Accessibility in Kings County

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Diversity Kings County Committee
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MUNICIPALITY of the COUNTY of KINGS

What Am I talking about?

Agenda:

- Accessibility Act/Barriers and the Six Provincial Standard Areas
- What have we done in Kings County – Examples of Accessibility Projects

What is Accessibility?

- When our environments, services and products and policies are **proactively** designed and constructed so that people with a disability can fully and equally participate without experiencing barriers.
- An accommodation is a reactive tool to adjust environments, services, and products to be able to be utilized by someone with a disability.
- Accommodations are solutions that remove or reduce barriers in the environment for one person or group of people.

Why is It Important?

- 37.9% of Nova Scotians report having at least one disability.
- The national average is 27%.
- Number increases to 49.2% when looking at Nova Scotians 65+
- Persons with disabilities more likely to be living in poverty and report lower levels of quality of life. (Statistics Canada)

Barriers

- Barriers are things that limit persons with disabilities opportunities to participate meaningfully in life.
- Barriers can be physical, in the environment, information and communications, attitudes, routines. They can be hidden and unintentional.
- E.g. Difficult to open doors, difficult to understand language in documents, low contrast signs or environment, assuming someone with a disability won't understand you or will never work for you.

Barriers

- Barriers can be complex, and solutions may need to be individualized

- Often, they are not recognized by people who do not have a disability, or by people who have a different type of disability

Nova Scotia Accessibility Act (2017)

- Passed by the Nova Scotia government in 2017
- Intent was to prevent and/or remove barriers in six areas. (Important to remember barriers can exist in none or more than one of theses areas)
- Included that municipalities (as well as universities, colleges, libraries, etc.) establish an accessibility advisory committee and create an accessibility plan.
- ***Goal of Accessible Nova Scotia by 2030.

Six Standard Areas - from Access by Design 2030

1. Built Environment

Standards in this area will address how to make buildings, streets, sidewalks, and shared spaces accessible to all.

Six Standard Areas - from Access by Design 2030

2. Education

Standards in this area will help to create learning environments in which all students can participate. These standards could address how students with disabilities get the instruction and learning materials they need. The standards will apply to primary, secondary, and postsecondary education.

Six Standard Areas - from Access by Design 2030

3. Employment

Standards in this area will support persons with disabilities in finding and sustaining meaningful employment. The goal is to ensure equal access to employment for persons with disabilities.

Six Standard Areas - from Access by Design 2030

4. Goods and Services

Standards for delivering and receiving goods and services may address how service providers interact with and are trained to serve persons with disabilities. This may include how persons with disabilities access goods and services, including the use of assistive devices.

Six Standard Areas - from Access by Design 2030

5. Information and communications

Standards in this area will help to ensure all Nova Scotians can receive and share the same information. They may consider accessible formats (for example, braille, American Sign Language, or large print), accessible websites and technologies, and standards for communicating with persons with disabilities.

Six Standard Areas - from Access by Design 2030

6. Transportation

Standards in this area will help make it easier for everyone to travel in both rural and urban Nova Scotia.

Standards Timeline

Standard Area	AAB* recruits members for SDC**	SDC** develops draft recommendations	SDC** gets public input on recommendations	AAB* gives recommendations to Minister of Justice	Government reviews and drafts standard	Government gets public input on standard	Finalized standard becomes regulation (law)
Built Environment	Complete						2024
Education	Complete				2023-2024		2025
Employment	Complete			June 2024	2024-2025		2026
Goods & Services	Complete		Aug/Sep 2024	March 2025	2025-2026		2027
Public Transportation	Complete	Fall 2024 - Fall 2025	Fall 2025/Winter 2026	Spring/Summer 2026	2026-2027		2028/29
Information & Communication	Complete	Fall 2024 - Fall 2025	Fall 2025/Winter 2026	Spring/Summer 2026	2026-2027		2028/29

From NS Accessibility Directorate

What is Kings County Doing?

- Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee: Made up of people with disabilities, people who work with people with disabilities, and Village commissioners/Municipal Councilor.

- Accessibility Plan: Outlines plans for 17 short term actions over the next 2-3 years. Currently in the process of updating our plan with additional/new goals & ongoing work.

Aylesford Lake Improvements

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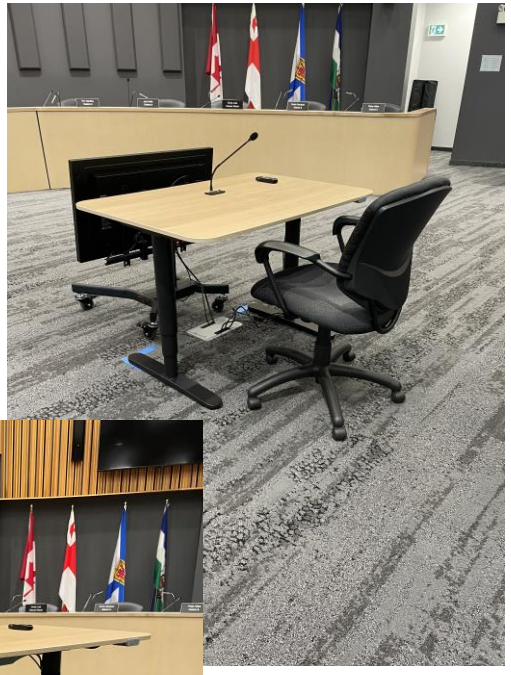
- Purchased two mobi mats and floating wheelchairs for beach access.
- Currently working on plans for further improvements like additional accessible sun shelters and accessible dock/launch for kayaks and paddleboards.

