

Accessibility in Nova Scotia

HRM Accessibility Advisory Committee
September 25, 2023



An Important Note on Language

Language is dynamic and changes over time. We strive to use inclusive, accessible, and respectful language throughout this presentation. The language we use is rooted in good intentions to treat people with dignity and respect.



Agenda

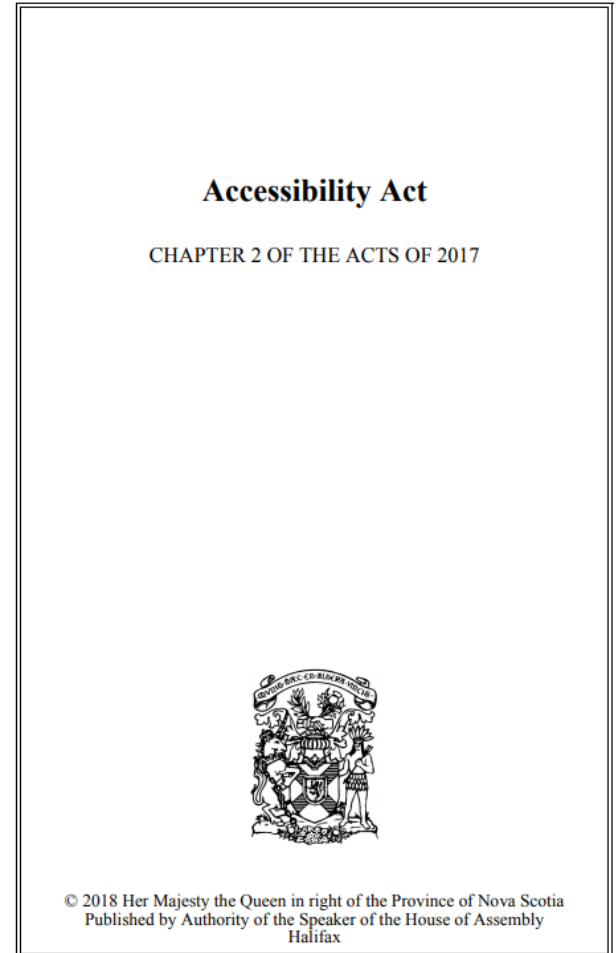
- Accessibility Act Essentials
- Accessibility Act Review Highlights
- Provincial and Municipal government roles
- Provincial Accessibility Standards update
- Access Includes Everyone Awareness Campaign

Accessibility Act Essentials

- Accessibility Act enacted in 2017.
- Accessibility is a human right.
- Almost 1 in 3 people in NS have a disability.

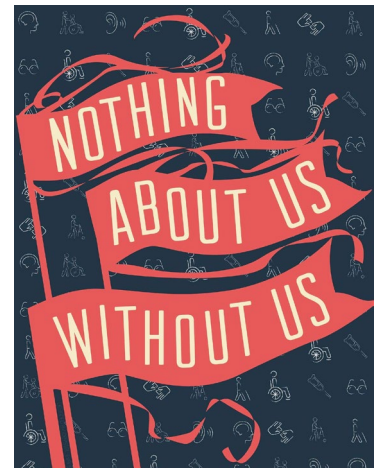
Access by Design 2030, Nova Scotia's accessibility framework identifies 6 priorities:

- Standards Development (6)
- Awareness and Capacity Building
- Collaboration and Support
- Compliance and Support
- Monitoring and Evaluation
- Government of Nova Scotia – Leading by Example



