



# houdinidesign ARCHITECTS

**Accessibility Action Plan**  
**Prepared for**  
**The Kentville Accessibility**  
**Advisory Committee**

**Kentville**  
A BREATH OF FRESH AIR

**Submitted by**  
**houdinidesign ARCHITECTS**  
**March 5, 2021**

Sledge Hockey Player: Hannah Corkum  
Photo: Shelley Corkum-Bezanson  
Mural: Phantom Effects Centennial Arena

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Accessible Sports, Cavert Lakes, UK

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KCA student, Grade 7



KCA student, Grade 5

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## INTRODUCTION

### 1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Nova Scotia has the highest rate of people with disabilities in Canada, nearly one person in three. There are different types of disabilities which include: physical, visual, hearing, mental health, intellectual and learning disabilities. The research and recommendations for the Accessibility Action Plan to address universal accessibility improvements for the Town of Kentville attempt to include the spectrum and experiences of disabilities. We also examined diversity and inclusion in relation to accessibility issues, and make recommendations leading to impactful changes in the local culture and the social environment.

The research and Citizen Engagement strategy for this report took place during the Covid19 global pandemic, which further heightened access and equity issues for citizens. From the people we connected with, we heard that accessibility issues were exacerbated due to isolation, lack of transportation, and increased poverty, all of which further affected mental and physical health. National research indicates that women in particular have been the hardest hit by Covid19's impact. Results of Citizen Engagement are peppered throughout this report with reference to Actions; full engagement results can be reviewed in the Appendix.

We would like to commend the Town of Kentville and its Accessibility Advisory Committee on scanning its community, infrastructure and assets at this time as the Province of Nova Scotia begins its work towards 2030 Access by Design: Achieving an Accessible Nova Scotia with its first work of developing standards. For this report, we utilize standards already set by the Government of Canada in the Accessible Canada Act, and the Rick Hansen Foundation Accessibility Certification built environment standards.

Accessibility is a human right: denying or making access difficult, the equal rights of a person are denied. The first step towards achieving accessibility goals, as identified by Access by Design, is Awareness and Capacity Building about the rights of persons with disabilities and barriers to participation.



Inclusive Design - Educational Facility for the Blind Kindergarten, Pattaya, Thailand, Architect Creative Crew



Melgita't Women Drummers, NSCC Kingstec

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY (CONT.)

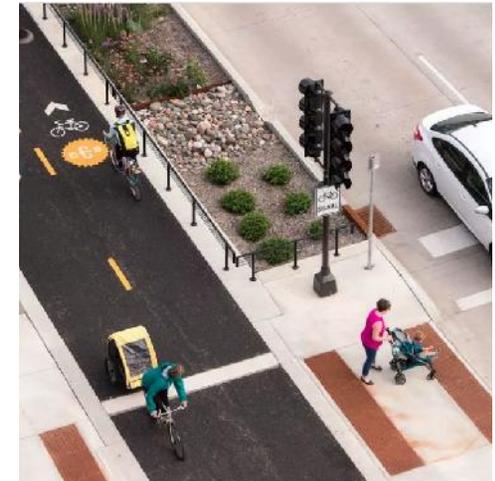
Often in Nova Scotia we get stuck in the old ways of doing things, which are rooted in patriarchal, colonial, ableist mindsets and structures. Rural Nova Scotia tends to still hold fast to this culture, with a reputation of being resistant to change. Change, however, is happening: environmental and climate change, social and political movements, technology innovation, global health crisis, economic, food and housing insecurities. We cannot not just respond to changes, but need to envision the change we want to be, plan for it and act accordingly, with the goal of a sustainable, progressive, equitable future for all.

Kentville can do this with citizen support and can become that ‘Breath of Fresh Air’ as a well-known destination attracting more positivity, more innovation, more diversity and always inclusive. Kentville should aim very high and then exceed the expectations through this work, starting with awareness and capacity building in the community.

We heard overwhelmingly from Citizen Engagement what solutions are to the future of access and inclusion for the Town of Kentville and they are very doable. The responses were reasonable, logical, compassionate and imaginative: all key components to building a stable foundation for the Accessibility Action Plan. The Town of Kentville also has the earlier report from UPLAND | Planning + Design laying out the plan for Active Transportation which is a solid component of the overall vision for accessibility in Kentville. The Active Transportation Plan must be solidly integrated with the recommendations in this report to ensure universal design is achieved.

The solutions to achieving accessibility and inclusion in the Town of Kentville will require resources, human and capital, but they are within reach and have the capacity to be transformative for the Town, its citizens and visitors. We hope that this report provides starting points to achieving goals, and delineating the steps in between to help you get there. It has been our pleasure to assist you with this work.

