



Town of Amherst  
Accessibility, Inclusion, Diversity and Equity Advisory Committee  
Agenda

Date: **Wednesday, February 11, 2026**  
Time: **4:30 pm**  
Location: **Council Chambers, Town Hall**

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	Pages
<b>1. Call to Order</b>	
<b>1.1 Territorial Acknowledgement</b>	
"I would like to acknowledge that our gathering today is taking place in Mi'kma'ki (MEEG-MA-GEE), the traditional, unceded and ancestral territory of the Mi'kmaw people. I would also like to acknowledge that Nova Scotia has another unique people, the people of African descent whose legacy and contributions date back over 400 years predating confederation of this land. We are all treaty people."	
<b>1.2 Approval of Agenda</b>	
<b>1.3 Acceptance of Minutes - November 12, 2025</b>	2 - 5
<b>2. Presentations</b>	
<b>2.1 Provincial Human Rights Remedy Presentation - Lindsay Harnish and Lora Church</b>	6 - 14
<b>2.2 CNIB SnoWay Campaign Presentation - Marisa Hersey-Misner</b>	15 - 21
<b>3. Discussion Items</b>	
<b>3.1 Built Environment Reviews - Klooster</b>	22 - 94
<b>4. Information Items</b>	
<b>4.1 A.I.D.E Strategic Plan Progress to Date</b>	95 - 123
<b>5. Next Meeting Date</b>	
<b>6. Adjournment</b>	

**TOWN OF AMHERST**  
**Accessibility, Inclusion, Diversity and Equity Committee**  
**Minutes**

**Date:** November 12, 2025  
**Time:** 4:30 pm  
**Location:** Council Chambers, Town Hall

**Members Present** Councillor Kathy Wells, Chair  
Councillor Hal Davidson, Vice Chair  
Ava Tooley, Youth Town Council Representative  
Jim Prendergast, Citizen Representative  
LJ Barquilla, Citizen Representative  
Marina Godfrey, Citizen Representative  
Vanessa Jones, Citizen Representative  
Victoria Vance, Citizen Representative

**Members Absent** Clifford Pinchbeck, Citizen Representative  
Tammy Gero, Citizen Representative

**Staff Present** Aaron Bourgeois, Director of Operations  
Mallory Klooster, Community Well-Being Manager  
Marc Buske, Building Official  
Sean Payne, Marketing & Communications Officer  
Natalie LeBlanc, Municipal Clerk  
Cindy Brown, Administrative Assistant

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1. **Call to Order**  
The Chair called the meeting to order at 4:30 PM.

1.1 **Territorial Acknowledgement**  
The Chair gave the Territorial Acknowledgement.

The Chair welcomed Amherst Youth Town Council representative Ava Tooley and the Town of Amherst Building Official Marc Buske to the Committee.

1.2 **Approval of Agenda**  
**Moved By Councillor Davidson**  
**Seconded By Jim Prendergast**  
**That the agenda be approved as circulated.**

**Motion Carried**

1.3 **Acceptance of Minutes - September 17, 2025**  
The Chair called for any errors or omissions in the minutes. There being none, the minutes of the September 17, 2025, meeting of the Accessibility, Inclusion, Diversity and Equity Committee were accepted as included in the agenda package.

## 2. **Hailie Tattrie Presentation**

Hailie Tattrie presented her update on her research project she is doing through MITACS (Mathematics of Information Technology and Complex Systems) for the study on youth resiliency in Cumberland County. Hailie said she is hoping her report will be complete by March 2026 and that she is also writing a book on this subject and that could be submitted to publishers as early as April 2026. She indicated that the top concerns for youth were identified as transportation, a need for a third space, poverty and homelessness, lack of funding and training for youth workers, and drugs, adding that the youth also indicated they would not want to raise a family here.

Councillor Davidson asked for clarification on the research participants, Hailie explained how she had interviews with youth providers, three one on one interviews with youths and a sharing circle with twelve to fifteen youths from across Cumberland.

Victoria Vance asked about the diversity of the research participants. Hailie answered there was quite a few LGBTQ+ participants, and she did get a few participants of colour.

Marina Godfrey asked if there were any participants with disabilities. Hailie answered she did not notice any participants with physical disabilities but there were some with learning disabilities and some with mental health issues. Marina found this disappointing and would like to engage youth with physical disabilities.

## 3. **Discussion Items**

### 3.1 **Annual Accessibility, Inclusion, Diversity and Equity Report - Klooster**

Mallory Klooster presented the Annual Accessibility, Inclusion, Diversity and Equity (AIDE) Report. Mallory reviewed the objectives and goals for Accessibility and Equity and Anti-Racism and the accomplishments.

Councillor Wells advised that during the NSFM Fall Conference MLA Elizabeth Smith-McCrossin organized a meeting with the Mayor Small, Mayor Gilroy and representatives with the NS Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal to discuss the construction of a sidewalk from Canadian Tire to the Cumberland Regional Hospital. Councillor Wells said that she also spoke with CAO Jason MacDonald about writing a letter from the Committee to several departments in the provincial government to help expedite this.

LJ Barquilla asked if the Town requires pedestrians to wear reflective or bright clothing while walking out at night to make them more visible. Mallory Klooster answered that the Town of Amherst cannot dictate what people wear but the Community Living staff is working on sidewalk safety videos and that can be mentioned as public awareness. LJ suggested perhaps the Town could distribute reflective tape or stickers as a potential solution.

Marina Godfrey said that motorized scooter users should have some safety education. Councillor Wells answered that the Amherst Police Department along with the RCMP recently held a Scooter Safety Session and no one attended. Ava Tooley added that police do go into the schools to present to students on scooter safety.

Vanessa Jones asked if it will be Marc Buske performing the Accessibility Standard Audits, with his Rick Hansen training. Mallory Klooster said it would be a collaborative staff effort, but that Mark Buske will be included as part of it. Marc

Buske said that Rick Hansen is a business, and often their evaluation sheets do not line up with Nova Scotia Building Regulations. Marc Buske said as a building official he looks at the sidewalk all the way into the building, this includes new construction and renovations.

Vanessa Jones asked if an audit report will be brought back to this Committee. Mallory Klooster answered yes that it can be, or it can be integrated in the annual Accessibility, Inclusion, Diversity and Equity (AIDE) Report.

Councillor Davidson said that according to the Accessibility, Inclusion, Diversity and Equity (AIDE) Strategic Plan that there is supposed to be assessments done with findings reported back to Council.

Councillor Davidson asked if the annual report has been submitted to the province yet. Councillor Wells said not yet we need a motion to send it to council for next week. Mallory Klooster said that the province does not require for the annual report be submitted to them, this is just a report to be submitted to council.

Councillor Davidson said that the under Accomplishments section, the U17 hockey game should be removed as it was not accessible, most of the wheelchair areas were blocked off by equipment and Halloween decorations, and that neither the seniors' room nor the portable ramp was available. Mallory Klooster said that she will remove that from the report before it is presented to Committee of the Whole.

Victoria Vance asked if accessible parking will be included as part of the audit. Victoria said the handicap parking spot at the intersection of Church Street and Victoria Street is a real concern. Marc Buske said it depends on the mandate from the Committee. Councillor Davidson added that anyone trying to get out of an accessible van in the accessible parking lots behind Town Hall would not be able to do so if cars were parked beside them.

LJ Barquilla asked if anything has been done about making restrooms at Town facilities more inclusive for all genders. Mallory Klooster answered that nothing has been done yet.

Councillor Davidson suggested that perhaps a strategic plan update be a standing agenda item for future meetings.

**Moved By LJ Barquilla**

**Seconded By Victoria Vance**

**That the Accessibility, Inclusion, Diversity and Equity Committee recommend that Council request staff to investigate the feasibility of having inclusive for all gender restrooms at all Town of Amherst facilities.**

**Motion Carried**

**Moved By Vanessa Jones**

**Seconded By Councillor Davidson**

That the Accessibility, Inclusion, Diversity and Equity Committee recommend Council request staff to complete an audit of all Town of Amherst facilities and infrastructures, including accessible parking spaces, to ensure they are fully accessible as it is laid out in the Council approved Strategic Plan and to bring a report back to this Committee for review.

Motion Carried

Moved By Marina Godfrey

Seconded By LJ Barquilla

That the Accessibility, Inclusion, Diversity and Equity Committee recommend that the Annual Accessibility, Inclusion, Diversity and Equity Report with amendments be forwarded to the Committee of the Whole.

Motion Carried

**3.2 YReach Newcomer Event - Klooster**

Mallory Klooster presented her memo on the YReach Snack and Survey Social that was intended to engage with new residents. The event included a survey for new residents to share what brought them to Amherst and what supports they would like to see in order for them to stay in the community.

**3.3 Anti-Hate Call Application - Klooster**

Mallory Klooster presented her memo regarding the Anti-Hate Call for Proposals application. If the application is successful, there will be funding to hire a full time 2-year term employee to lead the collaborative project with community partners.

Councillor Wells asked when the Town will know if this application is successful. Mallory Klooster answered that they are hoping to hear early in 2026.

**3.4 Green Space Update - Klooster**

Mallory Klooster presented her memo on naming of the Green Space next to Town Hall. Councillor Davidson asked who is being consulted. Mallory Klooster answered that staff is currently working with Indigenous Affairs about the naming the green space.

**4. Next Meeting Date**

The next meeting date was scheduled for February 11, 2026, at 4:30 PM.

**5. Adjournment**

There being no further business, the Chair adjourned the meeting.

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Natalie LeBlanc  
Municipal Clerk

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Councillor Kathy Wells  
Chair

# NOVA SCOTIA HUMAN RIGHTS REMEDY

*"The Remedy isn't about a single solution – it's as many solutions as there are people with disabilities."*

Dr. Tim Stainton



# What is the Human Right Remedy?

The Nova Scotia Human Rights Remedy is a five-year, legally binding agreement that guides government's work to transform the disability support system in Nova Scotia. It is called "the Remedy" because it is what government must do to remedy the discrimination against people with disabilities in Nova Scotia.



**Everyone should have the freedom to create the life they want to live, in a community where they are welcomed, supported and valued.**

In October 2021, the Nova Scotia Court of Appeal ruled in favour of the plaintiffs.

The Disability Rights Coalition (DRC) summarizes the ruling around four grounds:

1.

**Unnecessary Institutionalization**

There has been unnecessary institutionalization in purpose-built institutions for persons with disabilities as well as in other institutional settings such as psychiatric hospitals

3.

**Denial of Community of Choice**

Persons with disabilities have often been ‘placed’ in settings distant from their families/friends, and not within their community of choice

2.

**Right to Assistance**

The right to assistance when needed has been denied to eligible persons with disabilities

4.

**Delays in Assistance**

Persons with disabilities have experienced frequent, indefinite, extended delays in the provision of assistance (waitlists) despite statutory entitlement

# 6 Key Directions

**Individual Planning and Support Coordination**

**Closing Institutions**

**Community-Based Supports and Services**

**Regional Hubs and Multidisciplinary Support**

**Individualized Funding**

**Strengthening Disability Capacity**

# Current Remedy Highlights

almost 3 years into the 5 year plan

School Leavers Program

10 Approved Home Share Organizations

24 IPSC's and 26 LAC's 17 EFAC's hired and trained

32% decrease in the population of institutions

IPSC's are working with 248 individuals

LAC's are working with 218 individuals

Large influx of funding

individualized Funding rollout

## Projects

Safeguards

Workforce

Closure Teams

Regional hubs

# Opportunities

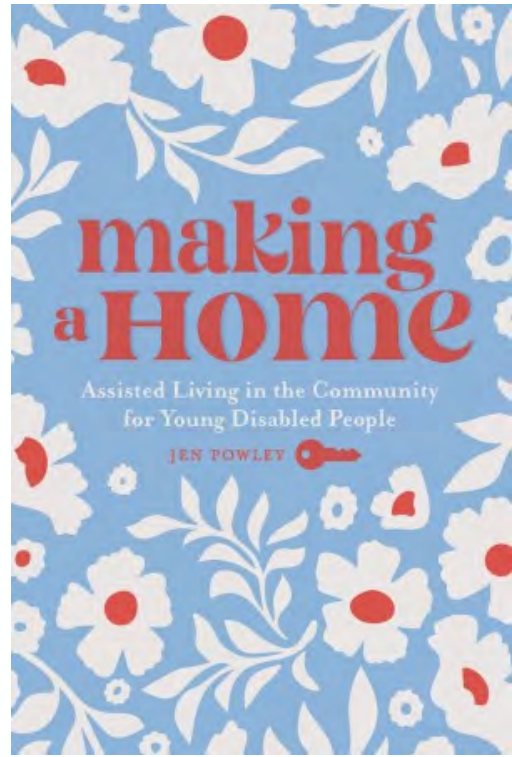
## Individuals and families

- Individualized Funding allows for full range of life choices
- Flexibility, Imagination, & Individualized
- Better Quality of Life outcomes

## Community

- Growing workforce - increased disability representation
- Money going back to the community
- Housing partnerships
- Accessibility and transportation
- Diversified work opportunities for people
  - Individual
  - Team
  - Home share





**Jen Powley**  
Making a Home: Assisted Living in the  
Community for Young Disabled People

**Vicky Levack**

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/nova-scotia/disability-rights-vicky-levack-independent-living-apartment-1.6639119>



