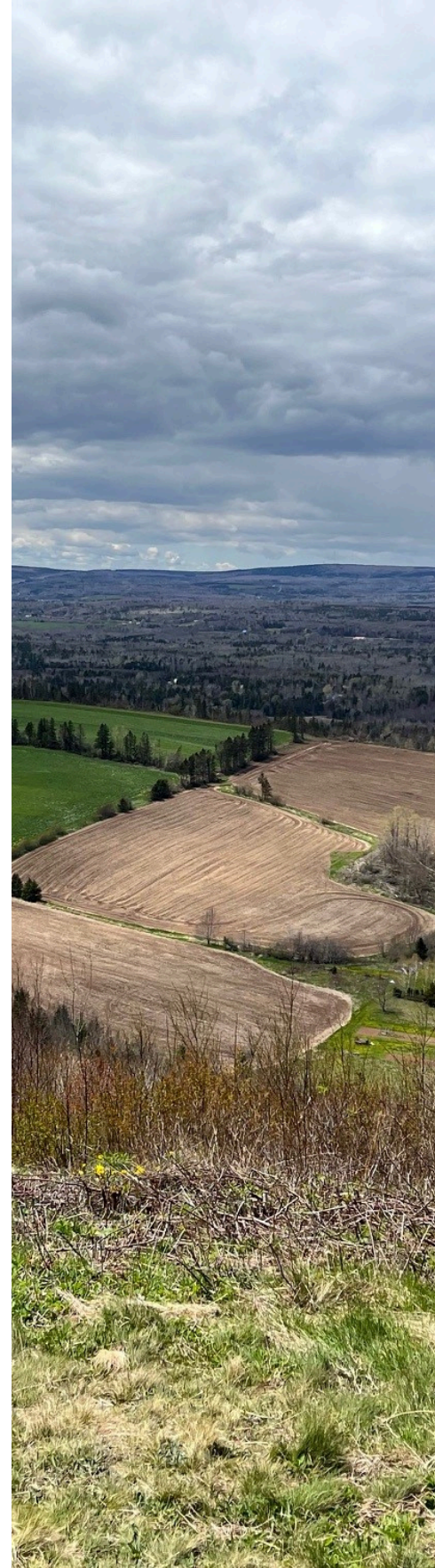


APRIL 2025

Accessibility Plan Update

MUNICIPALITY OF PICTOU COUNTY



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MOPC Vision & Commitment

VISION

Our plan is the result of the collaboration of the Municipality of Pictou County, the Accessibility Advisory Committee, the Nova Scotia Accessibility Directorate within the Department of Justice, and members of the public.

The Municipality of Pictou County strives to be a welcoming, inclusive, and accepting community to all people.

Our goal is to continually improve and reflect on the work being done in the Municipality and encourage community members to give feedback to improve how we serve our community.

COMMITMENT

The Municipality of Pictou County is committed to improving accessibility in Pictou County and adapting and changing our priorities alongside our changing and growing community. Our goal is for every community member to access the services they need without barriers so that all residents of Pictou County feel at home here.

We recognize members of our community have a diverse range of movement, hearing, sight, and cognitive abilities and we are committed to the goal of inclusive access to our programs, services, spaces, and buildings.

Updates and Accomplishments

The Municipality of Pictou County is committed to improving accessibility in each of the key areas listed below. You will find our highlights and current accessibility initiatives here.



GOODS AND SERVICES



INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS



EMPLOYMENT



BUILT ENVIRONMENT



TRANSPORTATION



Goods and Services

HIGHLIGHTS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

- Accessibility upgrades to the MOPC website have been made.
- UserWay was installed to the MOPC website.
- An Owl was purchased to increase online accessibility for Municipal meetings.
- Pictou County Recreation operates a free equipment loan program. Increasing our accessible inventory has been a focus. The following accessible items are available to the community:
 - Kicksleds
 - Adaptive Hiking tips
 - SUP support for balance on Stand up Paddleboard
 - Adaptive Stand up Paddleboard
 - Adaptive Fishing Gear
 - Hippocampe and attachments – ski, beach, and trail
- The MOPC offers assistive supports for Municipal meetings. If requested, The Municipality will provide ASL and CART services at Council and other public meetings.
- The Municipality has funded a member of our Municipal Accessibility Committee to complete the Rick Hansen Professional Training.