In Peace & Friendship,  
houdinidesign ARCHITECTS, Nova Scotia, Canada 2021



Urban Design -Transportation  
& Safe Streets, Jackson  
Street, St. Paul



Inclusive Sports &  
Recreation

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.2 TERRITORY ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Ancestral or Traditional Territory refers to the land occupied by First Nations people and their ancestors. Kentville resides within the ancestral territory of the Mi'kmaq people. This territory is protected by the Treaties of Peace and Friendship, signed in 1752 between the Mi'kmaq, Maliseet, Passamaquoddy and the British Crown. This territory is known as Mi'kma'ki and was divided traditionally into seven districts: Kespukwitk, Sipekni'katik, Eskikewa'kik, Unama'kik, Epekwitk aq Piktuk, Sikniqt, and Kespek.

Treaties are a sacred agreements that are intended to uphold Indigenous knowledge, systems and sovereignty. There are 13 Mi'kmaq First Nations communities in Nova Scotia, not including all the First Nations residing outside of a community within this territory.

We honour that Annapolis Valley First Nation is composed of two Mi'kmaq First Nation communities located just 10 minutes from Kentville, and is home to over 200 Mi'kmaw people.

We acknowledge that our work and organizations are located within unceded and unsurrendered Mi'kmaq Territory that we all have a responsibility and accountability to uphold in the process of Truth and Reconciliation.

We are all treaty people.

During the Citizen Engagement process the relationship between the Town of Kentville - both Town Hall and the community - and First Nations people was discussed. This is a conversation happening throughout Mi'kmaki and all of Canada. There is much to do in terms of reconciliation and building meaningful dialogue, partnerships and opportunities to mend historical injustices and present day inequalities.

We have specific recommendations to address these concerns and help chart a way forward for an inclusive, accessible, welcoming community in Kentville that exists and operates from a place of peace and friendship.



NSCC Kingstec, Lnu Alliance,  
Annual Honoring Missing and  
Murdered Indigenous  
Women and Girls



Mi'kmaw People, image from  
Annapolis Valley First Nation's  
Website

## OVERVIEW

### 2.1 METHODOLOGY

“Our vision is for Kentville to be a healthy, vibrant, integrated and welcoming community, where all citizens and visitors can live, work and play, in an environment that promotes a fulfilling quality of life. We acknowledge that currently there are barriers to achieving this vision.” ~ *Kentville Accessibility Advisory Committee*

Tasked with creating an Accessibility Action Plan for the Town of Kentville by the Kentville Accessibility Advisory Committee, houdinidesign ARCHITECTS, certified in Rick Hansen Foundation Accessible Design, brought in reachAbility Association - abilities and inclusion specialists - to assist us with the engagement to inform the “9 Pillars of Accessibility,” standards by which to guide - a community, business, government, or organization - to universal accessibility by 2030. houdinidesign ARCHITECTS also reviewed some of the Town’s capital assets and infrastructure through a Rick Hansen Foundation Accessibility lens. This report presents strategies and activities designed to increase accessibility and inclusion within the Town of Kentville by 2030.

The report is delivered in sections, with the first half pertaining to each of the 9 Pillars of Accessibility with recommendations formulated utilizing reachAbility’s Inclusion in Action process, and the presentation of the Medicine Wheel to connect findings to the actions in an holistic framework. The Medicine Wheels can be utilized for visual communications within Town Hall departments and accountability to the public.

The second half of the report presents houdinidesign ARCHITECTS’ findings and recommendations to Kentville’s Downtown core infrastructure and assets, and presents a Universal Design urban plan concept which dovetails on the Town of Kentville’s Active Transportation Plan as conceived by UPLAND | Planning + Design. We believe that the plans for Universal Design and Active Transportation need to be married through a big picture lens.



Engagement Strategy Branding  
for the Accessibility Action Plan

## OVERVIEW

### 2.1 METHODOLOGY

#### A. THE MEDICINE WHEEL

The Medicine Wheel is a comprehensive tool that looks beyond western methodological frameworks, by looking at all interconnected systems. It is a framework developed by Indigenous peoples, with the oldest form appearing to originate from Majorville Cairn in Alberta over 5000 years ago.

Since its origins, the framework has been adapted and adopted by other Indigenous communities across Turtle Island. The framework looks at relations between people and all living worlds. The Wheel typically consists of four quadrants that represent various aspects of life (season, age, medicine, animal, element, cultures, etc.). Each quadrant is equally valued and showcases its unique and combined knowledge.

During engagement, the Medicine Wheel was used to guide a highly participatory experience for the community. Through each quadrant, we engaged with a variety of age ranges including Elders, Children, Youth, and Adults.

We reached out also to organizations that represent diverse or underrepresented populations, through The Portal, Chrysalis House, VANSDA, The Native Council of Nova Scotia, Acadia University, NSCC and the Valley Youth Project. Some groups were difficult to connect with, due in part to systemic or communication barriers highlighted during COVID19 restrictions, including lack of access to digital tools and restricted in-person interactions.

Through the Medicine Wheel we take into account our relationship with the land. For example, the Miner's Marsh Walk & Roll engagement session enabled enjoyment of the outdoors while the physical and emotional needs of the community were explored in a serene setting.

A Medicine Wheel has been created for each of the 9 Pillars of Accessibility highlighting some of the engagement outcomes and their resulting recommended actions. Note, the Citizen Engagement examples represented in the Wheels are but a fraction of the results, and a larger Citizen Engagement report can be seen in the Appendix.



