

It was moved by Daniel Muise and seconded by Linda Vickery to recommend that Municipal Council approve the draft 2025-2028 Accessibility Plan.

Motion carried unanimously.

Accessibility Plan 2025-2028



*932 Highway 1, Hebron
Nova Scotia B5A 5Z5*

*Phone: (902) 742-7159
www.munyarmouth.ca*

Table of Contents



Summary and Introduction	1
Areas of Focus: Goods and Services	2
Top Priorities: Goods and Services	4
Areas of Focus: Information and Communication	5
Top Priorities: Information and Communication	7
Area of Focus: Transportation	8
Area of Focus: Employment	8
Top Priorities: Employment	10
Area of Focus: Built Environment	11
Top Priorities: Built Environment	13

Summary

This plan is an update of the 2022-2025 Municipal Accessibility Plan. It shows our progress to date as well as our goals for 2025-2028. The Municipality of Yarmouth is committed to supporting the full participation of people with disabilities. These priority actions will help the Municipality become more accessible by helping to identify, remove, and prevent barriers for people with disabilities.

Introduction

The Nova Scotia Accessibility Act came into force in 2017 as a means of achieving accessibility in the province by preventing and removing barriers for people with disabilities. The province has a goal of becoming accessible by 2030. The Government of Nova Scotia's Accessibility Directorate is responsible for administering the Accessibility Act 2017 and advancing disability issues within government. They work collaboratively with persons with disabilities, municipalities, businesses, post-secondary institutions and others to achieve the goal of an accessible Nova Scotia by 2030. In 2020, the province determined that "prescribed public sector bodies" (which includes municipalities) shall have an approved accessibility plan by April 1, 2022, outlining how they will achieve these goals. The plans are required to be updated every 3 years.

This 2025-2028 updated plan was developed in consultation with the Accessibility Advisory Committee - which is made up of staff, municipal councillors, and community members - with feedback from the community and organizations that provide services to people with disabilities. The updated plan outlines what was achieved from the initial plan, as well as the priorities for the next 3 years.

Some of the successes we've achieved from the first plan include on-going major renovations to both the Administration Building and Rotary Centre to make them more accessible for all. We've also created a new municipal website and are working towards following the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines to make it more accessible and user friendly. We look forward to building on these and other initiatives in the coming years.

Municipality of Yarmouth

2025-2028 Accessibility Plan

Areas of Focus: Goods and Services

Actions in 2022-2025 Plan	Progress-to-date	Comments
Administration Building accessibility audit	Completed	Renovations have begun
Rotary Centre accessibility audit	Completed	Renovations have begun
Incorporate accessibility training to the annual staff and Council training plan	Ongoing	Some training has taken place
Where applicable, include an 'Accessibility Lens' / Impact Analysis in reports to Council and in consultant reports delivered to staff and Council	Ongoing	Included in Requests for Decisions and Briefing Notes
Train the staff who are responsible for delivering accessible services to people with diverse abilities (including seasonal employees)	Ongoing	Training ongoing in-house; Rec NS Rec Room platform for Social/Emotional Learning
Provide an adapted listing of recreation programs and services for people of all abilities and update it annually	Ongoing	Client focus/work with them on individual needs

Municipality of Yarmouth

2025-2028 Accessibility Plan

Areas of Focus: Goods and Services, continued

Actions in 2022-2025 Plan	Progress-to-date	Comments
Engage RCMP to find an accessible location for Senior Safety Coordinator to meet clients	Pending	
Engage employees and Councillors in simulation exercises to get a better understanding of the needs of people with disabilities	Ongoing	This has been done once and there are plans to continue.
As capital repairs are made, improve Municipal trails so they can be enjoyed by more people of various abilities	Ongoing	
Provide accessible exercise equipment at municipal recreational facilities	Ongoing	Funding based
Provide sign language interpreters, on request, to enable people to participate in municipal programs	Pending	

Goods and Services: Top Priorities (2025-2028)

1. Engage RCMP to find an accessible location for Senior Safety Coordinator to meet clients
2. Incorporate accessibility training in the annual staff and Council training plan
3. Where applicable, include an “Accessibility Lens”/Impact Analysis in reports to council and in consultant reports delivered to staff and council
4. Train the staff who are responsible for delivering accessible services to people with diverse abilities (including seasonal employees)
5. Continue to work with individual client needs in recreation programming
6. Complete renovations to Administrative Building and Rotary Centre
7. As capital repairs are made improve Municipal trails where possible so they can be enjoyed by more people of various abilities.
8. Provide sign language interpreters, on request, to enable people to participate in municipal programs
9. Explore easier/more accessible types of outdoor play for all ages and abilities

Areas of Focus: Information and Communication

Actions in 2022-2025 Plan	Progress to date	Comments
Key staff members to include plain writing and inclusive communications in annual training plan.	Ongoing	Some staff members have completed digital accessible and plain language training and there are plans to incorporate this knowledge in the annual training plan
Ensure the Municipality's web presence meets the latest Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) and is more user-friendly.	Ongoing	Working towards following the WCAG in the new municipal website to make it user friendly and more accessible
Identify ways/mediums to communicate with people who we are not currently reaching due to an accessibility barrier	Ongoing	
Ensure digital communications, including emergency alerts, are screen readable. Encourage partner agencies to achieve the same standard of communication.	Ongoing	Incorporating the tips from Plain Language training in municipal digital communications

Areas of Focus: Information and Communication, cont.

