

TOWN OF BERWICK 2022 ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

“A Little Town with a Lot to Offer”



TOWN OF
berwick

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WELCOME MESSAGE

The Town of Berwick rightly calls itself a “little town with a lot to offer”. We have always prided ourselves as a community that welcomed newcomers, sheltered and let flourish generations of growing families, and looked forward to new generations who will help us to grow and change with the times.



Part of being welcoming is to understand that our town is made up of a multiplicity of people, all with different abilities and needs. In 2017 the Nova Scotia Accessibility Act was passed, and all municipalities were then tasked with the goal of helping to achieve an accessible Nova Scotia by 2030.

Accessibility is a basic human right, and now it is finally a provincial mandate. It is with an eye to improving the accessibility of the town, and to the inclusion of those citizens who live or visit here, that the Accessibility Advisory Committee was launched. We will strive to create with this plan what we consider to be a “living document” that will be tweaked and improved upon as time passes and we hear feedback from those

citizens who are helping us to make Berwick a more accessible town.

We have been honoured to work on this very important task, and I thank the other committed Accessibility Advisory committee members, the staff - in particular Kimberly Halliday - who have worked tirelessly on the report, the Town Council, and the citizens of our wonderful town who provided feedback and counsel during this process.

Joan Langevin Levack,
Chair, Accessibility Advisory Committee

Some notes on the report:

- Please see the “definition of terms” section in the Appendix. We tried to make the report as clear and simple as possible, but there are specific terms that are particular to this subject. We have added an extensive list of definitions to help with clarity.
- We have chosen the font “Verdana” for this report as it has proven to be one of the most accessible and readable fonts. For the ease of those who may be print-restricted or have low vision, we have used a slightly larger font than is usual.

INTRODUCTION

After the Accessibility Act was passed in 2017, the Government announced its framework for *Access by Design 2030: Achieving an Accessible Nova Scotia* in 2018. This document and the Act are ways of ensuring an accessible future for all Nova Scotians and highlights five key areas for which the municipality should clarify, improve standards, and codify: the **Built Environment, Information and Communications, Employment, Goods and Services, and Transportation**. Berwick has committed to develop and uphold these standards as set forth in the Accessibility Act.

In this plan, Berwick will lay out the commitment we are making, the overview of where we stand now — our achievements so far, and any barriers, — and action items for the first three years of our plan's implementation for each of the five standards. We will continue to monitor and evaluate the plan yearly, and revisit it formally every three years.

Most information from this plan was collected through a survey that was disseminated within the town via posters, flyers, mail-outs, and electronically via our social media accounts in November 2021. We had intended in-person community engagement sessions, but given the pandemic and irregular wintry conditions, we had to be satisfied with the questionnaire. At a later date, more community consultations will be planned.

This plan will be available to view on the Town's website, and will be available in hard copy at our Town Hall. If you require any assistance accessing this document or reading it, please contact our Town Hall at 902-538-8068.

BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Berwick is committed to ensuring that our Built Environment becomes more accessible to those community members who have a disability, whether the land and/or infrastructure is owned, leased, or managed by the Town of Berwick.

Overall, the response from the survey has indicated that Berwick is on the right track when it comes to the accessibility of our built environment, but there is room for improvement.

With this guiding document, Berwick will begin to investigate our Town-owned spaces by creating checklists that will be available for community members to view at any time and which address the barriers we mentioned below. We will commit to applying an accessibility lens to any future projects and to keep engaging our community members so that this plan will have the most impact for those townspeople and visitors who live with disabilities.

Achievements Identified:

- Brand new recreation and municipal office facilities that are *mostly* accessible – Carol’s Place, Town Hall, the Fitness Centre at King’s Mutual Century Centre
- High-visibility and reflective crosswalk markings, and two push-powered signal crosswalks
- Sidewalk snow removal is done promptly and thoroughly

- Bezanson Drive sidewalks
- The crosswalk in front of Berwick Public School, and the new sidewalk in front of the school, have been designed with accessible transportation in mind
- Raised garden beds around Town allow most people to participate
- Trails are wide and well-groomed
- The library is an inclusive space with well-trained staff who are equipped to handle a variety of people and stages of development
- Carol's Place has accessible washrooms that are available in the Spring/Summer and early Fall



Carol's Place in Berwick, a place for gatherings

Listed below are the current barriers for persons living with disabilities that were identified in our community.

