

Accessibility Plan

2026-2029

Working together to achieve an accessible Nova Scotia



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A Note on Language

Choosing whether to use identity-first language or person-first language is a personal choice. At Build Nova Scotia, we think everyone should be free to identify themselves however they feel best. Build Nova Scotia will always ask people with disabilities how they wish to be addressed.

In this document, we will use person-first language. Person-first language means we mention the person before their disability, for example, “person with a disability” or “Nova Scotians with disabilities.”

Build Nova Scotia respects and values everyone’s choices.

A Message from the President and CEO

Build Nova Scotia's goal is to build places that enrich lives and keep everyone connected and thriving, no matter where they live in Nova Scotia. We do this by managing projects, properties, and infrastructure across the province.

Build Nova Scotia recognizes that there are three broad pillars of accessibility that can be applied to any type of work and are not limited to a specific industry.

- **Neurodivergent Accessibility: First impressions matter.**
Build Nova Scotia aims to ensure its properties, operations, and workplaces are welcoming and create a positive experience for everyone.
- **Functional Accessibility: Ease of navigation.**
Build Nova Scotia's products and services are designed in a way that everyone can easily understand and access them.
- **Technical Accessibility: Ease of use.**
Build Nova Scotia's physical and digital products are designed for full and equal access.

Build Nova Scotia commits to accessible properties, operations and workplaces. The Accessibility Advisory Committee has identified specific areas to address based on our work.

- Built Environment
- Employment
- Goods and Services
- Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)
- Communication other than ICT

Build Nova Scotia looks forward to ongoing collaboration with clients, community members, and all Nova Scotians as we advance this plan in the years ahead. Together, we envision a vibrant community where diverse contributions, varied perspectives, and life experiences enhance our shared journey.

We appreciate the contributions of all members of our Accessibility Advisory Committee in shaping the 2026 update.

David Benoit
President and CEO
Build Nova Scotia

Guiding Principles

Accessibility

Removing barriers for full inclusion.

Awareness

Enhance accessibility for all Nova Scotians.

Continuous Improvement:

Keeping accessibility measures up to date and addressing barriers.

Diversity

Value each person's uniqueness.

Equity

Integrate Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Accessibility (IDEA) to enhance our culture, talent, and brand.

First Voice

Prioritize inclusive collaboration, amplify first voice.

Human Rights

Accessibility is a human right.

Inclusion

Unique perspectives, backgrounds, and experiences add to our collective journey.

Innovation

Respect and inclusion fuel creativity, innovation, and success.

Intersectionality

Lives are complex and shaped by various factors.

Accessibility Standards Actions and Commitments

Built Environment

Commitment

Build Nova Scotia will follow the Built Environment Accessibility Standard, in effect April 1, 2026. The corporation will apply these requirements across its properties, projects and operations, and support ongoing accessibility improvements through planning, design, construction and asset management. This includes ensuring the properties and public spaces it manages are accessible to everyone, and prioritizing accessibility improvements for historic or legacy properties while respecting their heritage value.

Actions	Status
Assess all physical spaces managed and maintained by Build Nova Scotia. The assessment will identify barriers, propose solutions, and prioritize actions to remove them.	In progress
Diverse voices will be included from start to finish on all projects to ensure the identification and removal of barriers.	Ongoing
<p>During the planning and design for new builds or major renovations, we will apply and evaluate the project using the principles of universal design, which are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Equitable use: The design should work well for everyone and look attractive. It should not separate, label, or isolate anyone.• Flexibility in use: The design is flexible and caters to different preferences and abilities. It offers choices, adjusts for right- or left-handed use, and accommodates varying speeds.• Simple and intuitive use: The design is easy to understand, regardless of a user’s experience, knowledge, language skills, or concentration level.• Perceptible information: The design ensures that information is clearly communicated to users, no matter the environment or their sensory abilities. It achieves this through various methods like pictures, audio, spoken words, touch, and by ensuring good visibility.• Tolerance for error: The design minimizes the negative outcomes of accidental actions. It arranges elements to lower risks.	Ongoing

Built Environment

Actions	Status
Work with local partners, landlords, neighbouring property owners, and municipalities to ensure accessibility standards are consistent between properties.	Ongoing
Ensure continued access is maintained for buildings, parking, and public spaces, during temporary disruptions like construction or seasonal weather such as snow, ice, and flooding.	Ongoing
Ensure that emergency evacuation systems, policies, procedures, communication, and training accommodate safe and efficient evacuation for people with disabilities.	Ongoing

Employment

Commitment

Build Nova Scotia is committed to reducing barriers to employment for people with disabilities and supporting fair hiring and workplace practices. The corporation will follow provincial employment and human resources requirements and include accessibility in hiring, onboarding, and workplace practices.

Actions	Status
Assess current employment and hiring standards to identify barriers, solutions, and prioritize actions to remove the barriers.	Ongoing
Work with applicants and employees to address accessibility barriers, provide accommodation, and ensure inclusive job advertisements and recruitment platforms.	Ongoing
Create fair policies to promote the recruitment, retention, and advancement of people with disabilities, allowing for flexible training and onboarding.	Ongoing
Support the development of a culture of respect and inclusion for people with disabilities or others who experience barriers to accessibility.	Ongoing

Goods and Services

Commitment

Build Nova Scotia is committed to improving access to goods, services, and public spaces. The corporation will work to comply with provincial procurement requirements and incorporate accessibility in how it buys goods and delivers services.