Information and Communication

HIGHLIGHTS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

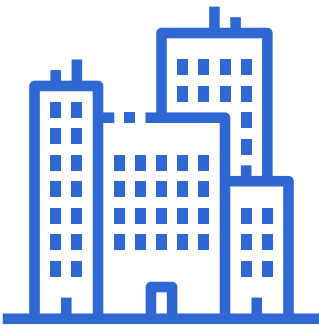
- The Municipality has purchased UserWay Web Accessibility Widge to improve our website for community members who need accommodations.
- The Municipality is currently in the process of reconstructing our website so that more accommodations for accessibility can be made.
- The MOPC Communications Officer completes accessibility training throughout the year.
- The MOPC purchased a new camera for council chambers and committee rooms.
- Digital communications, including emergency alerts, are screen-readable.
- The Municipality will provide American Sign Language (ASL) and/or Communication Access Realtime Translation (CART) services at Council and other Municipally-hosted public meetings, by request.
- New staff to the Municipality have included braille on their business cards.
- The Municipality has revamped the Council Proceedings Policy which states that pre-agendas are distributed 10 days in advance of the meeting and the final package is released 5 days before. This will allow time to arrange for accommodations if requested.
- Emergency Alerts – MOPC Alert is used for to inform Municipal water customers when there boil water advisories, local emergency management notifications, public engagement opportunities, or other water-related issues that may be relevant. Residents can choose what they want to be notified about and how they would like to be notified. Notifications can be sent by email, text message and/or by phone call. Only those who sign up will receive notifications.



Employment

HIGHLIGHTS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

- The Municipality offers accommodation to employees of all ages and abilities. This includes providing assistive devices so that employees can succeed at their jobs.
- Opportunities for accessibility training are shared with Municipal staff and community members.
- The Municipality has surveyed the Municipal workforce to get baseline data on the ages and abilities of employees.
- Jobs are posted in a variety of formats including web pages, radio, and print.
- Accommodations are offered during job recruitment if needed.



Built Environment

HIGHLIGHTS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

- The customer service counter at the Municipal Building is a height that is wheelchair accessible.
- Pictou County Recreation runs a free equipment loan program that features many adaptive/accessible items
- Our grant program assists community groups with funding to upgrade halls to meet accessibility requirements. We have also increased the number of comfort centres in the county, all at accessible halls, and have increased the number of supplies added to ensure a long list of needs are being met.
- Encourage aging-in-place housing options in the municipal planning strategy and zoning by-laws: While MOPC's new planning documents do not specifically identify provisions for secondary suites, as dwelling units, secondary suites would be permissible in all residential zones.



Transportation

HIGHLIGHTS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

- The Municipality provides funding to CHAD Transit, a local non-profit organization that aims to assist anyone who needs assistance with transportation.
- Pictou County Transit stops at the Wellness Centre – this is the only stop in the Municipality of Pictou County to date.

Priorities & Focus

The Municipality of Pictou County has made a commitment to accessibility and this section will highlight our priorities for improvements moving forward. We are focused on providing services with dignity, integrity and comfort for all community members.





Goods and Services

PRIORITIES AND FOCUS

- Continue to grow the adaptive portion of the “Go Play” Equipment Loan Program.
- Use plain language in documents and advertisements for municipal programming.
- Provide an adapted listing of recreation programs and services for people of all ages and abilities and update it annually.
- Train staff who are responsible for delivering accessible services to people with diverse abilities.
- Consult volunteer groups responsible for trail development and maintenance to ensure trails are accessible.
- Promote disability-related programs and supports to the community.
- Ensure the delivery of barrier free administrative and financial services.



Information and Communication

PRIORITIES AND FOCUS

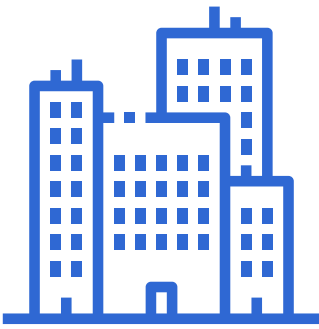
- Provide information in an accessible format or with communication supports that consider a person’s specific needs.
- Hold all in-person public meetings in barrier-free locations.
- Develop and implement a public awareness program (for Municipal staff and the public) to build awareness around barriers to accessibility and what an accessible community means.
- Provide modified editions of key municipal resources—in large print and/or in plain language. Examples include: newsletters, emergency management information, and bylaw services.