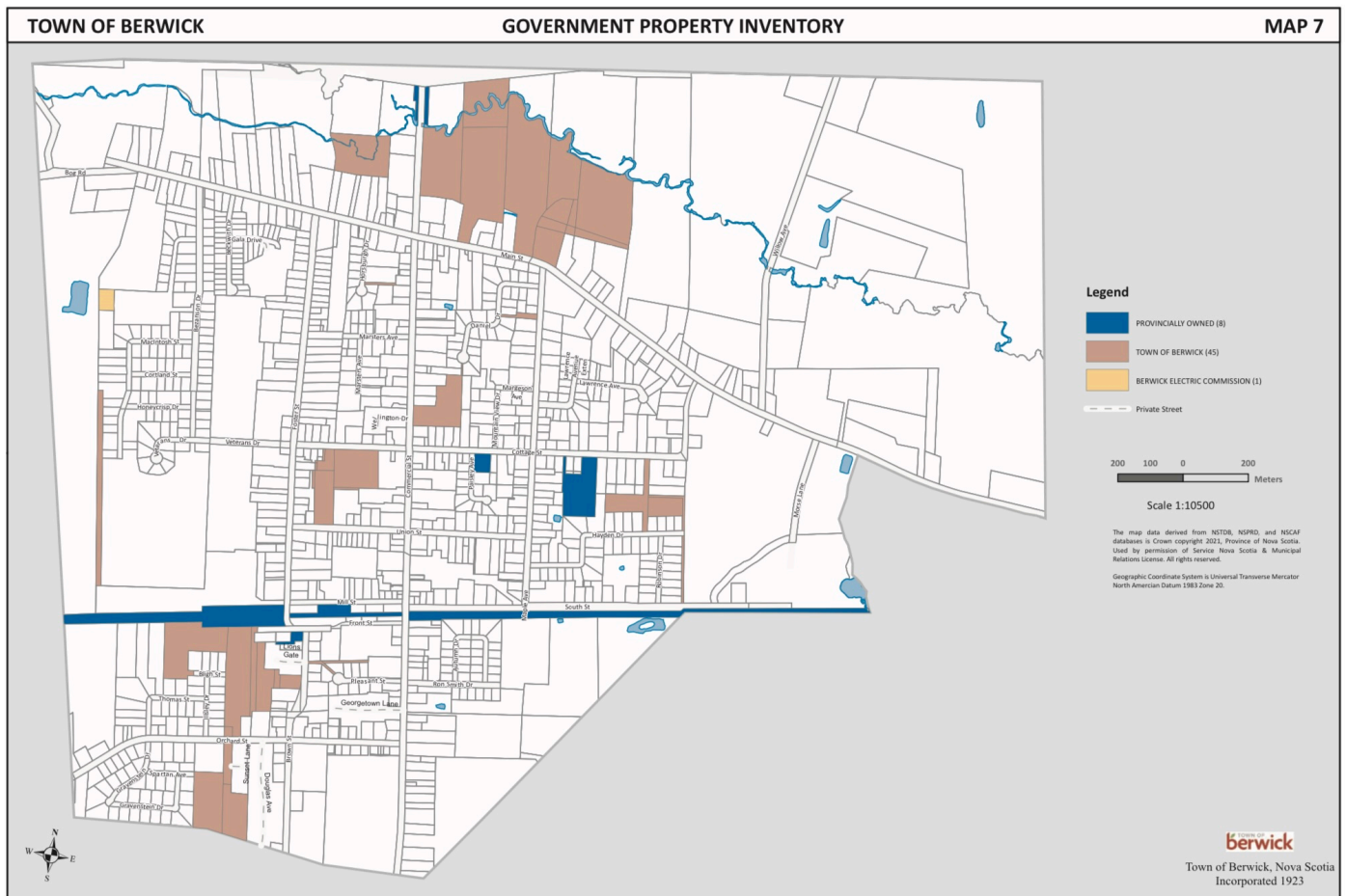
Identified Barriers

Public Works	The Public Works building does not have much interaction with the public, but their entrance and public-facing section are not accessible to those who use wheelchairs or other assistive devices. This discourages not only walk-ins from the public, but employment of persons with disabilities.
Side Streets	Some side streets in town do not have sidewalks, which makes active living for those who use assistive devices difficult. In winter, it makes it very difficult for any sort of movement around town.
Centennial Park	There is no paved walkway to get to Carol’s Place
Trails/ Sidewalks	More benches/rest areas on trails and in town are needed for those who have a disability that requires them to take breaks when navigating through town. One bench on the trail has been buried deep into the gravel when the trail is graded, and it’s largely impossible to use for a sitting spot
Peter Connell Park	The Park parking lot’s accessible washroom is currently difficult to access

Suggested Actions:

- Committee and Council to prioritize accessibility when planning new builds or retrofitting old buildings.
- It is suggested that a member of the Accessibility Advisory Committee be added to all pertinent Town Committees of Council (Planning Advisory, Community Development Advisory, REMO, Community Development Advisory committees, for example).
- An audit of all Town-owned property and infrastructure will be done on the following timeline:
 - Create a checklist (2022)
 - conduct walk-throughs and evaluate built environment with the help of a disability consultant or someone with Rick Hansen certification (2022-2023)
- Sidewalks. We will assess and prioritize all sidewalks in the Town of Berwick that need maintenance and upgrading through Committee evaluations and public engagements. We suggest that adequate sidewalks be built into any new developments plans for any new builds
- Improved pedestrian crosswalks. Lighting and marking
- Engage Berwick community members in ongoing discussions and public engagements about accessibility in the Town in terms of the built environment
- Where possible, ensure a higher standard of Accessibility in all Municipal public-facing built environments, according to CSA B651-18 guidelines
- Improve existing infrastructure

- Tennis courts entrance is not accessible
- retrofit doors inside of Town Hall so that persons with disabilities can access the main office without assistance
- Increase lighting behind the Town Hall, near entrance to Town Gym so that those using the accessible spots will have adequate visibility.



INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION

The Town of Berwick will endeavour to ensure that the needs of community members are met during meetings, public gatherings, sharing of information, and through communications with community members. We will commit to ensuring our information is written in plain language or by providing definitions to make sure it is clearly understood for all abilities.