**Premier apology video**

<https://youtu.be/uq2OJNeHwBY?si=ahhfc-gvyB-AURL4>

# Regional Advisory Councils

## Central region

Devon Bundy

[Devon.Bundy@novascotia.ca](mailto:Devon.Bundy@novascotia.ca)

## Eastern region

Diana Poirier

[Diana.Poirier@novascotia.ca](mailto:Diana.Poirier@novascotia.ca)

## Northern region

Adam Fraser

[Adam.Fraser@novascotia.ca](mailto:Adam.Fraser@novascotia.ca)

## Western region

Linda Jensen

[Linda.Jensen@novascotia.ca](mailto:Linda.Jensen@novascotia.ca)

## **Inclusion NS**

<https://www.inclusionns.ca>

## **Disability Rights Coalition**

<https://www.disabilityrightscoalitionns.ca>

## **Remedy Transformation Timeline**

<https://www.dsp-transformation.ca/timeline>

<https://dsp-transformation.ca/homeshare>

## **NSCLO**

<https://nsclo.ca>

# MEMO

**TO:** Accessibility, Inclusion, Diversity and Equity Committee

**FROM:** Mallory Klooster, Manager, Community Well-Being

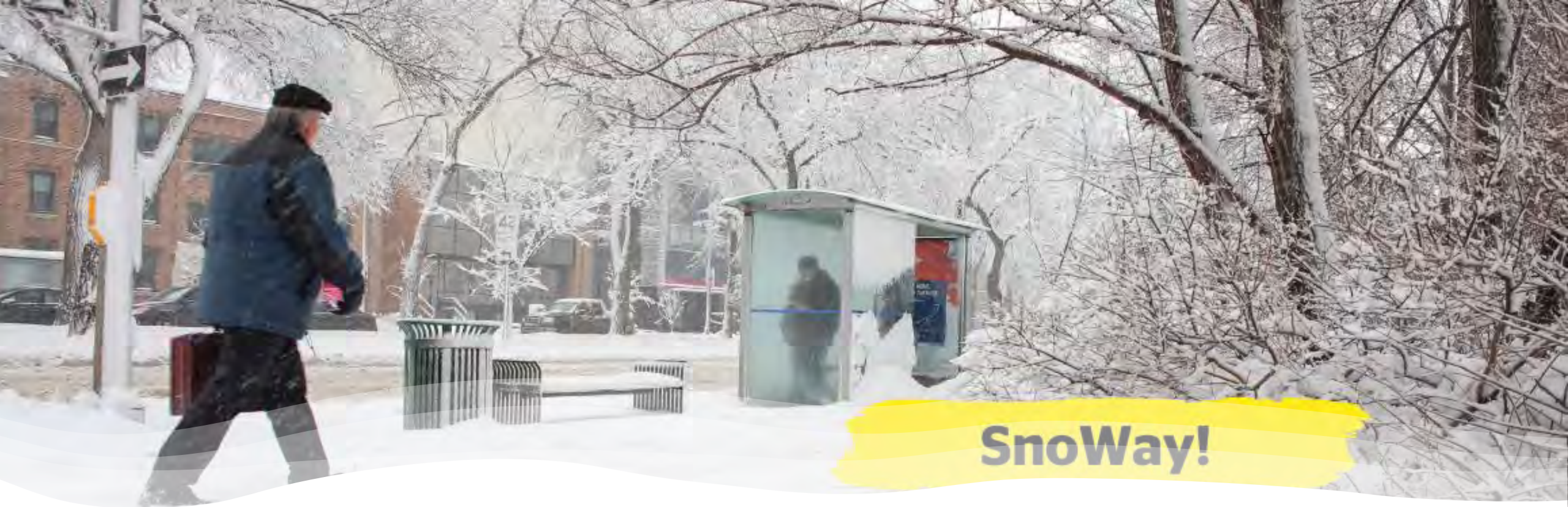
**DATE:** Wednesday, February 11, 2026

**RE: CNIB SnoWay Campaign Presentation**

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Winter conditions create significant safety and mobility barriers for pedestrians, particularly for children, seniors, people with strollers, and persons with disabilities. For individuals who are blind, Deafblind, or have low vision, snow- and ice-covered sidewalks, crossings, and transit routes can prevent safe navigation and access to public spaces and transit.


To highlight snow removal as an accessibility, mobility, and human rights issue, we are joined by Marisa Hersey-Misner, Program lead for CNIB Advocacy- Maritimes, who will provide us with an overview of the CNIB SnoWay Campaign and how it promotes shared responsibility for keeping paths of travel clear and accessible.



**SnoWay!**

SnoWay! Campaign

Safe and Accessible Journeys



# Snow Removal Campaign

In 2024, CNIB first introduced the SnoWay advocacy campaign to raise awareness among municipalities and the public about the environmental barriers snow and ice-covered sidewalks create and remind them of their responsibility to clear snow and ice from paths of travel.

**SnoWay!**

# Navigating your community after it snows shouldn't be an obstacle course.

- Winter travel can be treacherous for millions of Canadians as snow and ice-covered sidewalks, crossings and transit routes increase the risk of slip-and-fall accidents for pedestrians and pose serious safety and mobility risks for people who are blind, Deafblind, or have sight loss.
- **Snow removal is an accessibility issue, a mobility issue, and a human rights issue. When municipalities, businesses, snow removal contractors, and homeowners fail to clear snow and ice effectively, people with sight loss and those with disabilities cannot safely navigate the built environment in their communities and access public transit, undermining their independence and ability to carry out their daily activities.**
- Sidewalks, crossings, and transit stops are critical and necessary infrastructure for pedestrians and must

# Municipalities have a Responsibility

- Municipalities, businesses, snow removal contractors, and homeowners have a duty to clear pedestrian pathways of snow and ice within 48 hours following significant snowfall (or sooner if mandated by your municipality) and refrain from depositing snow pile obstructions back onto sidewalks or walkways. This includes residential and public sidewalks in front of homes, private properties, and businesses.
- Moreover, municipalities should prioritize pedestrian areas for clearance, especially along public transit routes. Transit stops and shelters must be fully cleared so they are easily identifiable and accessible. At intersections with pedestrian push-buttons like Accessible Pedestrian Signals (APS), sidewalks surrounding the area must be fully cleared of snow and



SnoWay! snow removal campaign is back! From November 2025 through March 31, 2026, join us in advocating for safe and accessible journeys for everyone.

Here's how you can say "SnoWay!" and get involved:

1. Shovel your snow! If it's your responsibility, clear snow and ice from your property or arrange for assistance if you're unable to.
2. Talk to your friends, family, neighbours, and local businesses about their snow removal practices – remind them of their responsibility to clear snow and ice from public paths of travel.
3. Speak out and file a complaint with your municipality. If you encounter a sidewalk, pathway or transit stop that hasn't been properly cleared of snow 48 hours after a significant snowfall (or sooner if mandated by your municipality), report it by submitting a complaint (online or by phone). Many municipalities have a centralized 311 number or equivalent service, allowing residents to easily report issues and submit a service request.
4. Share a photo on social media that highlights a sidewalk, crosswalk, or transit stop that hasn't been properly cleared of snow/ice. Tag CNIB and your municipality, use the hashtag #SnoWay, and include an image description that details the snow barrier and its location (e.g., the bus stop at the intersection of Bank Street and Queen Street).

Your participation in the SnoWay campaign will contribute to important ongoing discussions about the impacts of improper snow removal practices for people who are blind, Deafblind, or have low vision. We hope you'll get involved and share your experiences – because everyone should be able to travel safely and independently.



# Questions

**CNIB**  
FOUNDATION

FONDATION  
**INCA**

# MEMO

**TO:** Accessibility, Inclusion, Diversity and Equity Committee  
**FROM:** Mallory Klooster, Manager, Community Well-Being  
**DATE:** Wednesday, February 11, 2026  
**RE:** **Built Environment Reviews**

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At the November meeting, the following motions were made:

- 1. That the Accessibility, Inclusion, Diversity and Equity Committee recommend that Council request staff to investigate the feasibility of having inclusive, all gender restrooms at all Town of Amherst facilities.**
- 2. That the Accessibility, Inclusion, Diversity and Equity Committee recommend Council request staff to complete an audit of all Town of Amherst facilities and infrastructures, including accessible parking spaces, to ensure they are fully accessible as it is laid out in the Council approved Strategic Plan and to bring a report back to this Committee for review.**

## **Progress Update**

Staff have developed a facility accessibility review toolkit and will begin Built Environment assessments at the following locations:

- Stadium
- Town Hall
- CCUBIC
- Library
- Amherst Police Department (public spaces only)
- Amherst Fire Department (public spaces only)

Assessments will take place from March to September 2026 with results being reported through the annual A.I.D.E report.

The toolkit will be maintained as a living resource, with periodic reassessments and continued engagement with the committee and community.

**Attached: Town of Amherst Accessibility Audit Toolkit**

## SECTION A — COVER & PURPOSE

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**TOWN OF AMHERST**

**Accessibility Audit Tool**

**Facility Accessibility Walkthrough & Observation Checklist**  
*(Industry Standard Accessibility Best Practices)*

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**Facility Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Facility Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Audit Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Audit Conducted By (Names / Committee):**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Facility Lead / Department:**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### PURPOSE OF THIS TOOL

This Accessibility Audit Tool is a practical, observation-based checklist designed to help the Town of Amherst identify and understand accessibility barriers within municipal facilities.

This tool is intended for use by mixed committees, including staff and non-technical participants. It focuses on real-world use and experience, not technical measurements or regulatory enforcement.

## WHAT THIS TOOL IS

- A walkthrough-based audit
  - Grounded in industry standard accessibility best practices
  - Designed to be user-friendly and practical
  - Suitable for all Town-owned and operated facilities
  - Supports:
    - ✓ Maintenance planning
    - ✓ Operational improvements
    - ✓ Capital planning
    - ✓ Internal reporting and Council discussions
- 

## WHAT THIS TOOL IS NOT

- ✗ A certification
  - ✗ A building code inspection
  - ✗ A legal compliance or enforcement document
  - ✗ A pass/fail assessment
- 

## HOW TO USE THIS TOOL

Walk the facility as a member of the public

Observe how someone with different mobility, sensory, or cognitive needs may experience the space

Use practical tests where helpful (for example: doorway clearance using a 36-inch reference)

Measurements are not required

Some sections may be Not Applicable (N/A) — this is expected and acceptable

## RESPONSIBILITIES & FOLLOW-UP

- Facility Auditors
  - Owns identified actions and follow-up
  - Identifies barriers and makes recommendations to A.I.D.E. Committee
- Operations Staff
  - May address simple issues immediately where possible
- A.I.D.E. Committee
  - Makes recommendations to Council that may have budget implications

This tool is intended to support continuous improvement, not to assign fault.

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## DOCUMENT USE

This audit tool may be used:

During scheduled accessibility reviews

As part of facility condition assessments

To inform future upgrades or renovations

To support internal planning and reporting

## SECTION B — FACILITY INFORMATION SHEET

*(Complete once per facility before beginning the walkthrough)*

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### FACILITY IDENTIFICATION

**Facility Name:**

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**Street Address:**

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**Community / Location:**

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**Facility Type (check all that apply):**

- Arena / Recreation Facility
  - Park / Outdoor Space
  - Administrative / Office Building
  - Community Hall / Meeting Space
  - Washroom / Change Facility
  - Storage / Support Facility
  - Other: \_\_\_\_\_
- 

### FACILITY USE & PUBLIC ACCESS

**Primary Users (check all that apply):**

- General Public
- Seniors
- Children / Youth
- Sports / Recreation Groups
- Staff Only
- Mixed Use

**Is this facility open to the public?**

- Yes
- No
- Limited / By Appointment

**Typical Hours of Public Access:**

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**FACILITY CONTEXT**

**Approximate Age of Facility (if known):**

- New (0–10 years)
- Mid-life (10–30 years)
- Older (30+ years)
- Unknown

**Recent Renovations or Upgrades (if known):**

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**AUDIT DETAILS**

**Audit Date:**

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**Audit Conducted By (Names / Roles):**

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**Facility Lead / Department:**

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**Weather Conditions (if exterior areas reviewed):**

- Clear
  - Rain
  - Snow / Ice
  - Other: \_\_\_\_\_
- 

**SCOPE OF REVIEW**

**Areas Included in This Audit (check all that apply):**

- Exterior / Parking / Arrival
- Entrances
- Interior Public Areas
- Washrooms
- Seating / Counters / Service Areas
- Signage & Wayfinding
- Emergency Features
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**Areas Not Reviewed / Not Applicable:**

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**GENERAL NOTES (OPTIONAL)**

*(Use this space for context that may affect observations — seasonal access, temporary barriers, known limitations, etc.)*

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## SECTION C — SIMPLE PATH OF TRAVEL WALKTHROUGH

*(High-level walkthrough to identify obvious barriers before detailed review)*

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### HOW TO USE THIS SECTION

- Walk the most common public route through the facility  
*(from arrival → entrance → main public areas → washrooms → exit)*
  - Think about how someone using:
    - A wheelchair or walker
    - A stroller
    - Limited vision or hearing
    - Limited strength or balance  
might experience the space
  - Do not measure — rely on observation and practical judgment
  - This section is meant to flag issues early, not capture every detail
- 

### OPTIONAL TOOLS FOR THE WALKTHROUGH

*(Helpful items for the audit team — not required)*

These tools help the audit team see and feel if a space is easy for people to use. You do not need all of them. Use what helps.