Accessibility Act Review

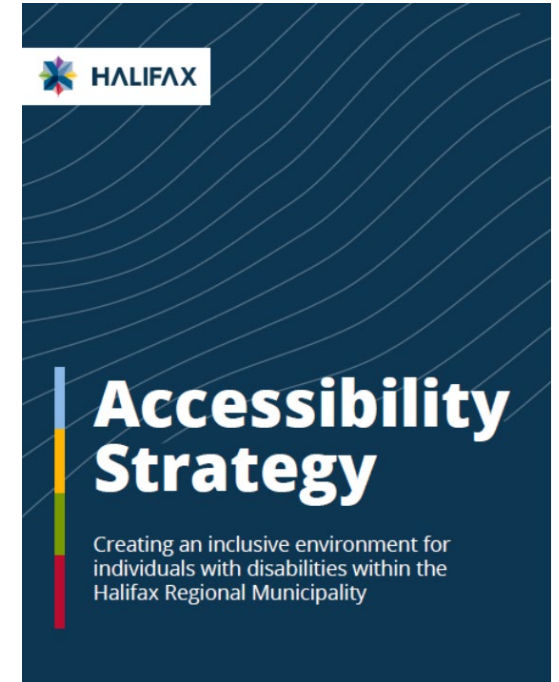
- Independent review required under the Act – four years (2021) and every 5 years.
- Dr. Katie Aubrecht appointed Sept 2021, report in May 2023
- Almost 800 Nova Scotians participated in the consultations.
- 48 recommendations, 6 themes – Timelines, Intersectionality, Capacity building, GNS model accountability, Strengthen autonomy, Revise definitions in the Act
- 11 recommendations that pertain to PPSBs (e.g., municipalities)
 - Diversity, anti-ableism, disability inclusivity
 - AACs – membership and feedback
 - Plans and progress reports
 - Centralized portal of all PPSB plans



Prescribed Public Sector Bodies (PPSBs)

6

- Municipalities, villages (and universities/colleges, libraries)
 - Prescribed April 1, 2021.
- Halifax Regional Municipality is required to:
 - Establish an accessibility advisory committee.
 - Develop an accessibility plan and update it every three years.
 - Comply with accessibility standards in the timelines specified when enacted.
- Plan renewal is an opportunity to revisit approach and priorities.



Provincial Government Role supporting PPSBs

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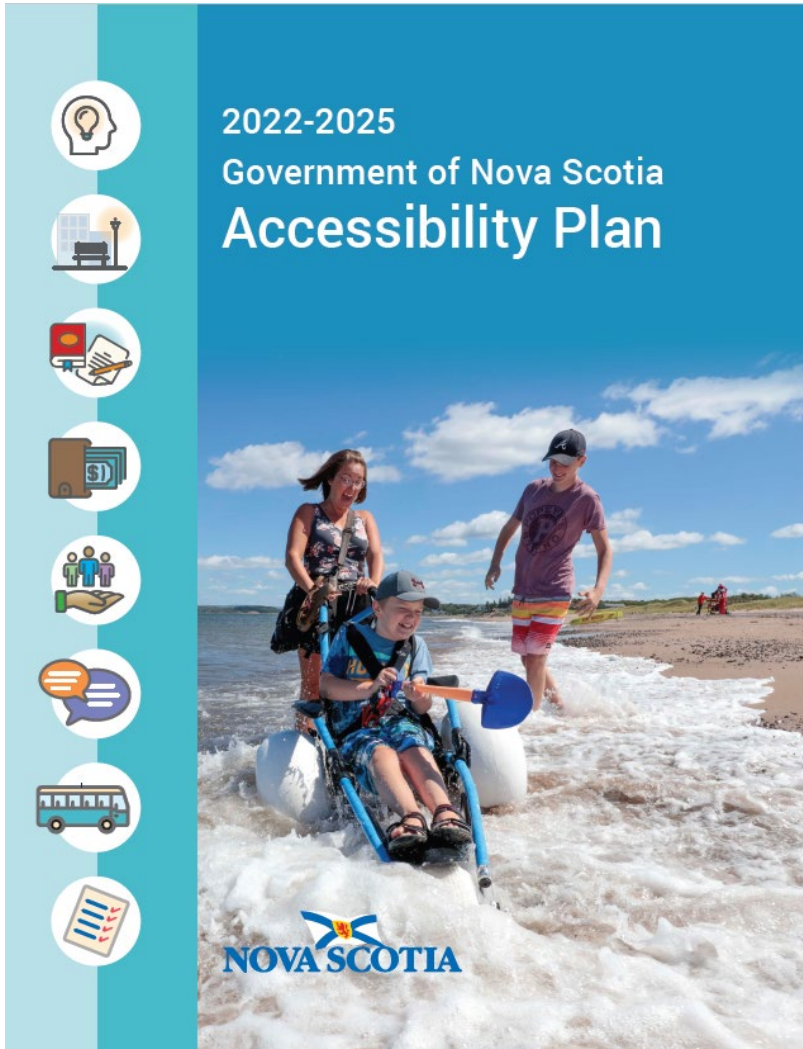
- Access by Design 2030 Priority 3: Collaboration and Support
- Provide support to assist prescribed public sector bodies in meeting obligations including:
 - Virtual Gatherings
 - Resources (e.g., engaging persons with disabilities, municipal accessibility planning toolkit)
 - Training (e.g., Accessibility Foundations Training)
 - Grants to support capacity building (e.g., AMANS Capacity Building Partnership)
 - Funding opportunities (e.g., CCTH Business and Community Accessibility grants)