Medicine Wheel, Lisa  
Tondino

## OVERVIEW

### 2.1 METHODOLOGY

#### B. INCLUSION IN ACTION

As accessibility support to organizations, reachAbility helps guide organizations through the process of becoming compliant with government legislation and building leadership in accessibility, diversity and inclusion.

The process of Inclusion In Action addresses the accessibility of policies, procedures, structure, programs and services of an organization through an inclusion and diversity lens. With public consultation this creates an inclusive action plan to align with both Access by Design 2030 and the Accessible Canada Act.

This is a a five-step process:

##### **Consultation**

- Assemble an Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC)
- Meet with AAC to identify critical goals for the organization

##### **First-Person Voice** (through various methods of engagement)

- Survey (online and in-person/via phone)
- Stakeholder/Citizen Engagement Sessions (Online, Small Group and Cafe Style in-person)
- Universal Design and Mapping Exercises (Online and in-person)
- Art Submission (digital, through School)

##### **Strategic Review**

- Review feedback from engagement sessions
- Revisit critical goals and compare to the identified issues highlighted from engagement
- Review the built infrastructure of the organization's assets

##### **Action Plan Delivery**

- Apply stakeholder/citizen recommendations
- Create an inclusivity action plan based on stakeholder/citizen recommendations and legislation requirements

##### **Essential Learning**

- Identify topics for continued learning for all organizational levels



KCA student, Grade 7

## OVERVIEW

### 2.1 METHODOLOGY

#### B. INCLUSION IN ACTION

In order to give feedback and create an Accessibility Action Plan in compliance with Bill 59/Access by Design 2030, The Accessible Canada Act (ACA) and provide the deliverables requested by the Town of Kentville we addressed the following **9 Pillars of Accessibility** according to the vision and deliverables:

##### 1. Goods and Services

- Town of Kentville: promote awareness about the importance of accessibility in accessing goods and services; ensure that people with disabilities have equitable access to goods and services provided by the Town of Kentville.
- Accessible Canada Act: Service Design & Delivery: receive services that are accessible to all.
- Bill 59: standards for delivering and receiving goods and services may address how service providers interact with and are trained to serve persons with disabilities. This may include how persons with disabilities access goods and services, including the use of assistive devices.

##### 2. Built Environment

- Town of Kentville: ensure buildings, streets, sidewalks, and shared spaces are accessible to all.
- Accessible Canada Act: move freely around buildings and public spaces.
- Bill 59: standards in this area will address how to make buildings, streets, sidewalks, and shared spaces accessible to all. These standards may address gaps in current regulations.

##### 3. Information and Communications

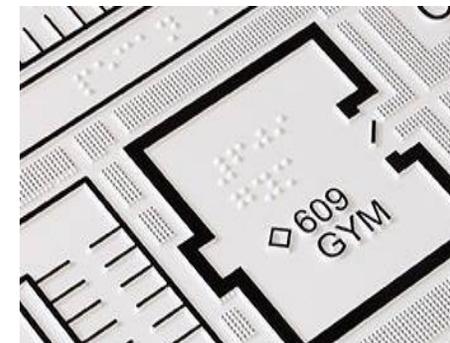
- Town of Kentville: ensure all people can receive, understand and share the information provided by the Town of Kentville.
- Accessible Canada Act: accessible digital content and technologies, barrier free spaces and services for people with communication disabilities.
- Bill 59: ensure all Nova Scotians can receive and share the same information. Consider accessible formats (for example, braille, American Sign Language, or large print), accessible websites and technologies, and standards for communicating with persons with disabilities.

##### 4. Awareness:

- The Town of Kentville will promote awareness throughout the Town of Kentville about the importance of accessibility.



Inclusive Design - Diverse ways of Communicating



Inclusive Design - Interactive Wayfinding

## OVERVIEW

### 2.1 METHODOLOGY

#### B. INCLUSION IN ACTION

##### 5. Transportation

- Town of Kentville: make it easier for everyone in the Town of Kentville to get where they need to go.
- Accessible Canada Act: barrier-free federal transportation network.
- Bill 59: public transportation and transportation infrastructure: standards in this area will help make it easier for everyone to travel throughout rural and urban Nova Scotia.

##### 6. Education

- Bill 59: standards in this area will help to create learning environments in which all students can participate. These standards could address how students with disabilities get the instruction and learning materials they need. The standards will apply to primary, secondary, and post-secondary education.

##### 7. Employment

- Town of Kentville: ensure the Town of Kentville is an accessible workplace; supporting young people with disabilities in finding and maintaining meaningful employment.
- Accessible Canada Act: access to employment opportunities and accessible workplaces.
- Bill 59: standards in this area will support persons with disabilities in finding meaningful employment. The goal is to ensure equal access to employment for persons with disabilities.

##### 8. Procurement

- Accessible Canada Act: ensure purchases of accessible goods, services and facilities.

Additionally, our process addressed **Human-Centred Design** as per the Town of Kentville's requested deliverables:

##### 9. Human-Centred Design

- Town of Kentville: implicit bias/decolonization.