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#### 1. 36-Inch Door Stick

**What it's for:**

To see if a doorway is wide enough.

**How to use it:**

If the stick fits through the door without squeezing, the door is likely wide enough.

## 2. Measuring Tape

### What it's for:

To check spaces that feel tight.

### How to use it:

Only measure if something doesn't feel right or is **requested in section H**

## 3. Phone with a Level App

### What it's for:

To see how steep a ramp is.

### How to use it:

Place the phone on the ramp. If it feels very steep, make a note.

## 4. Phone Timer

### What it's for:

To see if automatic doors stay open long enough. **Standard Listed in Section H**

### How to use it:

Press the button and see if the door opens, stays open, and closes according to the standard.

## 5. Rolling Item (Optional)

### Examples:

Stroller, rolling bag, or small cart.

### What it's for:

To feel how easy it is to roll over floors, ramps, and doorways.

## 6. Phone or Camera

### What it's for:

To take pictures of things that are hard to explain with words.

*(Photos are optional — see Photo Reference section.)*

## REMEMBER

These tools are helpers, not rules.

If something feels:

- Hard to use

- Confusing
- Unsafe

**Write it down!**

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## PATH OF TRAVEL OVERVIEW

**Primary Path of Travel Reviewed (brief description):**

*(Example: parking lot to main entrance, lobby to washroom)*

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## WALKTHROUGH CHECKLIST

For each item, complete all fields.

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### 1. Arrival to Entrance Feels Clear and Understandable

**Observation Status:**

- Observed – Present
- Observed – Not Present
- Unknown
- Not Applicable

**Meets Standard:**

- Yes – Meets Standard
- No – Does Not Meet Standard
- Unknown / Needs Review

**Notes:**

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**Tag:**

- Maintenance
- Operational
- Signage
- Capital
- Policy
- Review

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## 2. Path Surface Appears Stable and Easy to Move On

*(No major cracks, loose gravel, sudden changes, or trip hazards)*

*Slip resistant Exterior Walk way 63"*

### Observation Status:

- Observed – Present
- Observed – Not Present
- Unknown
- Not Applicable

### Meets Standard:

- Yes – Meets Standard
- No – Does Not Meet Standard
- Unknown / Needs Review

### Notes:

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### Tag:

- Maintenance  Operational  Capital  Review
- 

## 3. Route Is Free of Temporary or Moveable Obstacles

*(Garbage cans, signage, furniture, equipment, snow piles, cords)*

### Observation Status:

- Observed – Present
- Observed – Not Present
- Unknown
- Not Applicable

### Meets Standard:

- Yes – Meets Standard
- No – Does Not Meet Standard
- Unknown / Needs Review

**Notes:**

---

**Tag:**

Maintenance  Operational  Review

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**4. Entrance Is Easy to Identify and Reach**

*(Clear location, visible from path, no confusion about where to go)*

**Observation Status:**

- Observed – Present
- Observed – Not Present
- Unknown
- Not Applicable

**Meets Standard:**

- Yes – Meets Standard
- No – Does Not Meet Standard
- Unknown / Needs Review

**Notes:**

---

**Tag:**

Signage  Operational  Capital  Review

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**5. Doors Can Be Opened Without Excessive Effort**

*(Consider weight, handles, clearance, automatic features if present)*

**Observation Status:**

- Observed – Present
- Observed – Not Present
- Unknown
- Not Applicable

**Meets Standard:**

- Yes – Meets Standard
- No – Does Not Meet Standard
- Unknown / Needs Review

**Notes:**

---

**Tag:**

- Maintenance  Capital  Review
- 

**6. Interior Route Feels Clear and Logical**

*(Easy to follow, no sudden barriers, obvious direction of travel)*

**Observation Status:**

- Observed – Present
- Observed – Not Present
- Unknown
- Not Applicable

**Meets Standard:**

- Yes – Meets Standard
- No – Does Not Meet Standard
- Unknown / Needs Review

**Notes:**

---

**Tag:**

- Operational  Signage  Review
- 

**7. Washroom or Key Public Area Is Reachable Without Detours**

*(No unexpected stairs, locked doors, or confusing routes)*

**Observation Status:**

- Observed – Present
- Observed – Not Present

- Unknown
- Not Applicable

**Meets Standard:**

- Yes – Meets Standard
- No – Does Not Meet Standard
- Unknown / Needs Review

**Notes:**

---

**Tag:**

- Operational
- Signage
- Capital
- Review

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**OVERALL WALKTHROUGH IMPRESSION**

**Does the path of travel feel usable for most members of the public?**

- Yes
- Mostly
- No
- Unsure

**Brief Summary Notes:**

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## SECTION D — PATH OF TRAVEL MAPPING & PUBLIC AREAS

*(More detailed review of key public routes and spaces)*

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### PURPOSE OF THIS SECTION

This section expands on the simple walkthrough by documenting specific public areas and how they connect.

It helps identify:

- Gaps between accessible features
  - Areas where access exists but is difficult to find or use
  - Routes that technically work but may not feel usable or intuitive
- 

### PATH OF TRAVEL MAP (OPTIONAL BUT ENCOURAGED)

- Sketch the primary public path on the space below **OR**
- Attach a printed floor plan and mark the route

*(Include entrances, main public areas, washrooms, service counters, seating, exits)*

#### **Sketch / Reference Notes:**

[Include hand sketch or reference, use a copy of the building layout if available]

---

### PUBLIC AREAS INCLUDED IN THIS REVIEW

*(Check all that apply)*

- Parking / Drop-off Area
- Exterior Walkways
- Main Entrance
- Lobby / Waiting Area
- Hallways / Corridors
- Elevators / Lifts (if present)
- Ramps
- Public Washrooms

- Seating / Viewing Areas
  - Service Counters / Desks
  - Program / Activity Spaces
  - Emergency Exits
  - Other: \_\_\_\_\_
- 

## PUBLIC AREA ACCESS CHECKLIST

For each area reviewed, complete all fields.

---

### 1. Routes Between Public Areas Are Continuous

*(No missing links, dead ends, or inaccessible connections)*

**Observation Status:**

- Observed – Present
- Observed – Not Present
- Unknown
- Not Applicable

**Meets Standard:**

- Yes – Meets Standard
- No – Does Not Meet Standard
- Unknown / Needs Review

**Notes:**

---

**Tag:**

- Maintenance
  - Operational
  - Capital
  - Review
- 

### 2. Changes in Level Are Clearly Managed

*(Ramps, elevators, or alternate routes are obvious and usable)*

**Observation Status:**

- Observed – Present
- Observed – Not Present

- Unknown
- Not Applicable

**Meets Standard:**

- Yes – Meets Standard
- No – Does Not Meet Standard
- Unknown / Needs Review

**Notes:**

---

**Tag:**

- Capital  Signage  Review
- 

**3. Routes Are Wide Enough to Pass Comfortably**

**Standard: 39 ¼ “**

*(Wheelchairs, walkers, strollers can move without difficulty)*

**Observation Status:**

- Observed – Present
- Observed – Not Present
- Unknown
- Not Applicable

**Meets Standard:**

- Yes – Meets Standard
- No – Does Not Meet Standard
- Unknown / Needs Review

**Notes:**

---

**Tag:**

- Maintenance  Operational  Capital  Review
- 

**4. Doors, Gates, or Barriers Along the Route Are Manageable**

*(Effort, timing, handles, visibility)*

**Observation Status:**

- Observed – Present
- Observed – Not Present
- Unknown
- Not Applicable

**Meets Standard:**

- Yes – Meets Standard
- No – Does Not Meet Standard
- Unknown / Needs Review

**Notes:**

---

**Tag:**

- Maintenance  Capital  Review
- 

**5. Public Spaces Allow Clear Movement and Turning**  
**Standard: 5' and width of hall**

*(Lobbies, seating areas, waiting areas are not crowded or blocked)*

**Observation Status:**

- Observed – Present
- Observed – Not Present
- Unknown
- Not Applicable

**Meets Standard:**

- Yes – Meets Standard
- No – Does Not Meet Standard
- Unknown / Needs Review

**Notes:**

---

**Tag:**

- Operational  Maintenance  Review

**6. Accessible Features Are Easy to Find**

*(Washrooms, elevators, entrances, seating)*

**Observation Status:**

- Observed – Present
- Observed – Not Present
- Unknown
- Not Applicable

**Meets Standard:**

- Yes – Meets Standard
- No – Does Not Meet Standard
- Unknown / Needs Review

**Notes:**

---

**Tag:**

- Signage  Operational  Review

---

**OVERALL PATH OF TRAVEL NOTES**

*(Use this space to capture patterns, repeated issues, or standout strengths)*

---

---

---

---

## SECTION E1 — EXTERIOR ACCESS & ARRIVAL

*(Parking, drop-off, walkways, and approach to the building)*

---

### PURPOSE OF THIS SECTION

This section reviews how a member of the public arrives at the facility and moves from exterior areas to the entrance.

Focus on:

- Ease of arrival
  - Clear, usable routes
  - Common barriers caused by surface conditions, layout, or maintenance
- 

### EXTERIOR ACCESS CHECKLIST

For **each item, complete all fields.**

---

#### 1. Accessible Parking or Drop-Off Area Is Available (If Applicable)

*(Designated parking, curbside drop-off, or safe stopping area)*

**Observation Status:**

- Observed – Present
- Observed – Not Present
- Unknown
- Not Applicable

**Meets Standard:**

- Yes – Meets Standard
- No – Does Not Meet Standard
- Unknown / Needs Review

**Notes:**

---

**Tag:**

Maintenance  Operational  Signage  Capital  Review

---

**2. Parking or Drop-Off Area Is Clearly Identified**

*(Signs, markings, or obvious location)*

**Observation Status:**

- Observed – Present
- Observed – Not Present
- Unknown
- Not Applicable

**Meets Standard:**

- Yes – Meets Standard
- No – Does Not Meet Standard
- Unknown / Needs Review

**Notes:**

---

**Tag:**

Signage  Maintenance  Review

---

**3. Route From Parking / Drop-Off to Entrance Is Continuous**

*(No missing sidewalks, gaps, or unsafe crossings)*

**Observation Status:**

- Observed – Present
- Observed – Not Present
- Unknown
- Not Applicable

**Meets Standard:**

- Yes – Meets Standard
- No – Does Not Meet Standard
- Unknown / Needs Review

**Notes:**

---

**Tag:**

Maintenance  Capital  Review

---

**4. Exterior Walking Surface Appears Stable and Even**

*(No major cracks, potholes, loose gravel, or trip hazards- slip resistant)*

**Observation Status:**

- Observed – Present
- Observed – Not Present
- Unknown
- Not Applicable

**Meets Standard:**

- Yes – Meets Standard
- No – Does Not Meet Standard
- Unknown / Needs Review

**Notes:**

---

**Tag:**

Maintenance  Capital  Review

---

**5. Slopes, Ramps, or Curb Transitions Feel Manageable**

**Standard: slope 1 in 12 8.33%**

*(No sudden drops, steep sections, or awkward transitions)*

**Observation Status:**

- Observed – Present
- Observed – Not Present
- Unknown
- Not Applicable

**Meets Standard:**

- Yes – Meets Standard
- No – Does Not Meet Standard
- Unknown / Needs Review

**Notes:**

---

**Tag:**

- Maintenance  Capital  Review
- 

**6. Route Is Free of Seasonal or Temporary Barriers**

*(Snow piles, ice buildup, leaves, sand, construction materials)*

**Observation Status:**

- Observed – Present
- Observed – Not Present
- Unknown
- Not Applicable

**Meets Standard:**

- Yes – Meets Standard
- No – Does Not Meet Standard
- Unknown / Needs Review

**Notes:**

---

**Tag:**

- Maintenance  Operational  Review
- 

**7. Exterior Lighting Supports Safe Navigation (If Applicable)**

*(Approach and entry areas feel visible and safe)*

**Observation Status:**

- Observed – Present
- Observed – Not Present

- Unknown
- Not Applicable

**Meets Standard:**

- Yes – Meets Standard
- No – Does Not Meet Standard
- Unknown / Needs Review

**Notes:**

---

**Tag:**

- Maintenance  Capital  Review

---

**EXTERIOR ACCESS SUMMARY**

**Does the exterior arrival feel usable for most people?**

- Yes
- Mostly
- No
- Unsure

**Key Issues or Strengths Identified:**

---

---

---

## SECTION E2 — ENTRANCES & DOORS

*(Primary and secondary public entrances, vestibules, and door hardware)*

---

### PURPOSE OF THIS SECTION

This section reviews how people enter and exit the facility.

Focus on:

- Ease of locating entrances
  - Door usability
  - Clear, safe movement through vestibules and entry areas
- 

### ENTRANCES & DOORS CHECKLIST

For each item, complete all fields.