Inclusive yard sign offered to townspeople

The Town currently shares all information through a variety of means:

- Social media: Facebook, Instagram, Twitter
- The electronic sign on the corner of Cottage and Commercial Streets
- By mail (for example, print promotional materials can be sent through with power bills from Berwick Electric).
- Electronically, via addition to e-bills
- On our website at berwick.ca

Identified Achievements

- Berwick MESH. The Town provides free internet access (mainly at KMCC, up Commercial street, the Town Gym, and in Council Chambers). Wifi is available at the Fitness Centre.
- Council Chambers has a video system and tracker with great audio
- Consistent information being published to social media sites. This is especially useful when information needs to be shared quickly, such as power outages and estimated restoration time. This form of dissemination also invites a dialogue with citizens.

Identified Barriers

Town Website	<p>We have heard anecdotally that the Town of Berwick website is a little “cluttered”; finding information often means drilling down through a long line of links, which is hard to do for those citizens who have low vision, for example.</p> <p>There is a perceived lack of easily <i>accessible</i> information for where to go, i.e., for new community members about town services (power setup, etc.)</p> <p>A simplification (using WCAG guidelines) of the website would be welcome, for clarity.</p>
Internet Access	<p>Not all citizens have reliable internet access, and the Berwick MESH does not reach to all neighbourhoods</p>
Town Hall Technology	<p>We have excellent technology for council chambers especially; we need to activate all of the accessible features (for example, CART) and allow remote attendance at meetings</p>

Identified Barriers

Accessibility of Information	Care should be taken when the Town is posting information on social media to ensure that descriptive captions are used on all photos.
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Suggested Actions: Information and Communication

- Determine where and what way-finding signage is needed through AAC audits and evaluations. Have consistency in municipally owned signage. include an accessibility lens when creating signage, for example, braille signage and high contrast lettering
- Explore new communication technologies and identify services (for example, "speech to text" capability in virtual and in-person meetings)
- Research what is needed in order to have a list of ASL interpreters the Town can use if necessary. Make this a budget line item for the Town.
- Train staff on inclusive and plain language communications. This need not be complicated - Inclusion NS (inclusionns.ca) offers instruction and translation to community organizations and government if there is a need.
- Ensure that all pictures posted electronically by the Town have descriptive text
- The Town, where able, will provide recordings of public meetings with captions.