Places are starting to include  
Dedicated Maps for Accessible  
Routes through Towns



Interactive Screens for  
Learning

## OVERVIEW

### 2.1 METHODOLOGY

#### C. RICK HANSEN FOUNDATION ACCESSIBILITY CERTIFICATION (RHFAC) LENS

[Rick Hansen Foundation Accessibility Certification \(RHFAC\)](https://www.rickhansen.com/) is a lens through which to assess accessibility. <https://www.rickhansen.com/>

RHFAC ensures people with disabilities have direct input into the vision and details of how to create truly inclusive places. RHFAC has a rating system and certification process designed by people with disabilities to allow transparency, accountability and measurable data.

We believe that all new capital projects for Town of Kentville should ensure Rick Hansen Foundation Certified Silver or Gold.

RHFAC and Universal Design are symbiotic. Universal Design is the design of public buildings, products and environments to make them accessible to all people regardless of age, disability or other factors. This ensures that human rights, compassion, democracy, and access are all at the forefront in the public realm.

Sustainability is a component of Universal Design. Sustainability meets the needs of the present without compromising future generations. Sustainability is composed of three pillars: economic, environmental and social. In order to create a sustainable, fully participatory community, Universal Design must be undertaken to ensure access and inclusion. An RHFAC lens allows for a building or space to support sustainability through its democratic design.

Our team conducted a preliminary review of various assets in Kentville using the RHFAC guidelines and standards. We did not conduct a Provincial Building Code review. RHFAC can be applied in addition to the Provincial Building Code, but it is important to note that RHFAC often has standards that are different than the Building Code. An aspect may meet Code but not RHFAC. The best case scenario is that it meets both.

We used some of the major principles of RHFAC as a guide to highlight where the needs for improvements are, as well as identify efforts and successes as per the scope of this Accessibility Action Plan.



The Centre for Sustainable  
Landscapes

## CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT

### 3.1 SUMMARY

Overall, sentiment expressed at in-person engagement sessions was that although Kentville is a welcoming Town, it fails to showcase that welcome when it comes to diverse populations and the disabled community. We heard from people who strongly desire Kentville to be more welcoming and diverse and to be able to expand their relationships outside their current communities.

People identified ableist and colonial attitudes and systems as barriers to inclusion, representation and belonging.

For example, one individual who identified as Indigenous was referred to mental health services with no cultural supports and the individual continued to face crisis due to lack of cultural guidance. Another person brought up support in the school system: a parent felt they needed to advocate that their child was 'autistic enough' in order to access support. An Indigenous person expressed that she felt that there was poor representation of First Nations people in the Town of Kentville and that she does not feel welcomed.

Other individuals reflected on not feeling welcomed outside their own micro-communities.

For example: in the downtown core people with disabilities and members of visible minorities expressed feeling unapproachable and unwanted. In their micro-community they feel safe and welcomed. We heard a lot about financial inequities and how neighbourhoods are divided by income. Thus there are perceived benefits or deficits based on where people live in Town.

One thing rang true throughout all the engagement activities: the citizens of Kentville have an overwhelming sense of pride for their beautiful Town, and had many suggestions to share when it comes to improvements.

Due to Covid19 public gathering restrictions, extended digital, phone and small gathering or individual engagement sessions were offered. Extensive efforts were made to reach the BIPOC population, and a school activity with support from KCA principal and educators was met with great success.

The results from the Citizen Engagement highlight issues to address, and solutions to move into action, with main themes emerging recurring over age groups, abilities and experiences, and diversity. Reports from the Citizen Engagement sessions, Survey, and School Activity can be viewed in the Appendix.

Overall, over 600 citizens directly participated in engagement sessions.



Gardens & Inclusion  
Shanghai Sensory Gardens



Pride Parade, Downtown City  
Streets, Montreal

## CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT

### 3.1 SUMMARY

The following Activities took place to gather information, experiences, and suggestions from citizens:

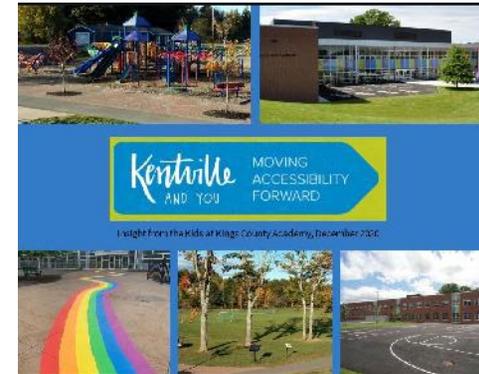
**Survey Kiosk:** Through a collaborative effort, a survey was designed and delivered online and in-person through a pop-up survey kiosk. The kiosk was located in Centre Square, Kentville where our Team interacted with the public through dialogue guided by a paper survey, or via the web survey to discuss accessibility in the Town of Kentville. This kiosk was offered on November 4th & 12th, with 25 public interactions.