Employment

PRIORITIES AND FOCUS

- Track the number of employees with disabilities, with the aim of reflecting the Municipality's diversity.
- Work with staff to build an understanding of the value of accessibility and inclusion.
- Update the employee training manual to include a section on respecting diversity. This will include training in working with people of all ages and abilities.
- All Municipal employees will be required to take the Working with Abilities online training provided free by the Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission (workwithabilitiesns.ca).
- Each department's budget will reflect the provision of accessible accommodations if needed. The provision of these accommodations will be promoted on future job postings.
- Create uniform messaging for future job descriptions indicating that accommodations are available to applicants as needed.
- Investigate strategies to reach a wider and more diverse audience with job postings. Include statements in the job postings to ensure applicants are aware that accommodations can be provided.



Built Environment

PRIORITIES AND FOCUS

- Ensure that all new municipal buildings (including major renovations) meet the provincial Accessibility Standards.
- Add sidewalk curb cuts at all intersections where sidewalks exist.
- Commit a portion of the annual budget to install, maintain, or improve accessibility in public buildings and spaces.
- Ensure all pedestrian buttons or light controls, such as those at intersections or pedestrian-controlled crosswalks, are located over a flat area.
- Widen doorways and install power door buttons or automated sliding doors at the entrance of municipal buildings and public washrooms.
- Municipal staff to review and bring forward to Council recommendations (with related capital and operating costs) to improve the standard timelines for snow removal on sidewalks.
- Put auditory, visual, and tactile markers at busy intersections where people cross the road
- Ensure the Council Chambers meet CSA Accessibility requirements
- Complete an accessibility audit on the Municipal building in 2025.
- Ensure lobby meets all CSA Accessibility requirements.
- Work with library partners, such as Pictou Antigonish Regional Library, River John Library to ensure library collections are more accessible.
- Ensure sidewalks and curb cuts within the Core area are improved and maintained, as soon as possible, to the standard outlined in Canadian Standards Association (CSA) B651-18, Accessible Design for the Built Environment.
- Encourage private developers to have their existing buildings RHFAC-certified and for new developments to meet the RHFAC Gold Standard.



Transportation

PRIORITIES AND FOCUS

- Ensure accessible taxi service is available to the public by doing the following:
 - Ensure that no one is charged additional fees or is charged a fee to store their mobility aids or mobility assistive devices.
 - Ensure that the vehicle registration is visible and available in accessible formats for passengers of all ages and abilities.
 - Explore subsidized transit fares and/or transit passes for people with disabilities and/or low income.

Implementing the Plan

The Municipal Accessibility committee, along with appointed staff and council are responsible for adopting and overseeing the MOPC Enabling Accessibility Plan.

The Chief Administrative Officer is responsible for implementing the plan and assigning an Accessibility Coordinator.

The MOPC Accessibility Coordinator is responsible for receiving and responding to public concerns, complaints, and suggestions.

The Accessibility Advisory Committee is responsible for giving feedback and recommendations to the Municipal Council.

The Municipal Accessibility Advisory Committee will prepare an annual report for council for the fiscal year ending March 31 of each 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 annual report will be a public document that will be posted to the MOPC website.

Acknowledgements

The Municipality of Pictou County would like to extend a huge thank you to everyone who contributed to the content of this plan. Our work is not done and our plan will continue to shift and change along with our community.

Our hard working and passionate Accessibility Committee is made up of council, staff, and community members who have declared that accessibility is a priority.

Accessibility Committee Members:

Joe MacDonald (Chair) Councillor

Nancy Cheung (vice-chair) Community Representative

Rick Parker Member at Large Community Representative

Susan Matheson, Member at Large, Community Representative

Rae Gunn, Member at Large, Community Representative

Grace Maxner, Member at Large, Community Representative

Antonia Philips, Member at Large, Community Representative

Sarah Fraser, Member at Large, Community Representative

Joy Polley, Member at Large, Community Representative

Larry Turner Councillor

Logan McDowell Director of Public Works and Development, Staff Member at Large

Clare Steele Active Communities Coordinator, Staff Member at Large

Warden Robert Parker ex-officio

Brian Cullen Municipal CAO