Government of Nova Scotia Accessibility Approach

- Prescribed by the Accessibility Act with the same requirements as PPSBs.
- Has a commitment through Access by Design to ‘lead by example’.
- Accessibility Directorate staff support.
- Interdepartmental Committee on Accessibility.
- Departments develop and carry out commitments in alignment with mandates.
- “Cross-cutting” departments support commitments to advance corporate-wide priorities that impact all departments.
- Departments submit annual progress reports, shared through the Minister’s Annual Report on Accessibility.

Government of Nova Scotia – Leading by Example



- Second accessibility plan
- Launched December 19, 2022
- 8 priority areas aligned with accessibility standard areas
- 47 commitments (6 government-wide)
- All departments involved

Highlights of commitments

- Embed accessibility into govt policy and planning
- Accessibility in public housing, schools, buildings
- Remove barriers to govt programs and services
- Providing resources and support to PPSBs

Provincial Accessibility Standards

Standard Development

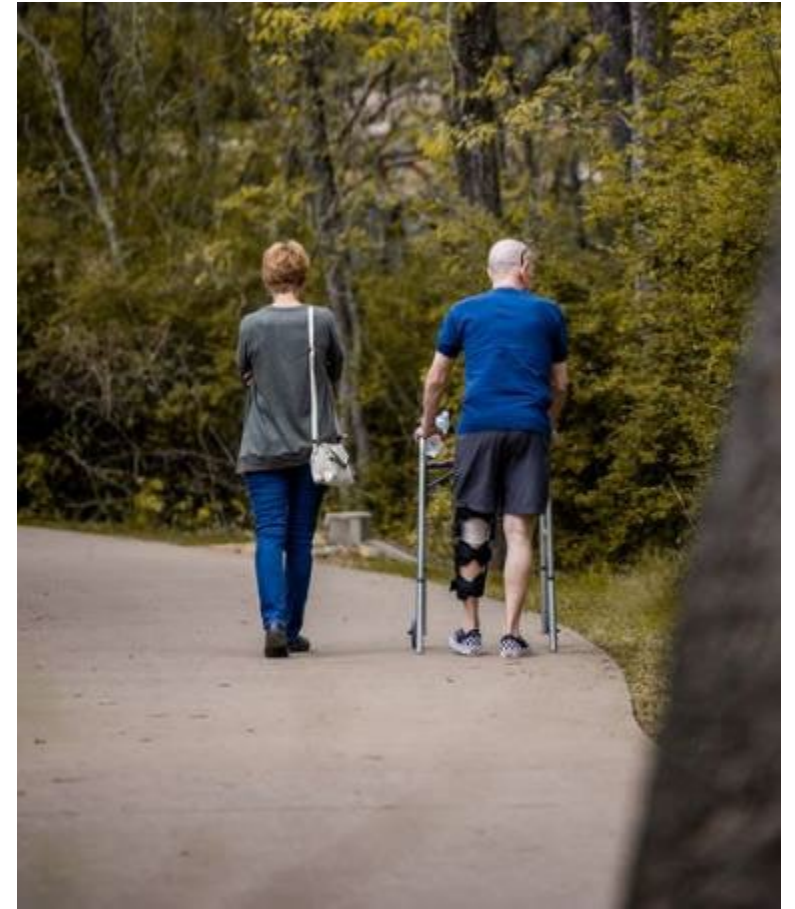
Access by Design 2030 outlines the following 6 areas for standard development:

1. Built Environment
2. Education
3. Employment
4. Goods & Services
5. Public Transportation
6. Information & Communications

Built Environment Scope

“Built environment” means the human-made space in which people live, work, learn and play and includes buildings, rights-of-way and outdoor spaces.

- Excludes federal infrastructure
- Includes multi-unit residential housing of 2 or more stories and 4 or more units



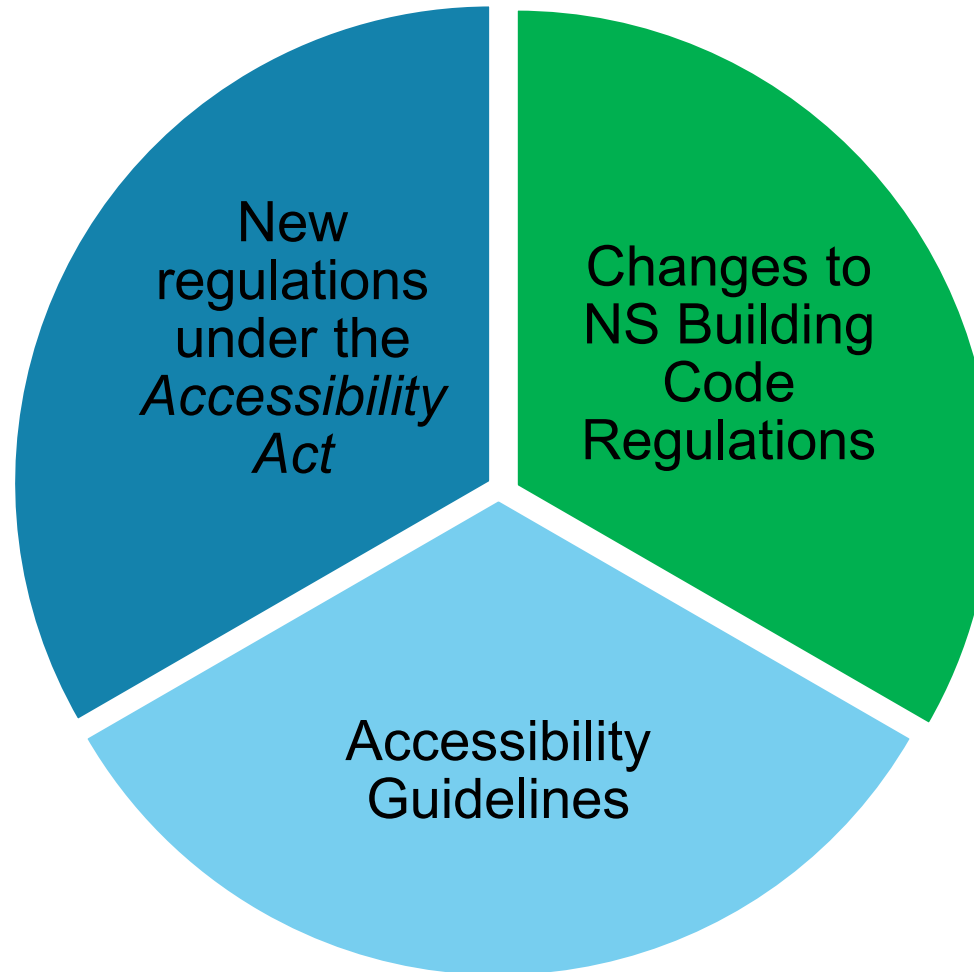
Built Environment Recommendations

134 recommendations covering:

- Site selection
- Exteriors
- Accessible Parking
- Interiors
- Emergency Systems
- Housing
- Wayfinding and Signage
- Parks and Recreation
- Schools and Public Libraries



Built Environment Standard Work



Summary of Proposed Regulations

Government of NS	Prescribed Public Sector Bodies	Businesses
<p>Plans for accessible washrooms, accessible entrances, parking lot maintenance, snow clearing, and accessible outdoor spaces</p>	<p>Plans for accessible washrooms, accessible entrances, parking lot maintenance, and snow clearing</p>	<p>Plans for accessible entrances, and parking lot maintenance</p>
<p>Requirements for new site selection, on-street parking, parking lots, pedestrian facilities, campgrounds, and outdoor classrooms, play spaces, and eating areas</p>	<p>Requirements for new site selection, on-street parking, parking lots, pedestrian facilities, lockers, pools, and outdoor classrooms, play spaces, and eating areas</p>	<p>Requirements for new parking lots, lockers, pools, campgrounds, and outdoor eating areas</p>
<p>Requirements for all temp. sidewalks</p>	<p>Requirements for all temp. sidewalks</p>	<p>Requirements for all sidewalks cafés</p>

Summary of Revised NS Building Code

- *Nova Scotia Building Code Regulations* apply to **new construction or renovations**.
- Amended to adopt the national codes as the new minimum standards for construction in the province. These codes include:
 - 2020 National Building Code
 - 2020 National Plumbing Code
 - 2020 National Energy Code for Buildings
- Amended to include built environment recommendations

Public Review of Proposed Standard

- August 31 to October 30, 2023 (60 days)
- Ways to submit feedback
 - Online through web engagement platform:
<https://accessibility-engagement.ca/built-environment-public-review>
 - Email accessibility@novascotia.ca
 - Phone 1-800-565-8280
 - Request a Meeting
- For more information, email accessibility@novascotia.ca

Next Steps

- Late Fall 2023: Public feedback is shared with Board
- Late Fall - Winter 2023/24: Final standard goes to the Office of the Registrar of Regulations, further cost analysis (TBD)
- Winter 2023/24: Standard regulations are advanced for approval to be enacted (requires approval of Government)
- 2024: NS Building Code Regulations are enacted
- 2024: Standard regulations are enacted; guidelines are published
- 2024 - 2025: Education and awareness of standard requirements and promotion of guidelines
- 2026: Standard regulations effective, compliance & enforcement begins