---

#### 1. Main Public Entrance Is Easy to Identify

*(Visible, clearly signed, not hidden or confusing)*

**Observation Status:**

- Observed – Present
- Observed – Not Present
- Unknown
- Not Applicable

**Meets Standard:**

- Yes – Meets Standard
- No – Does Not Meet Standard
- Unknown / Needs Review

**Notes:**

---

**Tag:**

- Signage  Operational  Capital  Review
- 

**2. Entrance Route Is Clear and Unobstructed**

*(No planters, mats, snow buildup, or clutter blocking access)*

**Observation Status:**

- Observed – Present  
 Observed – Not Present  
 Unknown  
 Not Applicable

**Meets Standard:**

- Yes – Meets Standard  
 No – Does Not Meet Standard  
 Unknown / Needs Review

**Notes:**

---

**Tag:**

- Maintenance  Operational  Review
- 

**3. Doorway Width Appears Sufficient for Mobility Devices**

**Standard:** 39 1/4 “

*(Practical judgment — no measurements required)*

**Observation Status:**

- Observed – Present  
 Observed – Not Present  
 Unknown  
 Not Applicable

**Meets Standard:**

- Yes – Meets Standard  
 No – Does Not Meet Standard  
 Unknown / Needs Review

**Notes:**

---

**Tag:**

Capital  Review

---

**4. Doors Can Be Opened Without Excessive Force**

*(Weight, closers, wind, or resistance- Tip: Make a fist to open the door)*

**Observation Status:**

- Observed – Present
- Observed – Not Present
- Unknown
- Not Applicable

**Meets Standard:**

- Yes – Meets Standard
- No – Does Not Meet Standard
- Unknown / Needs Review

**Notes:**

---

**Tag:**

Maintenance  Capital  Review

---

**5. Door Hardware Is Easy to Use**

*(Lever handles, push bars, accessible pulls)*

**Observation Status:**

- Observed – Present
- Observed – Not Present
- Unknown
- Not Applicable

**Meets Standard:**

- Yes – Meets Standard
- No – Does Not Meet Standard
- Unknown / Needs Review

**Notes:**

---

**Tag:**

- Maintenance  Capital  Review
- 

**6. Automatic Door Operators (If Present) Function Properly**

*(Buttons work, timing feels reasonable, clear approach)*

**Observation Status:**

- Observed – Present
- Observed – Not Present
- Unknown
- Not Applicable

**Meets Standard:**

- Yes – Meets Standard
- No – Does Not Meet Standard
- Unknown / Needs Review

**Notes:**

---

**Tag:**

- Maintenance  Operational  Capital  Review
- 

**7. Vestibule or Entry Space Allows Easy Maneuvering**

*(Room to stop, turn, and pass through doors)*

**Observation Status:**

- Observed – Present
- Observed – Not Present

- Unknown
- Not Applicable

**Meets Standard:**

- Yes – Meets Standard
- No – Does Not Meet Standard
- Unknown / Needs Review

**Notes:**

---

**Tag:**

- Capital  Review
- 

**8. Entry Mats or Flooring Are Secure and Flat**

*(No curling edges or slipping risk)*

**Observation Status:**

- Observed – Present
- Observed – Not Present
- Unknown
- Not Applicable

**Meets Standard:**

- Yes – Meets Standard
- No – Does Not Meet Standard
- Unknown / Needs Review

**Notes:**

---

**Tag:**

- Maintenance  Review

**ENTRANCES & DOORS SUMMARY**

**Do entrances feel usable and welcoming for most people?**

- Yes
- Mostly
- No
- Unsure

**Key Issues or Strengths Identified:**

---

---

---

## SECTION E3 — INTERIOR PATHS OF TRAVEL

*(Hallways, corridors, lobbies, and routes between public spaces)*

---

### PURPOSE OF THIS SECTION

This section reviews how people move through the interior of the facility once inside.

Focus on:

- Clear, continuous movement
  - Adequate space for mobility devices
  - Common interior barriers caused by layout, furniture, or operations
- 

### INTERIOR PATHS OF TRAVEL CHECKLIST

For each item, complete all fields.

---

#### 1. Interior Routes Are Continuous and Logical

*(No unexpected dead ends or barriers)*

**Observation Status:**

- Observed – Present
- Observed – Not Present
- Unknown
- Not Applicable

**Meets Standard:**

- Yes – Meets Standard
- No – Does Not Meet Standard
- Unknown / Needs Review

**Notes:**

---

**Tag:**

- Operational  Signage  Review
- 

**2. Path Width Appears Adequate for Comfortable Movement  
Standard: 39 1/4 "**

*(Wheelchairs, walkers, strollers can pass)*

**Observation Status:**

- Observed – Present  
 Observed – Not Present  
 Unknown  
 Not Applicable

**Meets Standard:**

- Yes – Meets Standard  
 No – Does Not Meet Standard  
 Unknown / Needs Review

**Notes:**

---

**Tag:**

- Capital  Review
- 

**3. Interior Flooring Is Stable and Even**

*(No loose tiles, curled edges, or sudden changes- slip resistant)*

**Observation Status:**

- Observed – Present  
 Observed – Not Present  
 Unknown  
 Not Applicable

**Meets Standard:**

- Yes – Meets Standard
- No – Does Not Meet Standard
- Unknown / Needs Review

**Notes:**

---

**Tag:**

- Maintenance  Review
- 

**4. Changes in Level Are Clearly Marked or Managed**

*(Ramps, handrails, or alternate routes where needed)*

**Observation Status:**

- Observed – Present
- Observed – Not Present
- Unknown
- Not Applicable

**Meets Standard:**

- Yes – Meets Standard
- No – Does Not Meet Standard
- Unknown / Needs Review

**Notes:**

---

**Tag:**

- Capital  Signage  Review
- 

**5. Corridors and Routes Are Free of Moveable Obstacles**

*(Furniture, storage, carts, equipment)*

**Observation Status:**

- Observed – Present
- Observed – Not Present

- Unknown
- Not Applicable

**Meets Standard:**

- Yes – Meets Standard
- No – Does Not Meet Standard
- Unknown / Needs Review

**Notes:**

---

**Tag:**

- Operational  Maintenance  Review
- 

**6. Interior Lighting Supports Safe Navigation**

*(No dark areas or harsh glare)*

**Observation Status:**

- Observed – Present
- Observed – Not Present
- Unknown
- Not Applicable

**Meets Standard:**

- Yes – Meets Standard
- No – Does Not Meet Standard
- Unknown / Needs Review

**Notes:**

---

**Tag:**

- Maintenance  Capital  Review
-

## 7. Wayfinding Cues Are Clear Within Interior Routes

*(Signs, visual cues, logical layout)*

### Observation Status:

- Observed – Present
- Observed – Not Present
- Unknown
- Not Applicable

### Meets Standard:

- Yes – Meets Standard
- No – Does Not Meet Standard
- Unknown / Needs Review

### Notes:

---

### Tag:

- Signage  Operational  Review

---

## INTERIOR PATH SUMMARY

### Do interior routes feel usable and intuitive?

- Yes
- Mostly
- No
- Unsure

### Key Issues or Strengths Identified:

---

---

---

## SECTION E4 — RAMPS & LEVEL CHANGES

*(Interior and exterior ramps, curb ramps, and changes in elevation)*

---

### PURPOSE OF THIS SECTION

This section reviews how changes in level are managed throughout the facility.

Focus on:

- Whether ramps or alternate routes exist where needed
  - Usability and safety from a practical, real-world perspective
  - Clear identification of level changes
- 

### RAMPS & LEVEL CHANGES CHECKLIST

For each item, complete all fields.

---

#### 1. Ramps or Alternate Routes Are Provided Where Needed

*(No required stairs without an alternative)*

**Observation Status:**

- Observed – Present
- Observed – Not Present
- Unknown
- Not Applicable

**Meets Standard:**

- Yes – Meets Standard
- No – Does Not Meet Standard
- Unknown / Needs Review

**Notes:**

---

**Tag:**

Capital  Review

---

**2. Ramp Slope Feels Manageable and Safe**

**Standard: 1 in 12 8.33%**

*(Not overly steep; feels comfortable to use)*

**Observation Status:**

- Observed – Present
- Observed – Not Present
- Unknown
- Not Applicable

**Meets Standard:**

- Yes – Meets Standard
- No – Does Not Meet Standard
- Unknown / Needs Review

**Notes:**

---

**Tag:**

Capital  Review

---

**3. Ramp Surface Appears Stable and Slip-Resistant**

*(No loose material, pooling water, or damage)*

**Observation Status:**

- Observed – Present
- Observed – Not Present
- Unknown
- Not Applicable

**Meets Standard:**

- Yes – Meets Standard
- No – Does Not Meet Standard
- Unknown / Needs Review

**Notes:**

---

**Tag:**

- Maintenance  Capital  Review
- 

**4. Handrails Are Provided Where Helpful**

*(Both sides where applicable; easy to grip)*

**Observation Status:**

- Observed – Present  
 Observed – Not Present  
 Unknown  
 Not Applicable

**Meets Standard:**

- Yes – Meets Standard  
 No – Does Not Meet Standard  
 Unknown / Needs Review

**Notes:**

---

**Tag:**

- Capital  Review
- 

**5. Ramp Landings Allow Safe Stopping and Turning**  
**Standard: 5' by the width of the ramp**

*(Space to pause, turn, or rest)*

**Observation Status:**

- Observed – Present  
 Observed – Not Present  
 Unknown  
 Not Applicable

**Meets Standard:**

- Yes – Meets Standard
- No – Does Not Meet Standard
- Unknown / Needs Review

**Notes:**

---

**Tag:**

- Capital  Review
- 

**6. Level Changes Are Visually Obvious**

*(Contrast, markings, or cues reduce trip risk)*

**Observation Status:**

- Observed – Present
- Observed – Not Present
- Unknown
- Not Applicable

**Meets Standard:**

- Yes – Meets Standard
- No – Does Not Meet Standard
- Unknown / Needs Review

**Notes:**

---

**Tag:**

- Signage  Maintenance  Review
- 

**RAMPS & LEVEL CHANGES SUMMARY**

**Do level changes feel safe and usable for most people?**

- Yes
- Mostly

- No
- Unsure

**Key Issues or Strengths Identified:**

---

---

---

## SECTION E5 — WASHROOMS

*(Public washrooms, universal washrooms, and change facilities)*

---

### PURPOSE OF THIS SECTION

This section reviews whether washrooms are usable, understandable, and functional for a wide range of users.

Focus on:

- Ability to locate washrooms
  - Ease of entry and use
  - Practical usability rather than technical measurements
- 

### WASHROOM ACCESSIBILITY CHECKLIST

For each item, complete all fields.

---

#### 1. Accessible or Universal Washroom Is Available (If Applicable)

*(Dedicated accessible stall or universal washroom)*

**Observation Status:**

- Observed – Present
- Observed – Not Present
- Unknown
- Not Applicable

**Meets Standard:**

- Yes – Meets Standard
- No – Does Not Meet Standard
- Unknown / Needs Review

**Notes:**

---

**Tag:**

Capital  Review

---

**2. Washroom Location Is Easy to Find**

*(Clear signage, logical placement)*

**Observation Status:**

- Observed – Present
- Observed – Not Present
- Unknown
- Not Applicable

**Meets Standard:**

- Yes – Meets Standard
- No – Does Not Meet Standard
- Unknown / Needs Review

**Notes:**

---

**Tag:**

Signage  Operational  Review

---

**3. Washroom Entrance Door Is Easy to Use**

*(Door width, swing, hardware, automatic features if present)*

**Observation Status:**

- Observed – Present
- Observed – Not Present
- Unknown
- Not Applicable

**Meets Standard:**

- Yes – Meets Standard
- No – Does Not Meet Standard
- Unknown / Needs Review

**Notes:**

---

**Tag:**

Maintenance  Capital  Review

---

**4. Interior Space Allows Comfortable Movement**

*(Turning, positioning, and maneuvering)*

**Observation Status:**

- Observed – Present
- Observed – Not Present
- Unknown
- Not Applicable

**Meets Standard:**

- Yes – Meets Standard
- No – Does Not Meet Standard
- Unknown / Needs Review

**Notes:**

---

**Tag:**

Capital  Review

---

**5. Toilet Height and Position Appear Usable**  
**Standard: 17" to 18" and a Transfer area 35 ½"**

*(Feels reasonable and accessible)*

**Observation Status:**

- Observed – Present
- Observed – Not Present
- Unknown
- Not Applicable

**Meets Standard:**

- Yes – Meets Standard
- No – Does Not Meet Standard
- Unknown / Needs Review

**Notes:**

---

**Tag:**

- Capital  Review
- 

**6. Grab Bars Are Present and Secure (If Applicable)**

*(Well placed, stable)*

**Observation Status:**

- Observed – Present
- Observed – Not Present
- Unknown
- Not Applicable

**Meets Standard:**

- Yes – Meets Standard
- No – Does Not Meet Standard
- Unknown / Needs Review

**Notes:**

---

**Tag:**

- Maintenance  Capital  Review
- 

**7. Sink, Faucet, and Dispensers Are Easy to Reach and Use**

*(Soap, towels, dryer)*

**Observation Status:**

- Observed – Present
- Observed – Not Present

- Unknown
- Not Applicable

**Meets Standard:**

- Yes – Meets Standard
- No – Does Not Meet Standard
- Unknown / Needs Review

**Notes:**

---

**Tag:**

- Maintenance  Capital  Review
- 

**8. Mirror and Accessories Are Positioned for Use**

*(Mirror height, shelves, hooks)*

**Observation Status:**

- Observed – Present
- Observed – Not Present
- Unknown
- Not Applicable

**Meets Standard:**

- Yes – Meets Standard
- No – Does Not Meet Standard
- Unknown / Needs Review

**Notes:**

---

**Tag:**

- Capital  Review
- 

**9. Emergency Call Feature Is Present (If Applicable)**

*(If provided, appears functional and visible)*

**Observation Status:**

- Observed – Present
- Observed – Not Present
- Unknown
- Not Applicable

**Meets Standard:**

- Yes – Meets Standard
- No – Does Not Meet Standard
- Unknown / Needs Review

**Notes:**

---

**Tag:**

- Maintenance  Capital  Review

---

**WASHROOM SUMMARY**

**Do washrooms feel usable for most people?**

- Yes
- Mostly
- No
- Unsure

**Key Issues or Strengths Identified:**

---

---

## SECTION E6 — SERVICE COUNTERS, SEATING & PUBLIC SPACES

*(Customer service desks, ticket counters, seating areas, viewing spaces, and waiting areas)*

---

### PURPOSE OF THIS SECTION

This section reviews how people interact with staff and use shared public spaces.