Actions in 2022-2025 Plan	Progress to date	Comments
Use alternate communications methods (bulletin board, digital signage in front of building, monthly newsletter, etc.)	Ongoing	
When requested, provide modified editions of key municipal resources—in large print, Braille and/or in plain language.	Ongoing	
Add standard language on how and when to request an adaptation/support to participate in a Council or Committee of Council meeting.	Pending	
Provide American Sign Language (ASL) and/or Communication Access Realtime Translation (CART) services at Municipal Council and other Municipality-hosted public meetings, on request	Pending	

Information + Communication: Top Priorities (2025-2028)

1. Identify ways/mediums to communicate with people who we are not currently reaching due to an accessibility barrier.
2. Work towards having the Municipality's web presence meets the latest Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) and is more user-friendly.
3. Key staff members to include plain writing and inclusive communications in annual training plan.
4. Ensure digital communications, including emergency alerts, are screen readable. Encourage partner agencies to achieve the same standard of communication.
5. Use alternate communications methods (bulletin board, digital signage in front of building, monthly newsletter, etc.)
6. Add standard language on how and when to request an adaptation/support to participate in a Council or Committee of Council meeting.
7. When requested, provide modified editions of key municipal resources—in large print, Braille and/or in plain language
8. Provide American Sign Language (ASL) and/or Communication Access Realtime Translation (CART) services at Municipal Council and other Municipality-hosted public meetings, on request.

Areas of Focus: Transportation

Actions in 2022-2025 Plan	Progress to date	Comments
The Municipality of Yarmouth does not presently have a publicly funded transportation system - this section does not apply	N/A	

Areas of Focus: Employment

Actions in 2022-2025 Plan	Progress to date	Comments
Assign a designated staff person to help individuals who may need assistance to succeed at their jobs	Completed	Accessibility and Inclusion Coordinator
State that the Deputy CAO is the lead on workplace adaptations	Completed`	
Add standard language to opportunity postings stating adaptations and accommodations can be made	Completed	

Areas of Focus: Employment, continued

Actions in 2022-2025 Plan	Progress to date	Comments
Incorporate accessibility training in the annual staff and Council training plan	Ongoing	
Make work areas more accessible to people with disabilities	Ongoing	Accessibility renovations currently going on in the Administration Building and Rotary Centre
Investigate strategies to reach a wider and more diverse audience with opportunity postings. Include statements in the postings to ensure applicants are aware that accommodation will be provided.	Ongoing	
Survey the municipal workforce, Council and citizen representatives to get baseline data on abilities	Pending	
Senior management staff will be required to take the Working with Abilities online training provided free by the NS Human Rights Commission (workwithabilitiesns.ca)	Pending	

Areas of Focus: Employment, continued

Actions in 2022-2025 Plan	Progress to date	Comments
Establish a centralized accommodation fund to pay for assistive devices or accommodations councillors, citizen reps and employees need to succeed at their jobs.	Ongoing	

Employment: Top Priorities (2025-2028)

1. Survey the municipal workforce, Council and citizen representatives to get baseline data on abilities.
2. Incorporate accessibility training in the annual staff and Council training plan
3. Investigate strategies to reach a wider and more diverse audience with opportunity postings. Include statements in the postings to ensure applicants are aware that accommodation will be provided.
4. Make work areas more accessible to people with disabilities
5. Senior management staff will be required to take the Working with Abilities online training provided free by the Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission (workwithabilitiesns.ca).
6. Establish a centralized accommodation fund to pay for assistive devices or accommodations councillors, citizen reps and employees need to succeed at their jobs.

Areas of Focus: Built Environment

Actions in 2022-2025 Plan	Progress to date	Comments
Council to add the recommendations from the building audits to its 5-year capital investment plan	Completed	
Add microphones to glass at all three customer counters	Completed	
Emergency management and building evacuation plans are reviewed with accessibility in mind	Ongoing	
Provide accessible parking spaces and access to buildings at the Administration building and Rotary Centre	Ongoing	Completed at Administrative Building and ongoing at Rotary Centre
All new municipal buildings (including major renovations) meet the Rick Hansen Foundation Accessibility Certification (RHFAC) Gold Standard	Ongoing	Renovations currently taking place

Areas of Focus: Built Environment, continued

Actions in 2022-2025 Plan	Progress to date	Comments
Council Chambers meet CSA Accessibility requirements	Ongoing	Renovations currently taking place
Service counters are at an accessible height	Ongoing	Renovations currently taking place
Include, in the design of all new municipal active transportation projects, provision for crosswalks on public and municipal roads. Review, and provision for crosswalks in the existing active transportation network.	Pending	
Sidewalks and curb cuts are improved and maintained, as soon as possible, to the standard outlined in Canadian Standards Association (CSA) B651-18, Accessible Design for the Built Environment	Ongoing	

Built Environment: Top Priorities (2025-2028)

1. All new municipal buildings (including major renovations) meet the Rick Hansen Foundation Accessibility Certification (RHFAC) Gold Standard.
2. Provide accessible parking spaces and access to buildings at the Administration building and Rotary Centre.
3. Emergency management and building evacuation plans are reviewed with accessibility in mind.
4. Council Chambers meet CSA Accessibility requirements
5. Service counters are at an accessible height
6. Complete renovations to Administrative Building and Rotary Centre
7. Sidewalks and curb cuts are improved and maintained, as soon as possible, to the standard outlined in Canadian Standards Association (CSA) B651-18, Accessible Design for the Built Environment
8. Provide some signage in Braille at the Administration Building
9. More visuals (i.e. directional arrows) to give multiple ways of reading information at Administration Building