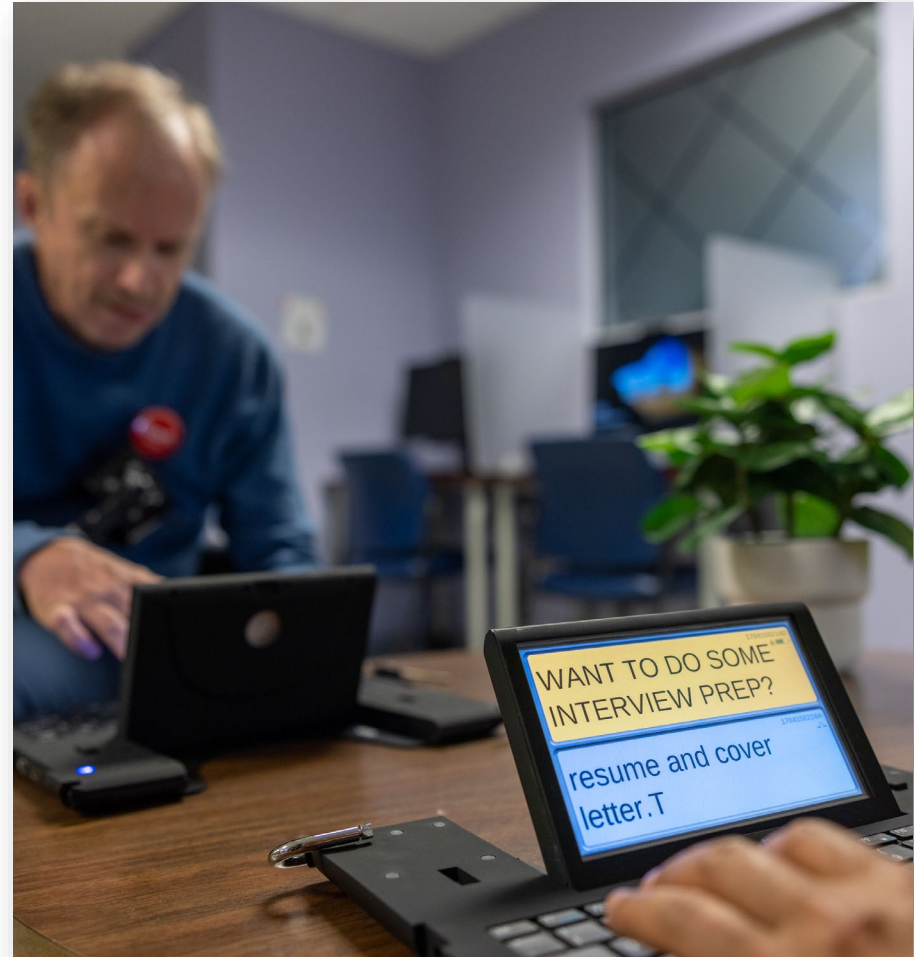
Education

- Education includes early childhood, primary, secondary, and post-secondary education.
- Education Standard Development Committee has completed its recommendations.
- Standard recommendations available online.



Employment

- Employment may include career planning, recruitment, retention, fair pay, workplace accommodation, etc.
- Standard Development Committee is developing recommendations now.
- Public engagement on draft recommendations will take place Fall 2023.



Goods & Services

- Goods & Services means the delivery and receipt of goods and services.
- Standard Development Committee has begun work to develop recommendations.



Public Transportation

- Jurisdictional research complete.
- Standard Development Committee member recruitment will take place later in 2023.



Information & Communications

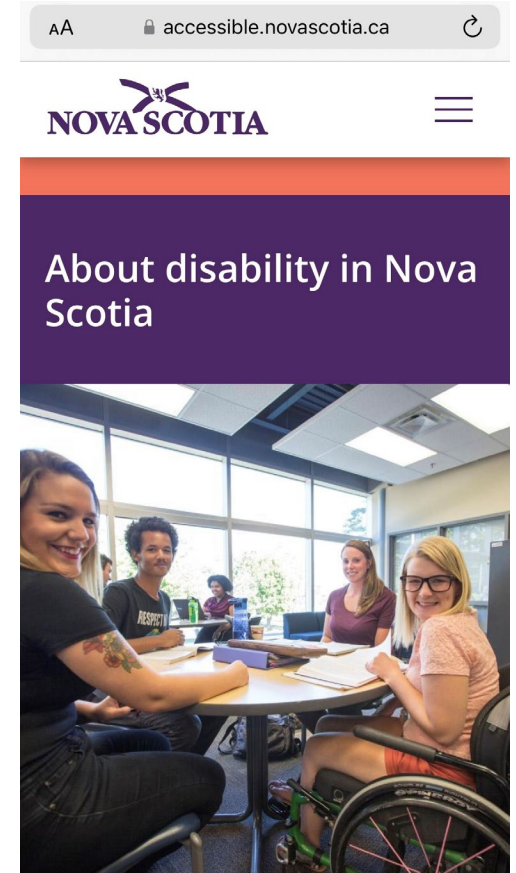
- Jurisdictional research is underway.
- Standard Development Committee recruitment will take place 2023 – early 2024.



Access Includes Everyone Campaign

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- 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, resource hub





Nova Scotia has an opportunity to be a leader in accessibility!

Contact Us:

Accessibility@novascotia.ca

Website:

<https://novascotia.ca/accessibility/>