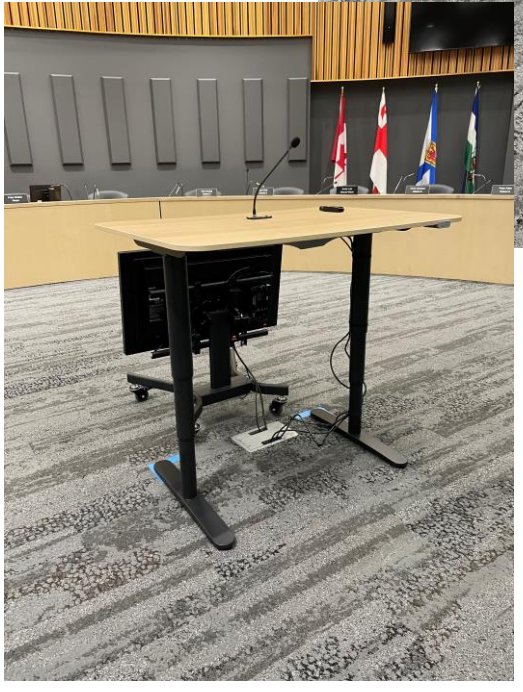
Municipal Building Improvements

- Received grant to install automatic door openers in thirteen doors in Municipal Complex (including Council Chambers, staff access door, etc.)

Municipal Building Improvements

- Changed to a new podium for Council Chambers that is more easily accessed by all.





Sensory Support Kits

Contents:

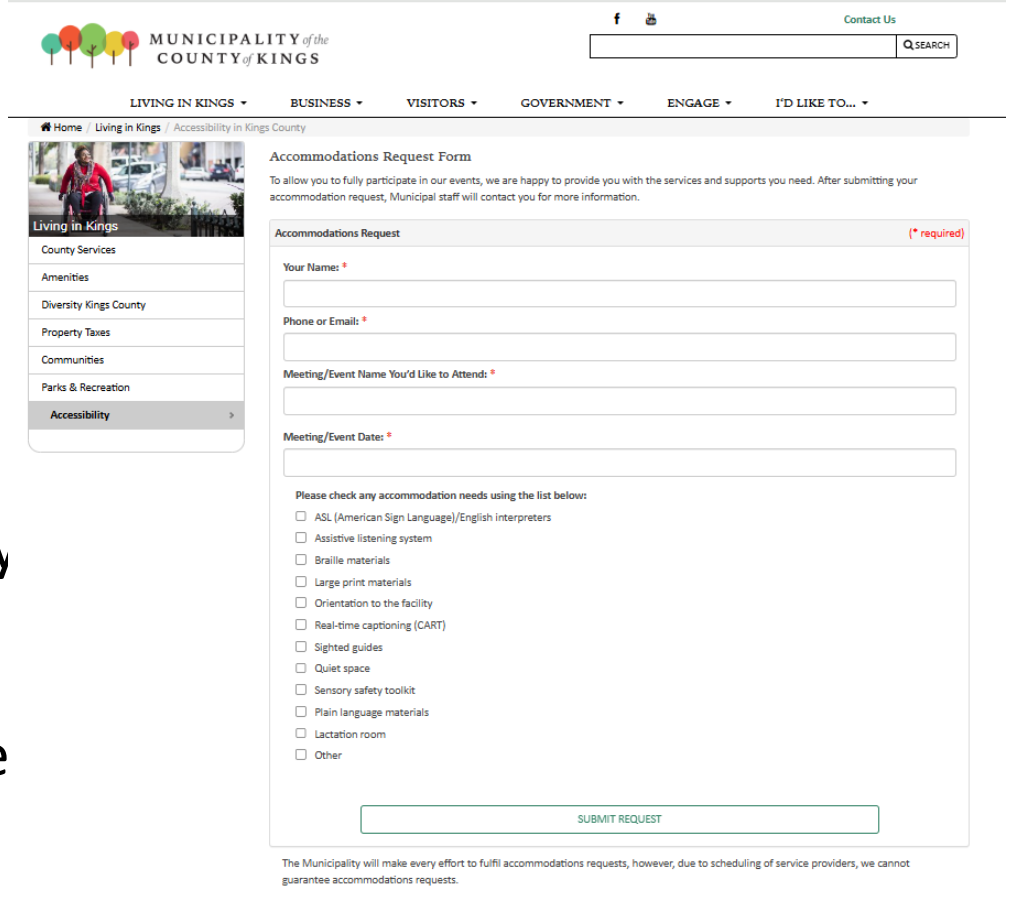
- Weighted lap blanket (5lbs)
- In-ear ear plugs
- Over-ear earmuffs
- Playdough
- Fidget items (fidget cube, fidget rings, knot twist toy)
- Liquid motion bubbler
- Pipe cleaners
- Stretch bands
- Sunglasses
- Peppermints and gum

Accessibility Training and Awareness

- Providing Training and Awareness Events: For Municipal and Village staff and the public – Accessibility Foundations, Accessibility Orientations, Digital Accessibility, Accessible Employment, etc.

Public Accommodations Program

- Providing additional supports for anyone who has barriers to participation in public meetings and events.
- Providing additional support for community groups looking to update their building/infrastructure for accessibility.



Village Accessibility

Kings County Accessibility

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Thank You!
Questions?