Actions	Status
Assess current goods and services procurement practices to identify barriers, solutions, and prioritize actions to remove the barriers.	Complete
Establish a Supplier Diversity Plan, outlining Build Nova Scotia's dedication to fostering minority supplier growth initiatives.	In progress
Standardize accessibility requirements for Build Nova Scotia's Request for Proposals (RFP) process.	Complete
Guarantee equitable access to all goods and services provided by Build Nova Scotia.	Ongoing
Deliver employee accessibility training to cultivate a culture of inclusion and diversity, improving the customer service experience.	Ongoing
Prior to the 2027 plan launch, review provincial procurement practices to confirm that Build Nova Scotia is compliant in all aspects of accessibility.	Not started

Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)

Commitment

Build Nova Scotia will ensure its digital tools and platforms, such as websites, software and mobile apps are accessible to everyone.

Actions	Status
Assess current information and communication technologies practices to identify barriers, solutions, and prioritize actions to remove the barriers.	Ongoing
Ensure the Build Nova Scotia website properties meet the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) standards.	Ongoing

Communication (other than ICT)

Commitment

Build Nova Scotia will ensure people can access, receive, understand and share its information.

Actions	Status
All public announcements, meetings, emails, printed materials, press conferences and other communications are clear, accessible and easy to understand, and are available in accessible formats or with supports on request.	Ongoing
Upon request, alternative formats and communication supports, such as audio, large print, braille, sign language interpretation and captioning, are provided. New and emerging technologies are considered as they become available.	Ongoing
Use plain language in our communication that mirrors the community and people we serve.	Ongoing
Create communication guidelines for plain language and accessibility across all formats, including print, digital signage, video, audio, and event communication.	Not started
Ensure that Build Nova Scotia public spaces can be accessed and navigated by inclusive signage and wayfinding tools.	In progress
Ensure office signage and wayfinding tools are accessible.	In progress
Establish a feedback system using plain language to address all inquiries.	Ongoing

Implementation, Monitoring, Evaluation, Budget and Resources

Commitment

Build Nova Scotia will take a clear and consistent approach to implementing and tracking accessibility. The corporation will align its work with the Nova Scotia Accessibility Act, monitor progress, and use results to improve over time. Accessibility will be part of how the organization plans, delivers and manages its work.

Actions	Status
Conduct an annual internal review to update our accessibility plan. This will include a review of the provincially led categories to ensure compliance.	Ongoing
Conduct a comprehensive review every three years to ensure Build Nova Scotia’s plan aligns with the Nova Scotia Accessibility Act and our mandate.	Not started
Meet quarterly as a committee to review plans and highlight successes and room for improvement in each area.	In progress
Make recommendations to the Executive Team.	Ongoing
Establish Accessibility Working Groups for each focus area: Built Environment, Employment, Goods and Services, and Communication (other than ICT).	Not started
Develop visual project timelines, milestones, and deadlines for clarity and organization.	Not started
Work closely with government partners to secure additional financial resources to fulfill our commitments.	Ongoing

Appendix 1 – In Progress and Completed Projects

Date	Title	Description	Accessibility Standard	Status
2025-06-10	Renewal Assurance Program (RAP)	Installed tactile indicators along the Halifax Waterfront boardwalk, from near the Bicycle Thief restaurant on Bishop Street to the Water Polo restaurant at the Cunard Residences, to improve navigation and accessibility.	Built Environment	Completed
2025-06-11	Patio accessibility analysis and map series	Evaluated restaurants along the Halifax Waterfront Boardwalk using defined accessibility criteria and categorized each location based on level of access.	Goods and Services	Completed
2025-08-13	The Boat School Project at the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic	Build Nova Scotia is working with the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic to complete accessibility features for the Boat School Project. These include accessible entrance and exit doors, accessible washrooms, ramps, a LULA The Jenny lift and strobe alarms.	Built Environment	In progress
2025-09-04	The Rainbow Haven Project	Ensured there are accessible parking spaces, barrier-free faucets and sinks, and an accessible ramp at Rainbow Haven Provincial Park, 2248 Cow Bay Road.	Built Environment	In progress

Appendix 1 – In Progress and Completed Projects

Date	Title	Description	Accessibility Standard	Status
2025	Established a supplier diversity plan.	The Central Services Division created clear processes to support reverse trade shows and public messaging.	Goods and Services	Completed
2025	Standardize accessibility requirements for the Request for Proposals (RFP) and business	Accessibility requirements are required for all Requests for Proposals and business development opportunities, and they are scored as part of the evaluation process.	Goods and Services	Completed
2026-01-16	Patio Licence Agreement Accessibility By-Law	Added a statement to the licence agreement to reference the Patio Licence Agreement Accessibility By-law.	Built Environment	In progress