Focus on:

- Ability to approach and use service counters
  - Availability of seating options
  - Clear movement and comfort in public areas
- 

### SERVICE COUNTERS & PUBLIC SPACES CHECKLIST

For each item, complete all fields.

---

#### 1. Service Counters Are Easy to Approach

**Standard: top of the counter is not more than 34"**

*(Clear route, no barriers, adequate space in front)*

**Observation Status:**

- Observed – Present
- Observed – Not Present
- Unknown
- Not Applicable

**Meets Standard:**

- Yes – Meets Standard
- No – Does Not Meet Standard
- Unknown / Needs Review

**Notes:**

---

**Tag:**

- Operational  Maintenance  Capital  Review

**2. Counter Height or Interaction Area Appears Usable**

*(Lower section, alternate surface, or staff accommodation)*

**Observation Status:**

- Observed – Present  
 Observed – Not Present  
 Unknown  
 Not Applicable

**Meets Standard:**

- Yes – Meets Standard  
 No – Does Not Meet Standard  
 Unknown / Needs Review

**Notes:**

---

**Tag:**

- Capital  Operational  Review
- 

**3. Seating Options Are Available in Public Areas (If Applicable)**

*(Benches, chairs, rest areas)*

**Observation Status:**

- Observed – Present  
 Observed – Not Present  
 Unknown  
 Not Applicable

**Meets Standard:**

- Yes – Meets Standard  
 No – Does Not Meet Standard  
 Unknown / Needs Review

**Notes:**

---

**Tag:**

- Capital  Review

**4. Seating Allows Space for Mobility Devices**

*(Room for wheelchairs or walkers to sit with others)*

**Observation Status:**

- Observed – Present  
 Observed – Not Present  
 Unknown  
 Not Applicable

**Meets Standard:**

- Yes – Meets Standard  
 No – Does Not Meet Standard  
 Unknown / Needs Review

**Notes:**

---

**Tag:**

- Operational  Capital  Review
- 

**5. Viewing or Program Areas Provide Inclusive Options**

*(Accessible viewing, flexible seating)*

**Observation Status:**

- Observed – Present  
 Observed – Not Present  
 Unknown  
 Not Applicable

**Meets Standard:**

- Yes – Meets Standard  
 No – Does Not Meet Standard  
 Unknown / Needs Review

**Notes:**

---

**Tag:**

- Capital  Review

**6. Furniture Layout Supports Clear Movement**

*(Tables, chairs, stanchions do not block routes)*

**Observation Status:**

- Observed – Present  
 Observed – Not Present  
 Unknown  
 Not Applicable

**Meets Standard:**

- Yes – Meets Standard  
 No – Does Not Meet Standard  
 Unknown / Needs Review

**Notes:**

---

**Tag:**

- Operational  Maintenance  Review
- 

**7. Acoustic or Visual Conditions Support Communication**

*(Noise levels, glare, ability to hear or see staff)*

**Observation Status:**

- Observed – Present  
 Observed – Not Present  
 Unknown  
 Not Applicable

**Meets Standard:**

- Yes – Meets Standard  
 No – Does Not Meet Standard  
 Unknown / Needs Review

**Notes:**

---

**Tag:**

Operational  Capital  Review

**SERVICE & PUBLIC SPACE SUMMARY**

**Do service areas and public spaces feel usable and welcoming?**

- Yes
- Mostly
- No
- Unsure

**Key Issues or Strengths Identified:**

---

---

---

## SECTION E7 — WAYFINDING & SIGNAGE

*(Directional signs, identification signs, and information displays)*

---

### PURPOSE OF THIS SECTION

This section reviews whether people can find their way easily through the facility.

Focus on:

- Clear directions
  - Simple language and symbols
  - Consistent placement and visibility
- 

### WAYFINDING & SIGNAGE CHECKLIST

For each item, complete all fields.

---

#### 1. Entrances and Key Destinations Are Clearly Signed

**Standard:** Brail and tactile information. Sign are on the latch side 5' off the ground and 12" from the door

*(Washrooms, exits, service desks, elevators)*

**Observation Status:**

- Observed – Present
- Observed – Not Present
- Unknown
- Not Applicable

**Meets Standard:**

- Yes – Meets Standard
- No – Does Not Meet Standard
- Unknown / Needs Review

**Notes:**

---

**Tag:**

Signage  Operational  Review

---

**2. Directional Signs Are Easy to Read**

*(Clear text, symbols, contrast, size)*

**Observation Status:**

- Observed – Present
- Observed – Not Present
- Unknown
- Not Applicable

**Meets Standard:**

- Yes – Meets Standard
- No – Does Not Meet Standard
- Unknown / Needs Review

**Notes:**

---

**Tag:**

Signage  Review

---

**3. Sign Placement Is Consistent and Logical**

*(At decision points, along routes)*

**Observation Status:**

- Observed – Present
- Observed – Not Present
- Unknown
- Not Applicable

**Meets Standard:**

- Yes – Meets Standard
- No – Does Not Meet Standard
- Unknown / Needs Review

**Notes:**

---

**Tag:**

Signage  Operational  Review

---

**4. Accessible Features Are Clearly Identified**

*(Accessible entrances, washrooms, seating)*

**Observation Status:**

- Observed – Present
- Observed – Not Present
- Unknown
- Not Applicable

**Meets Standard:**

- Yes – Meets Standard
- No – Does Not Meet Standard
- Unknown / Needs Review

**Notes:**

---

**Tag:**

Signage  Review

---

**5. Temporary Signs Do Not Create Confusion or Barriers**

*(A-frames, event signs, notices)*

**Observation Status:**

- Observed – Present
- Observed – Not Present
- Unknown
- Not Applicable

**Meets Standard:**

- Yes – Meets Standard
- No – Does Not Meet Standard
- Unknown / Needs Review

**Notes:**

---

**Tag:**

- Operational  Maintenance  Review
- 

**6. Information Is Available in Clear, Plain Language**

*(Simple wording, minimal jargon)*

**Observation Status:**

- Observed – Present
- Observed – Not Present
- Unknown
- Not Applicable

**Meets Standard:**

- Yes – Meets Standard
- No – Does Not Meet Standard
- Unknown / Needs Review

**Notes:**

---

**Tag:**

- Signage  Policy  Review
- 

**WAYFINDING & SIGNAGE SUMMARY**

**Is wayfinding clear and easy to follow?**

- Yes
- Mostly
- No
- Unsure

**Key Issues or Strengths Identified:**

---

---

---

## SECTION E8 — EMERGENCY SYSTEMS

*(Alarms, exits, refuge areas, and emergency communication features)*

---

### PURPOSE OF THIS SECTION

This section reviews whether emergency systems and procedures are understandable and usable for a wide range of people.

Focus on:

- Clear exits and routes
  - Ability to receive emergency information
  - Practical usability during an emergency situation
- 

### EMERGENCY SYSTEMS CHECKLIST

For each item, complete all fields.

---

#### 1. Emergency Exits Are Clearly Identified

*(Visible exit signs, clear routes to exits)*

**Observation Status:**

- Observed – Present
- Observed – Not Present
- Unknown
- Not Applicable

**Meets Standard:**

- Yes – Meets Standard
- No – Does Not Meet Standard
- Unknown / Needs Review

**Notes:**

---

**Tag:**

Signage  Operational  Review

---

**2. Exit Routes Appear Clear and Unobstructed**

*(No stored items, locked doors, or barriers)*

**Observation Status:**

- Observed – Present
- Observed – Not Present
- Unknown
- Not Applicable

**Meets Standard:**

- Yes – Meets Standard
- No – Does Not Meet Standard
- Unknown / Needs Review

**Notes:**

---

**Tag:**

Maintenance  Operational  Review

---

**3. Exit Routes Appear Usable for People with Mobility Needs**

*(Level routes, ramps, or alternate exits where required)*

**Observation Status:**

- Observed – Present
- Observed – Not Present
- Unknown
- Not Applicable

**Meets Standard:**

- Yes – Meets Standard
- No – Does Not Meet Standard
- Unknown / Needs Review

**Notes:**

---

**Tag:**

Capital  Review

---

**4. Emergency Alarms Provide More Than One Type of Alert**

*(Audible and visual signals where applicable)*

**Observation Status:**

- Observed – Present
- Observed – Not Present
- Unknown
- Not Applicable

**Meets Standard:**

- Yes – Meets Standard
- No – Does Not Meet Standard
- Unknown / Needs Review

**Notes:**

---

**Tag:**

Capital  Review

---

**5. Emergency Instructions Are Easy to Understand**

*(Clear language, simple instructions, visible location)*

**Observation Status:**

- Observed – Present
- Observed – Not Present
- Unknown
- Not Applicable

**Meets Standard:**

- Yes – Meets Standard
- No – Does Not Meet Standard
- Unknown / Needs Review

**Notes:**

---

**Tag:**

- Signage  Policy  Review
- 

**6. Areas of Refuge or Safe Waiting Areas Are Identified (If Applicable)**

*(Clearly marked locations for assistance)*

**Observation Status:**

- Observed – Present
- Observed – Not Present
- Unknown
- Not Applicable

**Meets Standard:**

- Yes – Meets Standard
- No – Does Not Meet Standard
- Unknown / Needs Review

**Notes:**

---

**Tag:**

- Signage  Capital  Review
-

**7. Staff Procedures for Assisting During Emergencies Are Known (If Applicable)**

*(General awareness, posted guidance, or training reference)*

**Observation Status:**

- Observed – Present
- Observed – Not Present
- Unknown
- Not Applicable

**Meets Standard:**

- Yes – Meets Standard
- No – Does Not Meet Standard
- Unknown / Needs Review

**Notes:**

---

**Tag:**

- Policy  Operational  Review

---

**EMERGENCY SYSTEMS SUMMARY**

**Do emergency systems feel understandable and usable for most people?**

- Yes
- Mostly
- No
- Unsure

**Key Issues or Strengths Identified:**

---

---

---

## SECTION E9 — ADDITIONAL OBSERVATIONS

*(Items not captured elsewhere, unique facility features, or emerging concerns)*

---

### PURPOSE OF THIS SECTION

This section provides space to capture important accessibility observations that do not fit neatly into earlier sections.

Use this section to note:

- Facility-specific issues
  - Temporary conditions
  - Positive features or best practices
  - Barriers affecting sensory, cognitive, or environmental comfort
- 

### ADDITIONAL OBSERVATION ENTRIES

*(Repeat this table as needed)*

---

#### Observation

**Description of Observation:**

---

---

**Location (Area / Room / Route):**

---

---

**Observation Status:**

- Observed – Present  
 Observed – Not Present

- Unknown
- Not Applicable

**Meets Standard:**

- Yes – Meets Standard
- No – Does Not Meet Standard
- Unknown / Needs Review

**Notes / Context:**

---

---

**Tag:**

- Maintenance  Operational  Signage  Capital  Policy  Review

---

**Examples of Items to Capture Here (Optional Reference)**

- Glare or lighting issues
- Noise levels affecting communication
- Temperature or air flow comfort
- Door timing concerns
- Temporary program setups affecting access
- Seasonal accessibility challenges
- Strong positive accessibility features worth repeating elsewhere

*(Examples are for guidance only — do not limit observations)*

---

**ADDITIONAL NOTES**

---

---

---

---

## SECTION F — PHOTO REFERENCE (OPTIONAL)

*(Photos support observations but are not required)*

---

### PHOTO SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

Photos are optional, but encouraged where they help explain an observation.

If photos are taken, please email all photos to:

**mklooster@amherst.ca**

---

### EMAIL SUBJECT LINE

Please use the following format exactly:

**Accessibility Audit – [Facility Name] – [Audit Date]**

---

### EMAIL BODY FORMAT

Please include the following information clearly in the email text:

- **Facility Name:**
- **Audit Date:**
- **Photo Number or File Name:**
- **Location in Facility:** *(e.g., main entrance, washroom, lobby)*
- **What the Photo Shows:** *(brief description)*
- **Related Section:** *(e.g., E2 Entrances & Doors)*
- **Tag:** *(Maintenance / Operational / Signage / Capital / Policy / Review)*

This ensures photos can be correctly matched to the audit findings.