- On request, the Town of Berwick should provide communications in all types of Accessible formats
- Town Public Meetings with regard to By-law changes etc. should have in the announcement template (newspaper and digital) a request that citizens please contact the Town for ASL interpretation at least a week prior
- The Town will provide information in written and verbal formats as requested
- Continuously engage the community to discover needs: the AAC can continue to research any unmet needs by those people with disabilities living in and visiting the town.
- Continue to work on improving the reach of Berwick MESH
- When needed, and where feasible, seek the advice/email chair of AAC to review and provide direction
- All official notices that the Town sends out should be amended to state: "Berwick is committed to fostering full inclusion in our meetings; if you require accommodation to attend our meeting, we will endeavour to meet your needs. If ASL interpretation is necessary, please provide one week notice."

EMPLOYMENT

Berwick is an equal opportunity employer and will continue to remove barriers to employment within the Town. The organizational chart below is current as of early 2022.



There are currently 20 full time (FT) employees, 10 part time (PT), and 8 seasonal full time positions.

Council	7, including the Mayor
Administrative	2 FT
Finance	4 FT
Community Development	4 FT (Director position vacant)
Public Works	7 FT
Berwick Electric	3 FT and 1 PT
Fitness Centre	2 FT and 4 PT
After School Program	5 PT
Summer Day Camp	5 seasonal FT
Summer Parks	3 seasonal FT

Identified Achievements

- Council members have received iPads for reading all council and committee materials, which allows them to control the font size, zoom into images as needed, and has the technology to read or hear text.
- Town Hall staff is eager to accommodate any person with a disability employed with the Town who needs an assistive device to access employment, there is however no specific policy as such, and no one point-person responsible for this service.

Identified Barriers

Town Hall lobby entrance	<p>The doors into the main offices, off the lobby in the town hall, are not accessible. This discourages employment of persons with disabilities. Additionally, the way the main reception is configured does not allow adequate space for turning radius of wheelchairs, and the reception desk is quite high, making a respectful sight-line for someone in a wheelchair difficult to achieve</p>
Human Resources	<p>Berwick Town does not have a formal Human Resources department or Accessibility Coordinator; these matters are handled by individual managers, and by the CAO's office.</p>
Accessible washrooms	<p>There is only one accessible washroom available in town hall, outside of the Town Hall office. It has a door that can only be operated manually.</p> <p>An informal accessibility audit that we can forward to the town has identified areas of issue.</p>

Suggested Actions: Employment

- Become truly barrier-free in Town Hall public and private spaces.
- Staff and Council will be encouraged to complete online training, *Working with Abilities*, provided by the Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission (workwithabilitiesns.ca) which is free of charge.
- When able, Berwick will supply assistive devices to any employee who needs them to succeed at their jobs, and will report to the CAO for requests unless someone else is formally given that role.
- To these ends, Town of Berwick will attempt to secure grants necessary to provide any assistive devices necessary. The AAC is willing to help with both accessing grants and with the actual applications thereof.
- Job opportunities advertised by the Town will include mention of alternative interview styles as needed to allow those who have a disability an equitable opportunity for the job (for example, setting up a virtual interview rather than in-person)
- Make use of the already existing accessibility audit with regard to the accessible washroom in the Town Hall

GOODS AND SERVICES

Part of Berwick’s continuing desire to be “the Little Town with a Lot to Offer” is to ensure that we continue to offer equitable access to all of those people who live in and visit the town. In order for Berwick to be committed to ensuring that people of all abilities have equitable access to the goods and services provided by the Town, we will be reassessing our current structure and applying an accessibility lens to all future programs.



