needed workshops and training
- Employ strategies to become a more inclusive workplace; information on accessibility standards
- Promote government programs that support human resource and business development. Provide guidance to employers in navigating federal and provincial funding programs
- Work with other partners including: Regional Enterprise Networks, CBDC's, Chambers of Commerce, municipal economic developers and other government departments

Services for Students (Student Liaison positions):

Regional Centres for Education (RCE), le Conseil Scolaire Acadien Provincial (CSAP), as well as in the community at Nova Scotia Works Centres.

- Services offered to Grades 7 and 8 levels consist of school-wide group events.
- Services offered to Grades 9, 10, 11 and 12 levels consist of school-wide events including small group workshops or extra-curricular and individual sessions.

Family Supports: Access to external supports and workshops

Student Supports: Labour market information, Workshops & training, entry into the labour market

Community Coordinators:

Community Coordinators are organizations that can be supported to design and deliver their own employment programs for eligible individuals.

YESS (Youth Employment Skills strategy) – Service Canada (Federal Funding)

In this program we use a holistic approach to youth unemployment, addressing the mind, body and spirit. We adopt a comprehensive strategy to manage all the factors that impact participant employment opportunities, including general well being, mental health, support systems, addressing poverty, transportation, and more.



*** Services for Persons with Disabilities:**

Opportunities Fund for Persons with Disabilities – Service Canada (Federal Funding)

This model allows Service Canada to provide funds directly to Southwest Employment Services in order to deliver program interventions for persons with disabilities in Yarmouth County, Shelburne County, Kings County, Annapolis County and the Municipality of Clare.

Community Coordinators...

- select their own participants
- enter into their own agreements
- monitor the programs activities (Wage Subsidies, Self Employment, and Skills for Employment)
- accountable for the results of programs

Opportunities Fund interventions include: Wage Subsidies, Skills for Employment (training), Self-Employment interventions. Funding for additional supports such as disability-related supports/accommodations may also be available when required.

Our agency has received funding federally since 1997 and we have over 25 years of experience in delivering employment services and programs to persons with disabilities.

Member of the Collaborative Partnership Network (CPN)

In 1999, Human Resources Development Canada put in place an implementation plan for the Nova Scotia Partnerships for Persons with Disabilities, which led to the official launch of the Collaborative Partnership Network (CPN) in 2001 with incorporation in 2006. The CPN has been a partnership of nine community employment agencies across Nova Scotia (including Southwest Employment Services), providing a unified voice on behalf of persons with disabilities and a common approach to ensure their full access to the labour market.

- Over the 23 years of its existence, the CPN has become a model for innovation in servicing and supporting the employment needs of persons with disabilities and providing related expert advice to government. Its accomplishments include Development of a Specialized Service Delivery Model for persons with disabilities.
- Centralized distribution of the Provincial Funding Skills and Training Subsidies.
- Initiation in 2008, and ongoing organization of the Ability Starts Here Symposium.
- Initiation and presentation of the Lieutenant-Governor's Persons with Disabilities Employer Partnership Awards since 2008 until 2019 when the pandemic hit.
- Launch in 2012 and ongoing delivery of the Ability Employers-Disability Confident Workplace Series.
- Addition of Employment Maintenance Workers (now known as Employment Support Practitioners) in 2008