## PHOTO GUIDELINES

- Focus on features or barriers, not people
- Avoid capturing identifiable individuals
- Photos should support, not replace, written observations

## SECTION G — INDUSTRY STANDARD ACCESSIBILITY REFERENCE GUIDE

*(Reference only — guidance to support consistent observations)*

---

### PURPOSE OF THIS SECTION

This section provides commonly accepted industry standard accessibility best practices to support audit observations.

It exists to help answer:

*“Does this feature generally align with accepted accessibility best practices?”*

These references:

- Are not mandatory
  - Are not pass/fail rules
  - Are not legal or code enforcement
  - Support consistent understanding across technical and non-technical reviewers
- 

### GENERAL PRINCIPLES

Accessible features should be:

- **Easy to locate**
- **Easy to reach**
- **Easy to understand**
- **Usable independently and safely**

If a feature technically exists but is difficult to find, confusing, or hard to use, it may not meet best practice.

---

## SELECT INDUSTRY STANDARD REFERENCE GUIDES

*(Use as guidance only — not required measurements)*

---

### 1. Doors & Entrances

- **Clear opening width:** ~36 in (915 mm)
- **Door force:** Opens with light, reasonable effort
- **Automatic doors (if present):**
  - Provide adequate time (**3 seconds to open, door should remain open for 5 seconds and take 5 seconds to move from open to 12 degrees**).
  - Buttons are reachable and clearly marked

#### **Practical check:**

- Mobility devices pass comfortably
  - User does not need to rush or strain
- 

### 2. Interior & Exterior Routes

- Routes should be continuous and barrier-free
- Changes in level should be clearly managed
- Small thresholds should be minimal and smooth

#### **Practical check:**

- Wheels roll without lifting
  - No tripping or stopping points
- 

### 3. Ramps & Level Changes

- Slopes should feel gentle and manageable (8.33%)
- Landings should allow stopping and turning
- Handrails should be secure and easy to grip

**Practical check:**

- Comfortable to push or walk
  - Safe to stop without rolling back
- 

**4. Accessible Parking & Drop-Off Areas**

- Accessible spaces should:
  - Be close to accessible entrances
  - Include clear access aisles
  - Allow safe deployment of ramps or lifts
- Routes from parking to entrance should be continuous
- Accessible parking spaces require a minimum width of 8 feet (96 inches) for cars, while van-accessible spaces must be at least 11 feet wide. Both types require an adjacent, marked access aisle of at least 5 feet (60 inches) wide for wheelchair/mobility device transfer, which can be shared between two spaces

**Practical check:**

- Wheelchair ramp or lift can deploy
  - No curb or barrier without a ramped transition
- 

**5. Washrooms**

- Accessible or universal washrooms should:
  - Be easy to locate
  - Allow turning and positioning
  - Include reachable fixtures and secure grab bars

**Practical check:**

- User can enter, turn, and exit independently
- 

**6. Service Counters & Public Interaction Areas**

- Counters should provide:
  - A lower or alternate interaction surface (top of counter 34")

- Clear approach space
- Seating areas should include:
  - Space for mobility devices with companions

**Practical check:**

- User can approach and communicate comfortably
- 

## 7. Wayfinding & Signage

- Signs should:
  - Use clear text and symbols
  - Have good contrast
  - Be placed at decision points
- Where provided, tactile and braille signage supports:
  - Room identification
  - Key destinations (washrooms, exits)

**Practical check:**

- Sign is readable, understandable, and consistent
- 

## 8. Emergency Systems

- Fire alarms and alerts should:
  - Use both audible and visual signals
- Exit routes should:
  - Be clearly marked
  - Be usable by people with mobility needs
- Emergency instructions should be simple and visible

**Practical check:**

- Alerts can be seen and/or heard
- Exit route feels usable in an emergency

## USING “UNKNOWN / NEEDS REVIEW”

Select Unknown / Needs Review when:

- A feature exists but usability is unclear
- Technical confirmation may be required
- Further discussion is needed

This helps flag issues without slowing the audit process.

---

## FINAL REMINDER

This guide supports:

- Awareness
  - Consistency
  - Better planning over time
- 

## SECTION H — Facility Accessibility Summary

*(Summary of findings, suggested actions, and follow-up ownership)*

FACILITY: \_\_\_\_\_

### OVERALL ACCESSIBILITY IMPRESSION

- Generally Accessible – Most people can use the facility with little difficulty
- Accessible with Minor Barriers – Some improvements needed but access is generally possible
- Accessible with Moderate Barriers – Several areas limit independent or comfortable use
- Significant Accessibility Barriers Identified – Major improvements required for equitable access

### HIGH-LEVEL AREA REVIEW

Area	Works Well	Some Barriers	Major Barriers	Not Applicable
Exterior & Parking	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Building Entrances	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Interior Routes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ramps / Level Changes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Washrooms	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Public Spaces	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Wayfinding & Signage	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Emergency Systems	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

#### MOST IMPACTFUL BARRIERS IDENTIFIED

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

#### POSITIVE ACCESSIBILITY FEATURES

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**BARRIER TYPES IDENTIFIED**

- Maintenance (repairs, clearing obstacles)
- Operational (furniture layout, housekeeping)

- Signage / Wayfinding improvements
- Capital improvements (construction)

**PRIORITY OVERVIEW**

- High Priority Issues Present
- Medium Priority Issues Present
- Low Priority Improvements Identified

**ACTION POTENTIAL**

- Some barriers could be addressed through low-cost operational or maintenance changes
- Most barriers require planned capital improvements
- Further review needed before determining actions

**PROGRESS & FOLLOW-UP**

Previous Accessibility Audit Completed?  No  Yes – Year: \_\_\_\_\_

Since the last review, accessibility has:

- Improved significantly
- Improved somewhat
- Stayed about the same
- First audit of this facility

Next Recommended Review:

- Within 6 months
- Within 12 months
- As part of future renovation
- Other:  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Acknowledgement:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



# MEMO

**TO:** Accessibility, Inclusion, Diversity and Equity Committee  
**FROM:** Mallory Klooster, Manager, Community Well-Being  
**DATE:** Wednesday, February 11, 2026  
**RE:** **A.I.D.E Strategic Plan Progress to Date**

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Building on the annual report presented in November, staff are providing the Committee with a more detailed overview of ongoing initiatives and progress to date under the Accessibility, Inclusion, Diversity and Equity Strategic Plan.

**Attached: A.I.D.E Strategic Plan**



# Accessibility, Inclusion, Diversity & Equity, (A.I.D.E) Strategic Plan



2025-2030



# Land Acknowledgement

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We acknowledge that we are in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq People.

We celebrate 400+ years of African Nova Scotian descent.

We strive to foster a diverse community that values everything that makes us unique including our visible differences, such as race or gender expression, as well as our non-visible differences, such as gender identity and diversity of thought.

We are committed to equity, fairness and dignity for all.

# Mayor's Message

---



On behalf of the Town of Amherst, I am proud to introduce our newly combined Accessibility, Inclusion, Diversity and Equity, (AIDE) Plan. This plan reflects our unwavering commitment to building a community where every resident, visitor, and business feels valued, respected, and empowered to participate fully in all aspects of town life.

Previously, our Inclusion, Diversity, and Equity Plan and our Accessibility Plan were separate documents. By bringing them together, we recognize that the principles of IDE and accessibility are deeply connected – ensuring that Amherst is not only welcoming but also designed and structured to allow everyone to thrive.

This plan outlines our vision, goals, and concrete actions to create a more inclusive and accessible Amherst. It is the result of meaningful engagement with our community and a shared commitment from Council, staff, and residents to foster a town where barriers are removed, voices are heard, and diversity is celebrated.

As we move forward, we acknowledge that this work is ongoing. Inclusion, diversity, equity, and accessibility are not just policies but principles that must guide our everyday decisions and interactions. I invite each of you to join us in making Amherst a place where everyone belongs.

Sincerely,  
Rob Small  
Mayor, Town of Amherst



# Purpose

Amherst is becoming an increasingly diverse population which shapes and enriches the town. As we welcome all, we need to acknowledge that there are many forms of discrimination that can affect one's ability to participate in our community, from generations of systemic racism to facing physical barriers when trying to access our programs and services.

The Town of Amherst, in partnership with other levels of government and community organizations, have a pivotal role to play in eliminating inequalities and systemic racism in order to create a welcoming and inclusive community.

This Accessibility, Inclusion, Diversity and Equity (AIDE) Plan outlines our vision and goals over the next three to five years and will guide our work to bring equity, accessibility and anti-racism to the forefront of the Town's decision-making process to strengthen the health and wellbeing of Amherst.



# Vision

The Town of Amherst's vision is to be a healthy, prosperous, inclusive and environmentally sustainable community in which people of all ages, abilities, genders and cultures are engaged and proud to live, work and play.

We are committed to ensuring that all citizens have the opportunity to contribute and be valued. We believe in supporting diversity, inclusion and dignity for all citizens of our community.

We further seek to understand how we can be more responsive to the needs of the underrepresented groups of our community. We recognize that we need to create a space that is safe for their voices to be heard thus creating a community that is balanced, equitable and committed to ongoing review of our vision's objectives.



# Mission

We provide quality leadership, services, opportunities and resources for the benefit of our citizens, and in support of our growth and development of our community in a fair, equitable and transparent manner.



# Guiding Principles

Respect-Integrity-Collaboration-Accountability-Inclusivity-Evidence based decision Making-Sustainability.



# How Did We Create This Plan

---

The Town of Amherst Accessibility, and Inclusion Diversity and Equity committees, each created a strategic plan to guide the Amherst Town Council in making decisions related to accessibility, inclusion, diversity and equity. These strategic plans were adopted by Amherst Town Council in 2022 and 2023 respectively.

As we moved towards the development of a new combined plan for Accessibility Inclusion Diversity and Equity (AIDE) it became apparent that a review of the existing strategic plan goals would be required and further community consultation necessary to bring an updated combined plan forward.

Meetings were held with both committees to look at how best to combine the plans. We met with our community allies and members of underserved and underrepresented groups to guide our work. This included people from the African Nova Scotia community, Indigenous, 2SLGBTQIA+, new settlers, youth, seniors and persons with disabilities.

We also gathered feedback from a survey that was initially intended to inform our work around the new Amherst Police Department Strategy. This gave us insight into how marginalized groups feel about our policing services, systemic racism in the community, and procedures around dealing with hate crimes.

# Our Commitment

---

The Town of Amherst is aware of the need for reconciliation, the acknowledgement of the centuries long displacement and systemic racialization impacting persons of Indigenous and African NS descent.

We also understand that discrimination and bias exists towards individuals who live with disabilities, the 2SLGBTQIA+ and newcomer communities. We are committed to including those who are typically excluded, actively seeking input to hear all voices and identities in the community.

With the guidance of the Town of Amherst Social Equity Committee: Accessibility, and Inclusion, Diversity and Equity, we are committed to doing the necessary work, by growing strong relationships with underserved, underrepresented groups, gathering feedback, researching and revising relevant policies, creating actionable, achievable goals and adequately resourcing the work.





## Equity and Anti Racism Plan

Goals	Initiatives/ Actions	Indicators of Progress	Progress to Date
<p><b>Be the leader in the community known for Equity, Inclusion and Diversity</b></p>	<p>Ensure compliance with the NS Human Rights Act.</p> <p>Work to create a diverse municipal workforce.</p>	<p>Our policies and procedures will be updated to reflect a lens of equity and inclusion and accessibility.</p>	<p>AIDE principles are reflected in the People’s Strategy (Strategic Goal #6 – Policy Development and Compliance).</p>
<p><b>Owner/Lead</b></p>	<p>Ensure municipal services are equitable and accessible to all.</p>	<p>Elected officials and staff will embrace fairness, equity and operate with these principles each and every day.</p>	<p>The Marketing and Communications Strategy now includes a process to receive and respond to complaints, supported by the E11 online form and website.</p>
<p>Chief Administrative Officer</p>	<p>Develop, implement and promote anti racism policies and procedures including ways to hear complaints and resolve disputes.</p>	<p>The community will look to the Town as a role model in AIDE.</p>	<p>Training for elected officials has been delivered to build awareness and leadership.</p>
<p>Mayor and Council</p>			<p>Inclusive language and practices are guiding new strategic priorities.</p>
<p>Community Living Department</p>	<p>Provide educational opportunities for elected officials and employees on respect, cultural awareness and the promotion and protection of human rights.</p>		<p>A review of municipal buildings is underway to assess accessibility.</p>
<p>Human Resources</p>			



Goals	Initiatives/ Actions	Indicators of Progress	Progress to Date
-------	-------------------------	---------------------------	------------------

**To use Equity, Anti-Racist and Accessible language on all public documents**

**Owner/Lead**

Marketing Strategist

Community Well-Being Manager

Director of Community Living

Communications Officer

Marketing Staff

Ensure that all new public documents, website content, social media posts, publications, policies and procedures will be developed through an accessible and equitable lens.