Berwick currently is responsible for

- All public communication surrounding Town initiatives (see Information and Communication section)
- Offering recreational programming
- Hosting Council and AAC meetings
- Providing Customer Service at the Town Hall for resident information concerning property, electric bills, general questions, programs, etc.
- Maintaining streets, including sidewalk snow removal
- Maintaining all Town-owned properties and infrastructure including parks, trails, Splash pad, Carol’s Place, sewer and stormwater services, and hydro.
- Berwick is served by the RCMP detachment based in Kingston NS for policing services, and Fire Services are

provided by the Berwick and District Volunteer Fire Department.

- Fitness Centre, in the Kings Mutual Century Centre

Identified Achievements

- In the summer of 2021 Berwick offered a “Pay as you Can” Day Camp for children, a three-tiered system to provide families with different options of payment that fit their needs. People with disabilities for a number of reasons often live in poverty, so this serves the disability community’s needs.
- “NS Weekly Walks” is an ongoing Active Living service that promotes health by walking with a group of community members. Most walks are accessible, but some may stray into less accessible areas that need attention by the town.
- The Town has 13 new Community Charging Stations for electric vehicles, to help make owning e-vehicles easier for all.
- The Town has plans to install a Solar Garden to make solar power accessible to everyone, regardless of whether they own or rent a home.
- Our volunteer fire department is in a largely accessible building

Identified Barriers

Website	As mentioned previously, the website is not entirely user-friendly
Budget	To date, the Town has not identified specific funds for accessibility
Sport/Recreation	There are few opportunities for parasport programming from the town

Suggested Actions: Goods and Services

- Offer diversity and cultural competency training for all staff so they are able to provide inclusive services
- Partner with community agencies to help develop and implement inclusive programming so Berwick is able to offer direct support and programming for people with disabilities.
- Explore different ways of promoting Town events/activities that reach all community members.
- Review all current programming offered by the Town and where applicable, make them accessible
- We will encourage Gala Days and other events to apply an accessibility lens while planning to accommodate people who have a disability and may need support, including but not limited to: more accessible washrooms, a quiet space during fireworks and other louder events, etc.
- Events planned by Berwick will have an accessibility lens applied during the planning process
- Promotion of quiet spaces and accessibility needs in marketing for all events

- Waiving of entrance fee for individuals whose role is to support a person with a disability. This is a common courtesy and ensures full participation of a person with a disability who requires an aide, without undue financial hardship.
- Build leadership capacity within our programs to host different abilities through partnerships and training
- When possible, provide emergency preparedness kits (including ear muffs or earplugs to decrease sound without removing the individual from the festivities, etc.)
- Establish partnerships for different parasport programming/ events

TRANSPORTATION

Active Transportation is a key daily activity and determinant of health; our relatively flat topography on trails and sidewalks that line the main streets make getting to Town Hall and businesses fairly easy, if the Town takes care with the built environment and way-finding. It is not necessarily the *disability* that is "disabling," but the inability to navigate our surroundings with ease that causes distress and inequity.

Berwick will endeavour to ensure that everyone will have equitable access to publicly funded transportation through Kings Transit Authority and access to safe Active Transportation. We will continue to make roadways and sidewalks clear of snow and other dangers so that people of all abilities can use them for transportation.

Berwick also, in partnership with Kings Transit, offers public transit throughout Kings County. We have numerous bus stops and one accessible shelter currently within Town limits.

Identified Achievements

- An accessible and covered bus shelter was built in front of the Foodland grocery store
- New sidewalk and crosswalk just outside of Berwick Public School are accessible
- Kings Transit buses are fully accessible, with low floor buses for improved accessibility, and the option to have the bus

“kneel” on request to curb level. They have safe and secure tie down spaces. For those users travelling with an attendant, that attendant can accompany the passenger for free.



Kings Transit bus with accessible entry ramp

Identified Barriers

Accessible Parking Spots

Accessible spots are not clearly identified. The accessible spaces at the Town Hall, for example, have no signage. In winter, the symbol that shows it is accessible is covered with snow.