**Café Style Session:** Through an interactive mapping exercise located at Town Hall, stakeholders, organizations and the public were encouraged to attend and provide insights into the services and delivery offered by the Town of Kentville, as well as envisioning a future Kentville. This session was held on November 12th, with 9 organizations and 10 participants in attendance.

**Walk & Roll: Miners Marsh:** Strolling Miners Marsh acted as an opportunity to engage the public in one of the Town's beloved outdoor assets, with 27 people providing first voice experiences and visions for an accessible Kentville on November 17th.

**Zoom-in:** Throughout November and December, a total of 4 Zoom sessions were hosted in collaboration with the public, members of the Accessibility Advisory Committee, diverse populations and service providers, to discuss the accessibility pillars as outlined by the Accessible Canada Act and the Town of Kentville. Throughout the series of calls approximately 30 people participated.

**Phone-in:** Similar to the Zoom sessions, on December 11th and 14th, various community members and organizations were contacted to discuss the accessibility pillars as outlined by the Accessible Canada Act and the Town of Kentville - specifically, looking at the direct impacts of colonialism, systemic racism, gender inequality and gender identity. Approximately 10 people participated.



Kings County Academy,  
Booklet Cover from  
Engagement Findings



KCA student, Grade 7

## CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT

### 3.1 SUMMARY

**Art Submissions:** Between October and December, Art Submissions from members of the Town of Kentville communities were encouraged to submit #ShowUsYourKentville art, highlighting a first-voice day-to-day life experience of Kentville. This resulted in 10 submissions, including but not limited to various videos and photographs.

**School Engagement:** A creative interactive approach for school aged children was developed through an accessibility module. The module highlighted one question from the identified Pillars of the Accessible Canada Act and the Town of Kentville. The module produced over 200 pieces of feedback via drawings or writings. These items were collected and turned into a booklet for the Town of Kentville that is available in full in the Appendix.

**Online Survey:** An online survey portal was created based on the Pillars in the Accessible Canada Act and by the Town of Kentville. Between October and December, while the survey was active, over 300 Kentville residents completed the web-survey. Additionally, an internal survey was created for the Town of Kentville staff, of which 9 were completed.

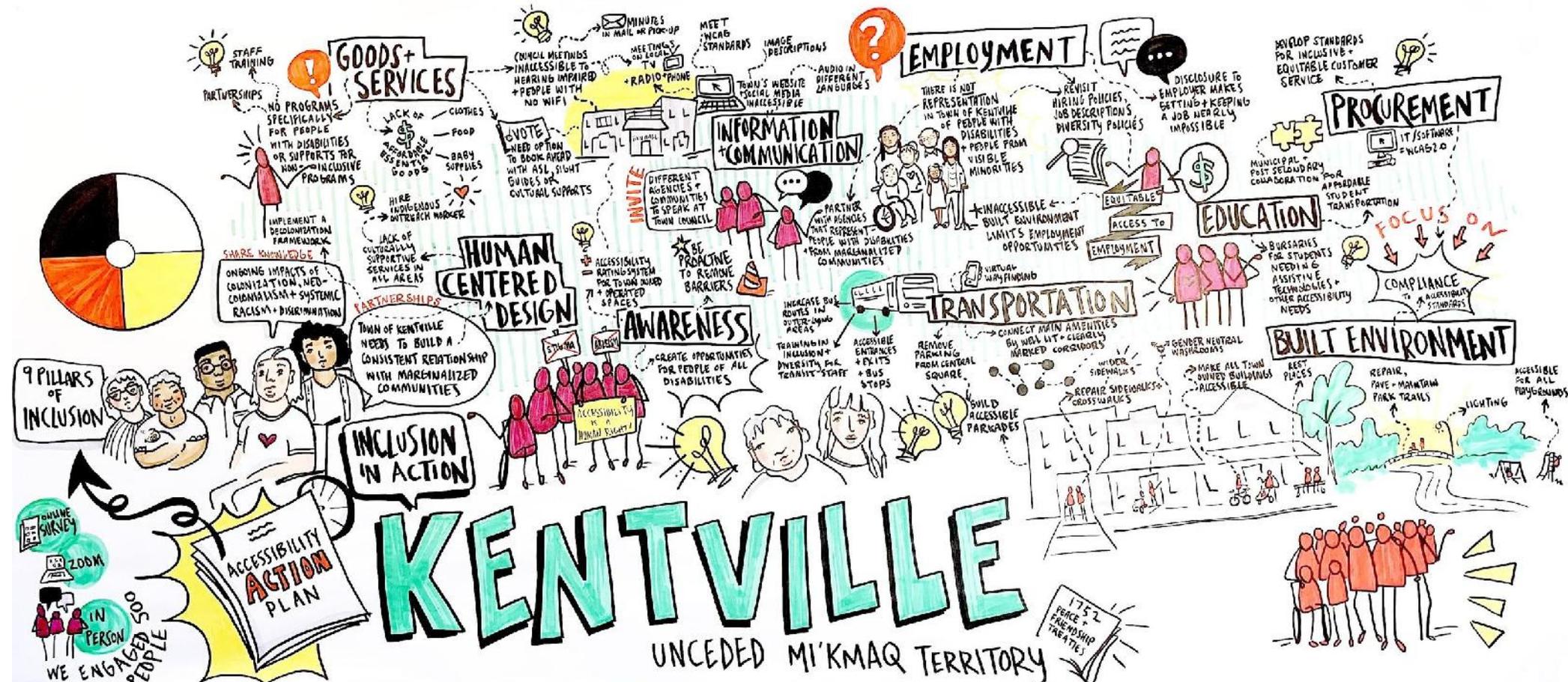
**Social Media Campaign:** Throughout this project, a social media campaign was used to promote and engage with the Town of Kentville citizens, workers and visitors. The campaign, titled “Kentville and You. Moving Accessibility Forward” reached over 50,000 individuals (saw the awareness campaign on their social media platforms); leading to 1031 organic clicks (1031 people clicked through the ads to obtain further information about the campaign), and over 1400 post engagements (comments, likes and shares).