Existing documents will undergo a review to ensure we are updating documents to reflect our vision.

We will ensure 100% of new content meets this standard using readability tools.

Training will be provided to content creators to ensure successful implementation.

Existing documents reviewed with an equitable and accessible lens.

The following trainings have been provided to our Marketing and Communications Team:

- Accessible Events
- Plain Language
- Using an Equitable Lens
- Accessible Social Media
- Engaging with Persons with Disabilities

Ways that marketing team ensure accessibility:

- All new video content has subtitles
- Where appropriate, social media posts have ALT Text
- Easy to read fonts
- Plain language used on public posts
- Live Streaming of our Events



Goals	Initiatives/ Actions	Indicators of Progress	Progress to Date
<p><b>Increase Community Engagement</b></p> <p><b>Owner/Lead</b></p> <p>Community Living Department</p>	<p>Over the next 12-24 months we will increase opportunities for engagement by launching an outreach campaign, round tables, to gather public information with diverse groups.</p> <p>Build stronger connections with youth, the 2SLGBTQIA+ and newcomer community.</p>	<p>Organize and launch an outreach campaign to understand how to improve our engagement strategies.</p> <p>Through improving our engagement strategies we will increase our participation in community consultations, increase feedback from surveys</p> <p>Create volunteer opportunities that build a sense of belonging and support relationship building in our community.</p> <p>Build a community committee of volunteers from all diverse sectors of our community to further our Municipal Strategic plans.</p>	<p>The Demographic Strategy Newcomer Roundtable was launched to have evidence based decision making embedded into the development of the Strategy, with plans to add 1–2 additional sessions and expand Pride-focused engagement.</p> <p>A Volunteer Procedure has been developed to support inclusive and consistent volunteer practices.</p> <p>Town of Amherst is now on the “Just Serve” Volunteer Portal. A launch to partners and community members to follow.</p> <p>The next phase within the Volunteer Sector will be building a Community Committee, bringing together volunteers from diverse sectors to support the Town’s Municipal Strategic Plan.</p>



Goals	Initiatives/ Actions	Indicators of Progress	Progress to Date
-------	-------------------------	---------------------------	------------------

**Work to build an Equitable and Inclusive Community**

**Owner/Lead**

Community Living Department

We will continue to increase our promotion, respect, understanding and appreciation of our community’s diversity by organizing annual workshops, offering educational resources on equity and anti racism.

Embed social connection and sense of belonging into decisions about policies and programming.

Partner with community groups and organizations to help create meaningful opportunities that celebrate diverse backgrounds and cultures.

Support a culture of safety and inclusion for all community members.

Welcoming Week (YReach) Event to be built upon under the Demographic Strategic Plan to support newcomer inclusion.

Grant-supported engagement with the Indian community, including Diwali celebrations, led by Active Living Coordinator.

Collaboration with Indigenous Elders to support the naming of a municipal park.

Funding applications submitted to expand reconciliation and inclusion initiatives.

Partnership with the Truth and Reconciliation Committee at the Catholic Church and Indigenous community to support the return of the Mawio’mi event.



## Accessibility Plan

Since 2022, the Town of Amherst and the Accessibility Advisory Committee have been working tirelessly to identify, prevent and eliminate barriers to people with disabilities in municipal programs, services, initiatives and facilities.

We are taking the steps to address discrimination, racism and inequalities in our community as these can limit access to our services, education, employment, information and hinder our residents ability to navigate our buildings and town.



### **Successes to date:**

#### **Training:**

Training was offered to summer staff to ensure our park programs were more accessible to children with different needs. Safer Spaces training which strives to build and increase awareness of the 2SLGBTQIA+ experience, raises awareness of importance of pronouns, explores privilege and addresses how we can be allies. Physical and Health Training was also offered and focused on behaviors and technique, as well as adapting activities.

Staff attended multiple training opportunities for staff on accessibility and equity offered through the Association of Municipal Administrators Nova Scotia.

#### **Active Living Strategy:**

An Active Living Strategy was developed in 2024 where fostering equity, access, inclusion and safety were the key components in planning a framework to ensure an active and welcoming community for all.

## Community Support Grants

Over \$20,000.00 was awarded to community groups and organizations to help with accessible projects including Fundy Winds to develop accessible trails, Autism Nova Scotia to help with community programming, the 50 + Club to improve the parking lot to be more accessible as well as the Cumberland County Museum to update displays to be more accessible.

Goals	Initiatives/Actions	Progress to Date
<p><b>Increase Inclusive and Accessible community resources and services</b></p> <p><b>Owner/Lead</b></p> <p>Director of Community Living</p> <p>Community Well Being Manager</p>	<p>Through community engagement, services will be created that fit the needs of all residents and visitors of Amherst.</p> <p>All existing services to be reviewed for being equitable, inclusive and accessible.</p> <p>New services will be introduced that increase sense of belonging (Volunteerism).</p> <p>Create reporting/ monitoring system for incidents of accessibility, hate, racism, discrimination and accessibility issues.</p>	<p>Ongoing community engagement to ensure diverse voices are reflected in municipal initiatives.</p> <p>Accessible playground revitalization and park improvements designed to support inclusive recreation, including culturally specific groups (e.g., Cricket field at Winston Park).</p> <p>Growth of the municipal volunteer base through expanded and inclusive engagement efforts.</p>

Goals	Initiatives/Actions	Progress to Date
<p><b>Improve service delivery for residents</b></p> <p><b>Owner/Lead</b></p> <p>Chief Administrative Officer</p> <p>Community Living Team</p>	<p>Improve service delivery by educating staff through ongoing awareness and training programs.</p> <p>Increase knowledge and understanding of accessibility, equity, human rights, disability rights and accessibility barriers in our community.</p> <p>Explore new awareness and training opportunities for staff, senior management and Council.</p>	<p>A.I.D.E Training Manual developed, offering both internal and public training opportunities to build accessibility, inclusion, diversity, and equity knowledge across staff and the community.</p>
<p><b>Improve program delivery</b></p> <p>Community Living Department</p>	<p>Deliver training to all administrative and forward facing staff, including, event staff and summer students on accessibility issues and barriers to participation.</p>	<p>Active Living Summer Staff Training at Camp Tidnish delivered to understand accessibility needs in camps.</p> <p>Front counter improvements implemented to enhance accessibility and service for all visitors.</p>
<p><b>Ensure events are accessible to everyone</b></p> <p>Community Living Department</p>	<p>Continue to improve accessibility of public events hosted by the town by planning events with an equitable, anti-racism and accessibility lens, including location, event delivery and participation.</p> <p>Planning will have culture considerations as well as consider the needs of persons with disabilities including, but not limited to, having adequate accessible event parking, accessible portable toilets and, when possible, places to rest from sensory overwhelming environments.</p>	<p>Ongoing Initiatives</p> <p>Continue to improve accessibility and inclusivity of public events, applying an equity, anti-racism, and accessibility lens to all aspects of planning and delivery.</p> <p>Event planning considers cultural needs and accessibility, including accessible parking, portable toilets, and quiet or sensory-friendly spaces when possible.</p>



# Information & Communication

**Successes to date:**

**Delivery of Communication:**

Staff attended Accessible Communications regional training on digital communications and plain language.

**Website Re-Development:**

The Town of Amherst recently completed a website re-development project, which included making improvements for accessibility.

**Information:**

Community Well Being team exploring different platforms to help information be more accessible to the public on events and activities.

Goals	Initiatives/Actions	Owner/Lead	Progress to Date
<p><b>Ensure that all new public documents, website content, social media posts, publications, policies and procedures will be developed through an accessible and equitable lens</b></p>	<p>We will track and aim for 100% of new content to meet this standard using readability tools.</p>	<p>Community Living Department</p>	<p>Ongoing Initiatives</p> <p>See Above</p>
	<p>Training provided to content creators to ensure successful implementation.</p>	<p>Marketing Strategist</p>	
<p><b>Existing documents will undergo a review to ensure we are updating documents to reflect our vision</b></p>	<p>Existing documents will be revised where necessary.</p>	<p>Chief Administrative Officer</p> <p>Marketing Strategist</p> <p>Staff</p>	<p>Ongoing Initiative</p>

Goals	Initiatives/Actions	Owner/Lead	Progress to Date
<b>Improve signage to meet provincial standards</b>	<p>Implementing signage consistent with accessibility best practice.</p> <p>Prioritize having signage where necessary and appropriate.</p>	<p>Community Living Staff</p> <p>Operations</p>	<p>Wayfinding and signage improvements, will continue to be implemented based on accessibility and inclusion reviews.</p> <p>Wayfinding signs are currently being installed on trail systems.</p>
<b>Evaluate how we communicate to our external partners</b>	<p>Develop a comprehensive communications plan that identifies strategies on how to communicate to and engage with the public.</p> <p>Seek input from equity deserving groups, persons with disabilities and newcomers.</p>	Marketing Strategist	Focus groups conducted to inform a comprehensive marketing and communications plan, gathering input from equity-deserving groups, persons with disabilities, and newcomers to improve public engagement strategies.



**Successes to date:**

**Improvement of Town Sidewalks:**

\$145,000 for sidewalk improvements 2023/24/25. All the sidewalk improvement projects included the installation of Tactile warning surface indicator plates.

February 24, 2025 Council approved amendments to the Sidewalk/Curb Construction Policy as part of the Accessibility Strategy. This change was recommended by the Accessibility Committee.

## Active Transportation:

Currently, the Town of Amherst partially funds the Cumberland County Transportation Society bus system. The transportation society has fully accessible buses that run daily throughout Cumberland County and the Town of Amherst.

Goals	Initiatives/Actions	Owner/Lead	Progress to Date
<b>Improve Pedestrian Infrastructure</b>	<p>We will enhance connectivity in the community by improving pedestrian infrastructure including:</p> <p>Sidewalks: replacing the existing brick pavers with concrete.</p> <p>Installation of tactile warning plates.</p> <p>Prioritize safety of pedestrian infrastructure by investigating and making recommendations for appropriate lighting and benches to rest where possible.</p>	<p>Operations CAO</p>	<p>Currently underway: Enhancing community connectivity through improvements to pedestrian infrastructure, including replacing brick sidewalks with concrete and installing tactile warning plates for accessibility.</p> <p>Accessibility reviews will highlight pedestrian safety, including recommendations for appropriate lighting and resting areas such as benches where possible.</p>
<b>Enhance snow removal practices through consultation with outside agencies such as CNIB</b>	<p>Prioritize snow clearance at public buildings and municipally managed parking areas.</p>	<p>Operations</p>	<p>CNIB is presenting to A.I.D.E Committee on their SnoWay Campaign which promotes shared responsibility for keeping paths of travel clear and accessible</p>
<b>Continue to improve Active Transportation opportunities by reviewing accessibility of trails and sidewalks</b>	<p>Review current Active Transportation strategy, continue to enhance AT opportunities.</p>	<p>Operations</p>	<p>Ongoing Initiatives.</p> <p>See Information and Communication Goal: Improve signage to meet provincial standards</p>

**Increase opportunities for citizens to move throughout the community barrier free**

Determine feasibility of an accessible community transit system.

Council  
CAO  
Staff

Ongoing Initiative



## Education

### Initiatives/Actions

### Indicators of Progress

### Owner/Lead

### Progress to Date

**Continue to grow partnerships with schools and education centres at all levels to offer supports where needed**

Support in preventing and removing barriers to accessing education.  
  
Inclusion of students in community based cultural events such as, the Mawio'mi and pride events.

Community Living Department

Paid staff and student volunteers support initiatives and are included in community- based cultural events.

**Provide training and opportunities for accessibility, equity and anti-racism**

Training and get staff involved in conversation about how equity, racism and accessibility impact their work.

Community Living Department

A.I.D.E Fall Training Manual has been created and will be updated to provide more current training opportunities.

**Work to ensure Community Safety**

Support community initiatives such as neighborhood watch, provide training in senior scooter and crosswalk safety.

Police  
  
Community Living Department

Videos have been created and shared on senior scooter safety. Crosswalk safety videos are being planned with Amherst Youth Town Council in the Spring.



# Employment

## Successes to date:

### Human Resources:

We implemented the Employment Equity Policy in February 2024. Over the past two years, we have conducted a comprehensive review of all HR policies to include inclusive language.

All job postings now include language around needing accommodations, equal opportunity and identifying protected groups. We have also eliminated bias from job postings.

We offer flexible work options and accommodations as required and have adopted a Flexible Workplace Policy.

Initiatives/Actions	Indicators of Progress	Owner/Lead	Progress to Date
<b>Diversify recruitment methods</b>	Advertise jobs through diverse networks and community organizations.	Human Resources	These initiatives are supported through the People's Strategy (Strategic Goal #1 – Workforce Planning and Talent Attraction)
	Create hiring committee with equitable review of resumes.	CAO	
<b>Promote Amherst as an inclusive and diverse workforce</b>	Provide support and accommodations where necessary.	Human Resources	These initiatives are supported through the People's Strategy -(Strategic Goal #3 Employee Engagement and Retention and Goal #4 Equity, Diversity and Inclusion)
	Create team building and a welcoming atmosphere.	CAO	
	Ensure all abilities are recognized and celebrated.	Staff	
<b>Review of policies and procedures</b>	Continue to examine policies through a lens of accessibility and equity.	Human Resources	These initiatives are supported through the Peoples Strategy (Strategic Goal #4 Equity, Diversity and Inclusion )
	Create anti-discrimination policies and mechanisms for dealing with issues.	CAO Staff	



# Built Environment

## Successes to date:

### Town Hall:

Replacement of the ramp at Town Hall to current standards -approx. - \$45,000 Addition of handrails at Town Hall entrances- approx. - \$5,000 Ensuring new reception desk is at proper height.