(These spots around town are often misused by people “just running in for a minute”)

Identified Barriers

Kings Transit	Signage for bus stops have small lettering, which is difficult to read, and the placement is not ideal. Bus Routes are not publicized well
Sidewalks	Sidewalks on side streets are not always available. This makes way finding difficult and dangerous for people in wheelchairs, or who use scooters, walkers, or canes, particularly in winter months

Suggested Actions: Transportation

- A public information campaign regarding the misuse of accessible parking spots (and the fines that can be levied) could be a part of Berwick’s current marketing, or part of the social media posts. (“B Respectful”?)
- Posts installed to identify accessible spots may be useful. This way there is no misunderstanding. The signage on the post might be useful to market Berwick as a town with a lot of Accessibility to Offer”
- Install more bus shelters at key bus destinations
- Ensure snow removal of streets, sidewalks, and entrance to Town Hall is done in a timely manner



Town Hall accessible spot on a winter's day

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PLAN

Responsibilities

- The Town of Berwick is responsible for adopting and overseeing this Accessibility Plan
- The Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) is ultimately responsible for the implementation of the Plan, with astute delegation to appropriate Directors and staff
- The CAO is first contact for receiving and responding to public concerns, complaints, and suggestions; but the Accessibility Advisory Committee will be happy to give feedback and recommendations to CAO and Town Council

Monitoring and Timeline

The Action items in this plan will be addressed and implemented by the end of the first three year period, or they will be rolled into the subsequent plan and prioritized. In total, the goal is to reach full accessibility by 2030, as the Nova Scotia government's *Access by Design 2030: Achieving an Accessible Nova Scotia* dictates.

The Berwick Accessibility Advisory Committee will prepare a "report card" for council by 31 March of each year (the end of the fiscal year). This report card will measure the performance of the actions in this plan. The committee may also make recommendations to improve the plan.

The Report Card will be a public document, posted on the Town's website.

The checklists at the end of each section (and also in the appendices) have been created so that the Town and the AAC can easily access the information, and ensures that the actions we have recommended are implemented.

In the third year of this plan's implementation (2024-2025), another round of reporting from the Accessibility Advisory Committee will commence regarding the first plan, and the Committee will then begin community engagement on a new plan for the next three years, using this first report as a launching off point.

Responding to Questions and Complaints

- Anyone who lives or visits can express a concern about accessibility to the town. These would be directed to, as stated above, the CAO of the Town.
- The CAO will respond within a reasonable time, after consulting with the staff person responsible for that area of inquiry. A record should be kept of these concerns and comments, and disseminated to the AAC for their continuing review and fine-tuning of the Plan and may inform future changes.

CONCLUSION

We thank all of those who have participated in our journey toward ensuring that Berwick achieves equitable access to all citizens.

This is the very beginning of a formal process, and we want continually to form relationships with the people most impacted by this plan. We will continue to reach out and engage our community, and welcome all feedback and suggestions.

We will uphold the actions set forth in this living document and continue to strive for inclusion.

Town of Berwick Accessibility Advisory Committee

Joan Langevin Levack (Chair)

Elaine Furniss (Vice Chair)

Chris Cooke

Bradley Dundas

Councillor Chris Goddard

Kenisha Gordon

Michael Harris

Councillor Derrick Jamieson

Kimberly Halliday, Active Living Coordinator

APPENDICES

DEFINITION OF TERMS

AAC: Accessibility Advisory Committee. A volunteer committee established by a municipality to advise council about identifying, preventing, and eliminating barriers to people with disabilities in municipal programs, services, initiatives, and facilities. The committee plays a pivotal role in helping the municipality become a barrier-free community that complies with Nova Scotia's 2017 Accessibility Act. At least one half of the committee must have a disability or represent an organization that represents people with disabilities.

Accessibility Lens: Looking at issues through an "accessibility lens" means that pertinent decisions made by Council will be looked at from the viewpoint of those with disabilities, to build accessibility or equity through those decisions.

ASL: American Sign Language. A form of sign language developed for and by those who are deaf or hearing impaired in the US and also used in English-speaking parts of Canada.

Auditory: Relating to the sense of hearing.

Barrier: Something that makes it harder for some people to participate. Nova Scotia's Accessibility Act defines a barrier as "anything that hinders or challenges the full and effective participation in society of persons with disabilities, including a physical barrier, an architectural barrier, an information or communications barrier, an attitudinal barrier, a technological barrier, a policy, or a practice".