Participant, Avila at the Walk & Roll at Miners Marsh

3.2 GRAPHIC FACILITATION - What We Heard

Visual Artist Rachel Derrah of BraveSpace created a Graphic Illustration to represent the key findings from Citizen Engagement. The Graphic is available in large file format in print for public display and continued engagement, education, awareness and discussion regarding the Accessibility Action Plan.



## CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT

### 3.3 EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

From community knowledge came a clear message that an opportunity exists to enhance the EI or Emotional Intelligence of the Town staff and community through training opportunities to grow empathy and understanding regarding our differences. This image represents some of the opportunities created by increasing EI.

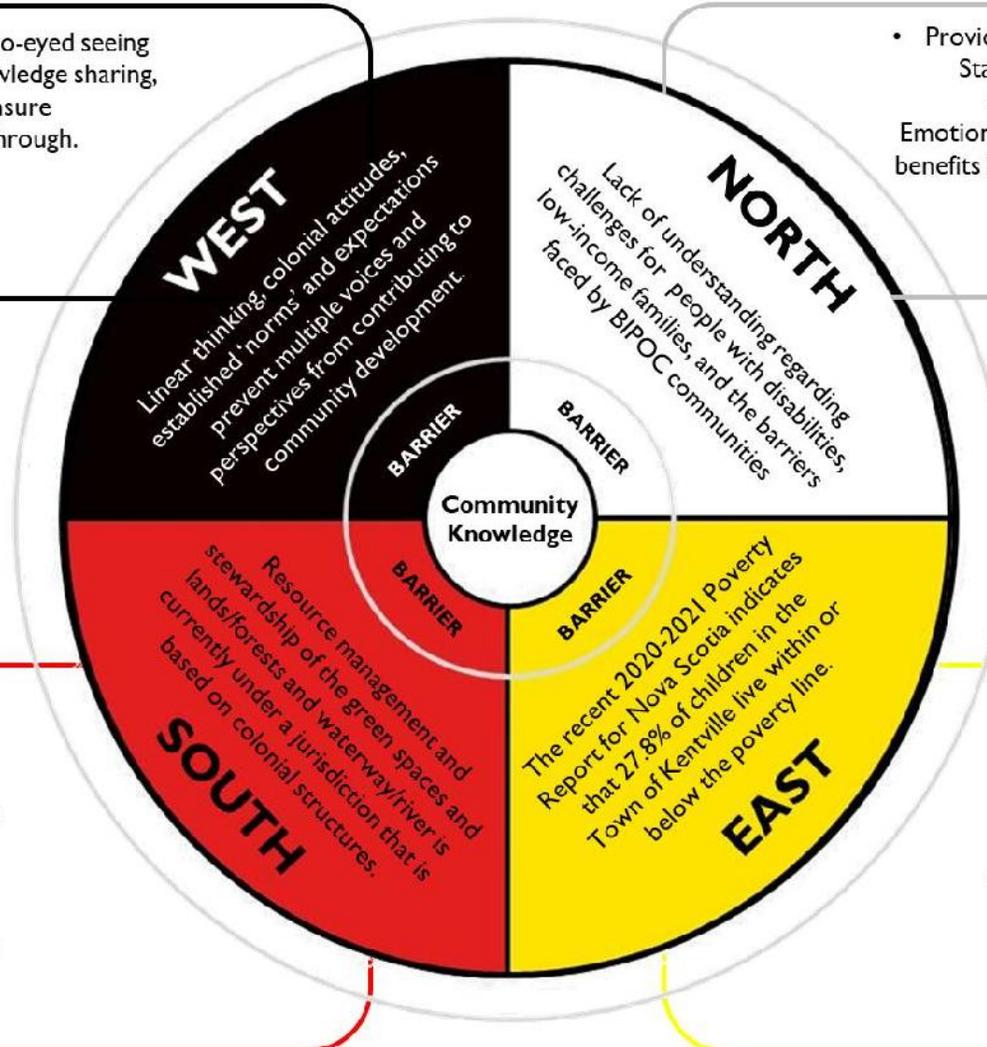
## EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

### Recommended Actions

- Embrace the concept of Two-eyed seeing through education and knowledge sharing, and develop a method to ensure accountability with follow-through.