### Robb's Complex & Trail System:

\$21,000 for a new trailer groomer. The new groomer attachment can bury stones, remove surface vegetation, breakup clumps of hard packed soil, fill in holes / washouts, and leave behind a levelled surface layer with a single pass of the tractor. The attachment will also be used to maintain the foul lines and warning tracks at the Robb's Complex. The groomer has improved operational efficiency and accessibility of our trail system. 2023.

### Stadium Platform:

To allow individuals who use wheelchairs or other mobility devices to have access to view the ice surface over the dasher boards during an ice event, the Facilities Department at the Town of Amherst built a \$2,000 10" high raised platform. The ramp can be moved and stored until needed. This project was completed as of September 2023.

### Raised Garden Beds:

Town of Amherst provided \$5,000 to the Amherst Community Garden to build accessible raised garden beds. 2023.

### Accessible Playgrounds:

Over the past several months Town staff have connected with like-minded organizations and committees to discuss accessible playground planning, design, cost and inclusivity. Playground consultation was conducted with Camp Tidnish, the Parrsboro Playground Committee and the Town of Westville. Staff also issued a public survey for parents, caregivers and those with disabilities in the Town of Amherst to gain insight and understanding on how to make our play spaces accessible and inclusive for all. Terms of reference for an external Accessible Playground Committee has been developed. Council approved \$200,000 for the construction of a fully accessible playground and a work plan has been developed to move this work forward.

Initiatives/Actions	Indicators of Progress	Owner/Lead	Progress to Date
<b>Review emergency management and building evacuation plan with a lens of accessibility in mind</b>	A new emergency management and building evacuation plan is written with an equitable and accessible lens.	CAO Safety Committee	CWB Manager, in collaboration with the Facilities Manager, updating Emergency Management and Building Evacuation Plan designed with an equitable and accessible lens.
<b>Conduct built environment assessments</b>	Continue to assess areas of accessibility to provide recommendations to council on improvements.	Operations CAO Council Staff	Staff to begin Accessibility Reviews for the Built Environment on 5 Town owned buildings.
<b>Improve ability to provide barrier free participation in events</b>	Invest in infrastructure to host inclusive and accessible signature events which will attract tourists and newcomers.	Mayor/Council CAO Operations Community Living Staff	Review and investments on infrastructure to support 55+ Games is underway.
<b>Improve access to safe, affordable and accessible housing</b>	Support organizations that develop affordable and accessible housing.	Council CAO	United Way Maritimes, The River Philip Foundation, and The Shaw Group have partnered on a new housing community called The Groves at Hillsdale in Amherst.
<b>Investigate &amp; make recommendation on the establishment of an Accessible Playground</b>	<p>Review parks and greenspace to evaluate usage and accessibility to accommodate growth and changing needs of the community.</p> <p>Consult community members with lived experience to gain insight and input on what should be included in the playground.</p> <p>Begin fundraising initiatives: community outreach, grants.</p>	CAO Operations Community Living	<p>Parks and greenspace review and community consultations with lived experience have been completed to inform playground planning.</p> <p>Fundraising initiatives, including community outreach and grant applications, have now begun.</p>

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**Increase  
partnerships in  
Accessibility**

Work with  
community partners  
to assist them with  
grant writing.

Advise on how  
community partners  
can become more  
accessible.

**Community Well  
Being Staff**

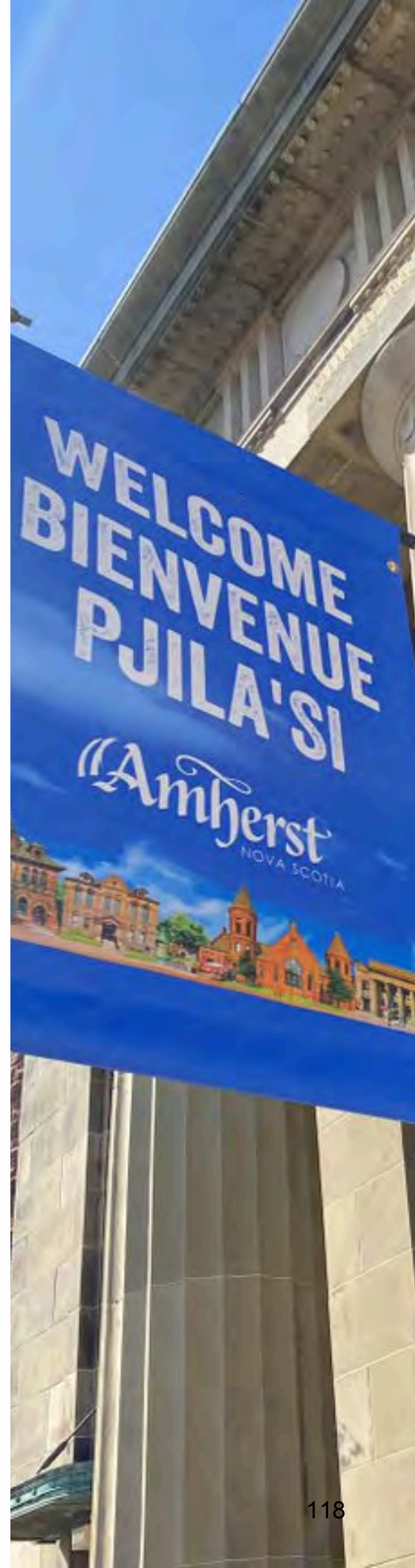
CWB Manager has been  
assisting the Culture,  
Heritage and History  
Community Group in  
finding and writing  
grants.


Executive Directors of  
Community  
Organizations as well as  
Amherst Regional High  
School Staff have been  
given tutorial on Grant  
Connect Program located  
at the library. The  
program is funded by the  
Town.



# Who is Responsible for Implementing?

- **Amherst Town Council:**  
Recognize the importance of implementing this plan and seek adequate funding to allow our municipality to meet the requirements under Nova Scotia's Accessibility and Anti-Racism Acts.
- **CAO/Staff:**  
Ensure the commitments outlined in the AIDE Plan are integrated into all municipal practices.
- **Accessibility, Inclusion, Diversity and Equity Committee:**  
Review this AIDE Plan on an annual basis as required by the Accessibility and Anti-Racism Act and update as required. The committees review the Municipal Accessibility Report Cards annually and report on progress toward meeting the commitments outlined in this plan.
- **Director of Community Living/Community Well-Being Manager:**  
Guide the work of the AIDE Committee, book meetings, prepare and distribute agendas and minutes, assist the chairperson in leading the meetings, manage recruitment for the committee when necessary. Act as a liaison with the Accessibility, Inclusion, Diversity and Equity Committee and the Amherst Town Council.
- **Human Resources:**  
Ensure all employee and hiring policies, procedures comply with Nova Scotia Human Rights Act and are reviewed and revised using an equitable, anti-racism and accessibility lens.





# How We Will Measure And Evaluate?

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- Develop a communications pathway that includes a emailing/ mailing list of persons who are interested in the ongoing work the committee is doing, to promote the work that is being done, and ask for feedback.
- Host regular information sharing sessions on the work of the committee and ensure underserved/underrepresented and diverse communities are invited.
- Establish a process of inquiry/complaint that is reviewed by the CAO and senior staff to respond to these inquiries.
- Community participation to be tracked and reviewed by the committee and council where required.
- Feedback to be gathered in various forms. The manner in which it's collected will be based on community preference.
- Equity Impact Assessments and Evaluation tool to be used when creating and reviewing policies, procedures, programs and services.



# Key Partners

The Town of Amherst has many community allies and partners.

These include:

- The Cumberland African Nova Scotia Association
- Autumn House
- Bridge Adult Service Centre
- Maggie’s Place
- Cumberland YMCA
- Lilac Place (Resource Centre for Women)
- Sexual Health Centre
- Schools Plus
- Cumberland Housing and Homelessness Association
- Cumberland Restorative Justice Society
- Cobequid Housing Authority
- Mental Health and Addictions
- Autism NS
- Senior Safety program
- Amherst 50+ club
- Spring Street Academy
- The Nova Scotia Community College
- Y Reach
- West Highlands Elementary
- Amherst Regional High School
- Amherst and Area Multi-Cultural Society
- After the School Bell
- Amherst Food Assistance Program
- Cumberland County Transportation Society
- Cumberland Adult Education
- Cumberland Early Intervention Program
- Cumberland Pride
- Indigenous Affairs
- In the Works
- E.B. Chandler Junior High



# Conclusion

We understand this plan is a living document and as our population continues to grow and age, new issues may arise. We will continue towards meeting the accessibility goals by 2030 as well as advancing equity and addressing systemic racism to improve community well-being.

A young girl with dark hair and a bright pink shirt is smiling. She has a colorful rainbow face painting on her right cheek. The background is slightly blurred, showing other people at what appears to be an outdoor event.

# Glossary

A Glossary of terms has been developed in an effort to promote understanding and clarify the terms that are contained in the strategy. It is recognized and understood that these definitions may change over time but will form a foundation for understanding in the current document.

**Accessibility:** Accessibility involves removing the barriers faced by individuals with a variety of disabilities (which can include but not limited to physical, sensory, cognitive, learning, mental health) and the various barriers (including attitudinal and systemic) that impede an individual's ability to participate in social, cultural, political and economic life. Disabilities can be temporary or permanent. As we age our abilities change and therefore an accessible society is one designed to include everyone and be fluid over time.

**Anti-Racism** involves actively opposing racism by advocating for changes in political, economic, and social life. It includes understanding one's own privilege, challenging internalized racism, and speaking out against racism when it is seen.

**An anti-racist person or organization** goes a step further than simply stating they are anti-racist. These individuals and organizations work to understand their own privilege, challenge their own internalized racism and call out racism when they see it impacting others.

**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."

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

# Glossary



**Diversity:** Vancouver's A Healthy City for All (2014) describes diversity as a term that is often confused for race or culture when in fact it should be used to consider the number of interlocking ways that people are disadvantaged and mistreated, and thus how people from various and marginalized groups or communities feel comfortable, safe and able to access their community spaces and institutions (City of Vancouver, 2014)

**Equity:** Fairness, impartiality, even-handedness. A distinct process of recognizing differences within groups of individuals and using this understanding to achieve substantive equity in all aspects of a person's life (Government of Canada, 2019)

**Inclusion:** Acknowledging and valuing people's differences so as to enrich social planning, decision making and quality of life for everyone. In an inclusive Municipality, we each have a sense of belonging, acceptance, and are recognized as valued, contributing members of society. Real inclusion takes place when those already included in the mainstreams learn from those who are excluded and initiate change (City for All Women Institute, 2015)

**Institutional Racism:** Policies, practices and procedures that work better for white people than people of color, often intentionally or inadvertently (National League of Cities, 2017)

**Intersectionality:** The intersection, or crossover, of our many identities affect how each of us experiences the Municipality. The intersections occur within a context of connected systems and structures of power (e.g., laws, policies, state governments, other political and economic unions, religious institutions and media (City for all Women, 2015)

**Marginalization:** Refers to a long-term, structural process of systemic discrimination that creates a class of disadvantaged minorities. These groups become permanently confined to the margins of society; their status is continually reproduced because of various dimensions of exclusion, particularly in the labor market, but also from full and meaningful participation in society (Province of Ontario, 2017)

# Glossary



**Oppression** is when one group benefits at the expense of another, using power and privilege.

**Plain Language:** Conversational communication that makes sense to the intended audience. The goal of plain language is to communicate so clearly the intended audience can easily find what they need, understand what they find, and use the information ([plainlanguagenetwork.org/](http://plainlanguagenetwork.org/)).

**Privilege:** The experience of freedoms, rights, benefits, advantages, access and or opportunities afforded to members of a dominant group in a society or in a given context (City of All Women Institute, 2015)

**Race:** A social construct that artificially divides people into distinct groups based on characteristics such as physical appearance (particularly color), ancestral heritage, ethnic classification, and the social, economic and political needs of a society at a given period of time. Racial categories subsume ethnic groups (Portland Metropolitan Region, 2017)

**Racism** is when people treat others unfairly because of their race, either personally or through unfair practices in organizations.

**Racialization:** A process of delineation of group boundaries and of allocation of persons within these boundaries by primary reference to (supposedly) inherent and/or biological (usually phenotypical) characteristics (Province of Ontario, 2017)

**Racial Equity:** Closing the gap so that race does not predict one's success, while also improving outcomes for all (National League of Cities, 2017)

**Structural, Institutional or systemic racism:** When institutions or systems create or maintain racial inequity, often as a result of hidden institutional biases in policies, practices and procedures that privilege some groups and disadvantage others (Province of Ontario, 2017)

**Systemic racism** refers to policies and practices within institutions that unintentionally exclude or promote certain groups.