Braille: A form of written language for people who are blind or have a visual impairment, in which characters are represented by patterns of raised dots that are felt with the fingertips.

Built Environment: man-made structures, features and facilities viewed collectively as an environment where people live and work.

CART: Communication Access Realtime Translation. CART is the live, word-for-word transcription of speech to text so that individuals can read what is being said.

CSA: Canadian Standard Association. The CSA is a standards organization that develops standards in 57 areas. CSA publishes standards in print and electronic form and provides training and advisory services.

Disability: As defined in Nova Scotia's Accessibility Act, disability is "a physical, mental, intellectual, learning, or sensory impairment, including an episodic disability that, in interaction with a hinders an individual's full and effective participation in society".

EMO: Emergency Management Office. The Emergency Management Office is responsible for emergency planning and coordinating emergency responses. There are regional Emergency Management Offices that are responsible for providing a prompt and coordinated response to emergencies that occur in their jurisdiction, and Berwick falls under the Kings REMO.

Of note for people with disabilities is the "**Vulnerable Person's Registry**" which is a free, voluntary, and confidential service aimed at improving the safety of residents living at home who would be at greater risk in emergencies. The registry improves safety by providing key information to emergency response teams to help them be more aware when addressing large scale

emergencies. The registry is updated on a yearly basis and there is online registration available here (<https://www.kingsremo.ca/>)

Equitable/Equity: This term refers to a commitment to fairness. *Equitable* access is different from *equal* access. Equality means everybody is treated the same; equity means that EVERYBODY is treated *fairly*, based on their needs or abilities.

Infrastructure: Infrastructure is the basic physical and organizational structures and facilities (i.e. buildings, roads, power supplies) needed for the operation of a society or enterprise.

Living Document: a Living Document is a document that is continually edited and updated. The Accessibility Advisory Committee is a fluid group and will change with time; needs with regard to accessibility in the Town will also change and evolve. There is a regular timeline for the document to be updated.

NSFM: Nova Scotia Federation of Municipalities. Municipal interests are represented through three caucuses - regional, rural, and towns. The NSFM works to help municipal councils better understand issues and opportunities. It does this through events, bringing people together, and sharing ideas. It also does this through the work of committees in developing toolkits and templates, the sharing of research documents, and the sharing of best practices.

Pedestrian: a pedestrian is a person traveling by foot and is *inclusive* of those using assistive devices (tricycle, quadricycle, or wheelchair).

Plain Language: Plain language is clear, conversational communication that makes sense to the intended audience. The goal of plain language is to communicate so clearly that the

intended audience can easily find what they need, understand what they find, and use the information.

Retrofit: to retrofit is to add a component or accessory to something that it did not have originally.

RHF: Rick Hansen Foundation. The Rick Hansen Foundation has a goal to create and deliver innovative solutions that lead to a global movement to remove barriers and liberate the potential of people with disabilities. They offer Accessibility Certification.

Information on this organization can be found here:

www.rickhansen.com/be-come-accessible/rating-certification

Tactile: Relates to anything designed to be perceived by sense of touch.

WCAG: Web Content Accessibility Guidelines. The Web Content Accessibility Guidelines are part of a series of web accessibility guidelines published by the Web Accessibility Initiative of the World Wide Web Consortium, the main international standards organization for the Internet. These guidelines are fluid, and new guidelines are set or occasionally. They can be found at <https://www.w3.org/WAI/standards-guidelines/wcag/>

BUILT ENVIRONMENT: LIST OF TOWN ASSETS

Current Property List (2022)

Infrastructure

The town of Berwick currently maintains the roads, sidewalks (including trimming overhanging shrubs) and curb cuts, pedestrian crossing lights and other crosswalks, street parking spots.

Parks and fields, playgrounds

Berwick Town Hall outdoor areas : field, footpath, Berwick Garden Project and a beach volleyball court

Centennial park: includes gazebo and picnic tables, footpaths, green space, former washroom (opportunity for replacement)

Chute park: mountain biking skills park and space for BMX riding, walking trail, Picnic spaces

Peter Connell park (formerly Brown Street ballfields): ballfields including canteen and washrooms (seasonal)

Rainforth park: softball field, a splash pad, tennis and pickle-ball courts, a basketball net, green space and playground.