### Recommended Actions

- Provide Emotional Intelligence Training to Staff and Council to support growth of empathy, awareness, understanding. Emotional Intelligence can be developed and benefits leadership, communication, decision making, relationships.



### Recommended Actions

- Work with Indigenous peoples and knowledge keepers to create and implement a decolonization land strategy and land care program for all Town of Kentville land/forests, waterways, trails and parks.

### Recommended Actions

- Ease of access to services to ensure that income is not a barrier to programs and services, such as eliminating costs associated to events and services.
- Develop a food security initiative that ensures access to healthy sustainable foods within the community.

## 9 PILLARS OF ACCESSIBILITY

### 4.1 STANDARDS & BENCHMARKS

A summary for each standard of Bill 59 (Nova Scotia's Accessibility Legislation/Access By Design 2030) and the Accessible Canada Act identifies current offerings, successes, barriers and recommended benchmarks.

These standards, or the 9 Pillars, are:

- Goods and Services (ACA: Service Design & Delivery)
- Built Environment
- Information & Communications (ACA: Communications & Information and Communications Technology)
- Awareness
- Transportation
- Education
- Employment
- Procurement
- Human-Centred Design/Implicit Bias

Each Pillar was assessed through the lens of Inclusion in Action and the Medicine Wheel Framework to create an Action Plan, that if adhered to, is compliant with Bill 59 and the Accessible Canada Act.

Through the guidance of the identified priorities of Access By Design 2030, we recommend the Town of Kentville address each of these standards by:

- 1) Developing the Standards: using our recommended benchmarks, develop standards as to how implementation within the Town of Kentville governance structure will occur and how it will affect non-Town of Kentville owned/operated entities.
- 2) Build Capacity and Awareness: Town of Kentville employees and Council build capacity through training. Town of Kentville promotes inclusive priorities with an awareness campaign.
- 3) Collaborate and Support: in collaboration with marginalised groups and agencies build relationships of mutual respect and support.
- 4) Compliance and Enforcement: based on the developed standards and using the recommended benchmarks the Town of Kentville implements these standards and clearly identifies compliance and enforcement strategies.
- 5) Monitor and Evaluate: as with any growth and change it is essential to revisit, reassess and revise policy and implementation.



