

Condensed 2025-2028 Accessibility Strategy

This plan follows the Nova Scotia Accessibility Act. It includes ideas from the community, city workers, the Accessibility Strategy Task Force, and the Accessibility Advisory Committee. The 2025-2028 Accessibility Strategy 30 ideas which will help the city to reduce barriers for people with disabilities to make it easier for them to do what they want to do.

Over the past three years, we have made our region more accessible. We share updates with Halifax Regional Council every year. You can find the latest update on the Accessibility Strategy page on halifax.ca.

2024 Update

To update the Accessibility Strategy, we needed feedback from the public and city staff. We completed 10 public consultations in spring 2024. We also asked city workers what they are doing, and what they will do in the future. We did this through two surveys: one for the city leaders and one for the workers. We also had an open house where all city workers could come and share their ideas. In winter 2024 the Accessibility Advisor met with the Accessibility Strategy Task Force.

Accessibility Strategy Recommendations & Timeline

The 2025-2028 Accessibility Strategy has 30 ideas to make the city better for everyone. These ideas are separated into three groups based on how long they will take to do. Short term ideas will take one year. Medium term ideas will take two years. Long term ideas will take 3 years.

Transportation & Transportation Infrastructure

Short Term

- Make a survey to ask people how well the accessible services are working.
- Share information with different groups about clearing snow for people with disabilities.

- Look at the rules for who can use Access-A-Bus and see if they need to change.

Medium Term

- Set up a website where people can book Access-A-Bus rides.
- Share information with newcomers and immigrants on how to use Access-A-Bus.
- Change city rules to make sure paths for walking are accessible.

Long Term

- Share information with people about where accessible parking spots are.
- Check all bus shelters to find any problems and suggest ways to fix them.
- Make a campaign to tell people how to safely park and ride e-scooters.
- Change the city's design rules (Municipal Design Guidelines) to make buildings and places more accessible.

Built Environment

Medium Term

- Make sure construction sites have clear signs. This will make them safer for people trying to move around them.

Long Term

- Make sure future buildings follow rules (CSA B651-23) to be as accessible as possible. They should be built to get a Gold Level from the Rick Hansen Foundation. This level means the building is very accessible.
- Make existing buildings follow rules (CSA B651-18) so they are as accessible as possible.
- Look at up to 100 buildings, parks, playgrounds, and trails to see how we can make them accessible.
- Make sure park paths, playgrounds, beaches, and sports areas are as accessible as they can be.

- Improve up to 25 bus stops to make sure they follow accessible rules. The bus stops should have space for a ramp so people can get on the bus from the sidewalk.

Information & Communications

Short Term

- Give city workers access to a guide that helps them write in plain language.

Medium Term

- Create design rules for making documents that everyone can understand.

Long Term

- Give city workers more training on how to help people with disabilities.
- Make a plan to make our city websites more accessible. The websites should follow the WCAG 2.2 rules.
- Look into and set up new ways to make the 311 easier to use for everyone. This might mean adding live chat.

Goods & Services

Long Term

- Get more gym equipment that everyone can use. This means buying new equipment or replacing old equipment in city gyms. Also, make rules for what kind of gym equipment is good for everyone.
- Include 10 percent more people at summer inclusion programs over the next three years.
- Measure how much support we give to people at programs in the fall, winter and spring over the next 3 years. This includes swimming.

Employment

Short Term

- Make a clear process so all workers know how to ask for accommodation if they need it.
- Teach hiring managers about the rules (Duty to Accommodate) for accommodating workers with disabilities.

Long Term

- Find out how many people say they have a disability when they apply for a job and compare it to how many of them get hired.
- Make a plan to encourage students with disabilities to apply for work placements.
- Make sure job descriptions and postings are easy to understand and accessible. Make rules so all future job postings are accessible.
- Work with up to nine groups that help people with disabilities find jobs.