Spicer park: a community garden and a playground, trail, and green space

Trailhead of "Apple Capital Heritage Trail": parking area, interpretive panel, community garden with raised beds, train display, Berwick mural project

Buildings

Town hall, includes town administration offices, gym and Berwick library

Carol's place: multi-use recreation building, with public washrooms

Utilities/ Service buildings:

Berwick Electric Commission

Berwick Public Works department

Berwick Waste Management facility

Berwick Fire Hall (50% owner town of Berwick)

Town Buildings not owned (leased space or other arrangement)

Berwick Visitor Information Center, (inside) Apple Capital Museum, main level

Kings Mutual Century Center, Berwick fitness center based on fee

Trails within Berwick

Harvest Moon Trail: Runs east/west through town on the old rail bed, owned by the province, maintained by the town.

West boundary trail: Runs north/south along the power line, hard packed and very wide.

Spicer Park Trail: From Cottage St. to South St.; unfinished from Hayden Dr. to South St.

Brown St. Connector Trail: From Harvest Moon Trail to Chute Bicycle Park, awaiting trail through park and crosswalk on Orchard St.

Brown St. to Pleasant St. and Allweather Windows (153 Commercial St) (unfinished to Allweather).

Daniel Dr. to Maple Ave.: unfinished.

Marsters Ave. to Cottage St.: A short, wide grass trail, used informally by local pedestrians.

KMCC Connector Trail: From KMCC to the west boundary trail.

ACTION CHECKLIST

Suggested Actions: Built Environment

- Committee and Council to prioritize accessibility when planning new builds or retrofitting old buildings.
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Suggested Actions: Employment

- Become truly barrier-free in Town Hall public and private spaces.

- Staff and Council will be encouraged to complete online training, *Working with Abilities*, provided by the Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission (workwithabilitiesns.ca) which is free of charge.
- When able, Berwick will supply assistive devices to any employee who needs them to succeed at their jobs, and will report to the CAO for requests unless someone else is formally given that role.
- To these ends, Town of Berwick will attempt to secure grants necessary to provide any assistive devices necessary. The AAC is willing to help with both accessing grants and with the actual applications thereof.
- Job opportunities advertised by the Town will include mention of alternative interview styles as needed to allow those who have a disability an equitable opportunity for the job (for example, setting up a virtual interview rather than in-person)
- Make use of the already complete accessibility audit with regard to the accessible washroom in the Town Hall

Suggested Actions: Goods and Services

- Offer diversity and cultural competency training for all staff so they are able to provide inclusive services
- Partner with community agencies to help develop and implement inclusive programming so Berwick is able to offer direct support and programming for people with disabilities.
- Explore different ways of promoting Town events/activities that reach all community members.

- Review all current programming offered by the Town and where applicable, make them accessible
- We will encourage Gala Days and other events to apply an accessibility lens while planning to accommodate people who have a disability and may need support, including but not limited to: more accessible washrooms, a quiet space during fireworks and other louder events, etc.
- Events planned by Berwick will have an accessibility lens applied during the planning process
- Promotion of quiet spaces and accessibility needs in marketing for all events
- Waiving of entrance fee for individuals whose role is to support a person with a disability. This is a common courtesy and ensures full participation of a person with a disability who requires an aide, without undue financial hardship.
- Build leadership capacity within our programs to host different abilities through partnerships and training
- When possible, provide emergency preparedness kits (including ear muffs or earplugs to decrease sound without removing the individual from the festivities, etc.)
- Establish partnerships for different parasport programming/ events

Suggested Actions: Transportation

- A public information campaign regarding the misuse of accessible parking spots (and the fines that can be levied) could be a part of Berwick's current marketing, or part of the social media posts. ("B Respectful"?)

- Posts installed to identify accessible spots may be useful. This way there is no misunderstanding. The signage on the post might be useful to market Berwick as a town with a lot of Accessibility to Offer”
- Install more bus shelters at key bus destinations
- Ensure snow removal of streets, sidewalks, and entrance to Town Hall is done in a timely manner