Changing Technology & Accessible Design



Changing Technology for Low Vision

# 9 PILLARS OF ACCESSIBILITY

## 4.2 GOODS & SERVICES

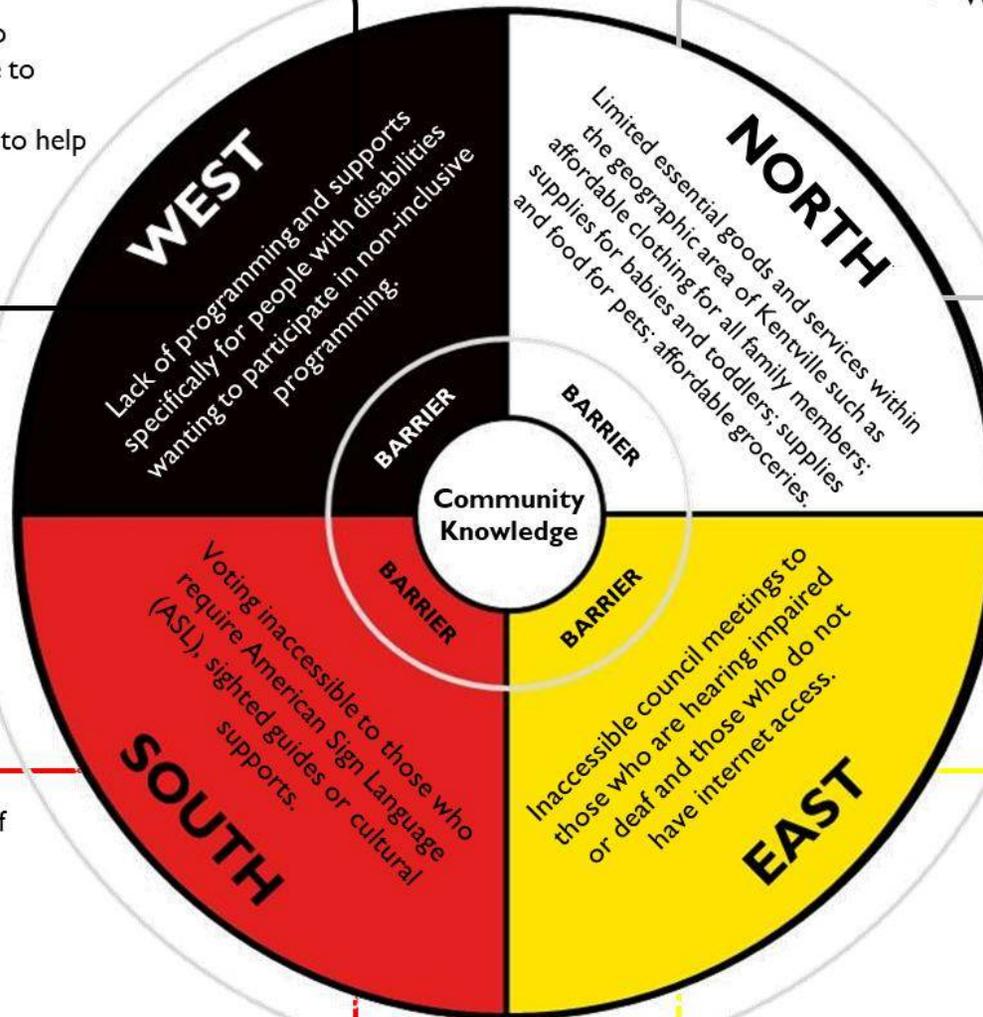
### GOODS & SERVICES

#### Recommended Actions

- Diversity, inclusion and cultural competency training for all staff so everyone is ready, willing and able to provide inclusive services.
- Partner with community agencies to help develop and implement inclusive programming under the Town of Kentville umbrella.

#### Recommended Actions

- Work with Kentville Business Community to establish needs based priorities for new businesses coming to Kentville.
- Have an updated business directory available to the public; make announcements of business relocations; create business wayfinding in the core.



#### Recommended Actions

- Offer the option to book ahead of time for voting to schedule ASL, sighted guides and/or cultural support for those who need it.

#### Recommended Actions

- Have council meetings available: on local tv; radio, and/or make minutes available for pickup or mail-out.
- Offer ASL interpretation or closed captioning.

## 9 PILLARS OF ACCESSIBILITY

### 4.2 GOODS & SERVICES

#### Policy:

The Town of Kentville will ensure that people with disabilities have equitable access to the goods and services provided by the Town of Kentville.

#### Current Services Offered:

The Town of Kentville currently provides the following goods and services

- Maintaining water and sewage
- Maintaining parks, trails and playgrounds (see Built Environment)
- Hosts Council and Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC) meetings
- Provides emergency services such as fire and police
- Offers recreational programming
- Manages communication to the public (see Information and Communications)
- Maintains infrastructure such as streets, sidewalks and crosswalks, specifically within Town of Kentville geographical area, including snow removal (See Built Environment)

#### Survey Overview:

Restaurants and hair salons/barbershops were both the top 2 services accessed in the Town of Kentville and identified as the most inaccessible. In regards to the Town of Kentville's service delivery 78% said they have input to provide about the services the Town offers, but 49% said they would not engage with the Town through Council meetings.

#### Successes (What We Heard):

- Town Hall has ramp access at the rear of the building with a door opener making it partially accessible.
- The Town's Recreation programming aims to eliminate barriers to participation by being free and/or at affordable prices.
- The Town provided play kits for children, youth, seniors and families that were created to continue to engage the community throughout the pandemic.
- The Town of Kentville offers Play Boxes (3) that are available throughout Town that provide free, play items to promote unstructured recreation activity.



Town of Kentville Play Box,  
Image via Play Outside  
Nova Scotia

## 9 PILLARS OF ACCESSIBILITY

### 4.2 GOODS & SERVICES

#### Barriers (What We Heard):

- The Town of Kentville doesn't offer enough programming specifically for people with disabilities or support for people with disabilities wanting to participate in programming.
- Council meetings are not fully accessible to those wishing to participate.
- Voting is inaccessible to those who require American Sign Language (ASL), Indigenous Sign Language (ISL), sighted guides or cultural supports.
- Although there is ramp access to the Town Hall where residents must go physically to pay bills and acquire Town specific services, the ramp is not appropriate nor accessible; the door opener is not safely located, there is no safe access to the ramp through the back parking lot, and it is not ethical for the only accessible access to be in the back of the building.

#### Benchmarks:

- Provide training to all staff in diversity and inclusion so everyone is ready, willing and able to provide inclusive services. Some departments will require more in-depth training depending on the services they provide, for example, training in sighted guiding so they can fulfill this role when needed.
- Ensure council meetings are available to all by using local tv; radio, and/or making minutes available for pickup or mail-out; and accessible to all by providing sign language interpretation and closed-captioning services.
- Offer the option to book ahead of time for voting to schedule ASL, sighted guides and/or cultural support for those who need it. ASL, Communication Access Real-Time (CART), and Sighted guides need to be offered at no cost for all public engagements, whether online or in-person.
- Ensure equitable access to Town Hall for all of Kentville's citizens by making all entrances accessible and welcoming.

#### Community Partnership:

- Work with the Kentville Business Community to ensure needs-based recruitment for new business coming to the Town of Kentville as community members have identified that there is a lack of goods and services like: affordable clothing for all family members, supplies for babies and toddlers, supplies and food for pets, and affordable groceries specifically produce and meat.
- Partner with community agencies to develop and implement inclusive and culturally supportive programming under the Town of Kentville framework.
- Partner with the Kentville Business Community and deploy a program similar to the Facade Program for accessible entrances and exits of all Town of Kentville business/store fronts.



## 9 PILLARS OF ACCESSIBILITY

### 4.3 BUILT ENVIRONMENT

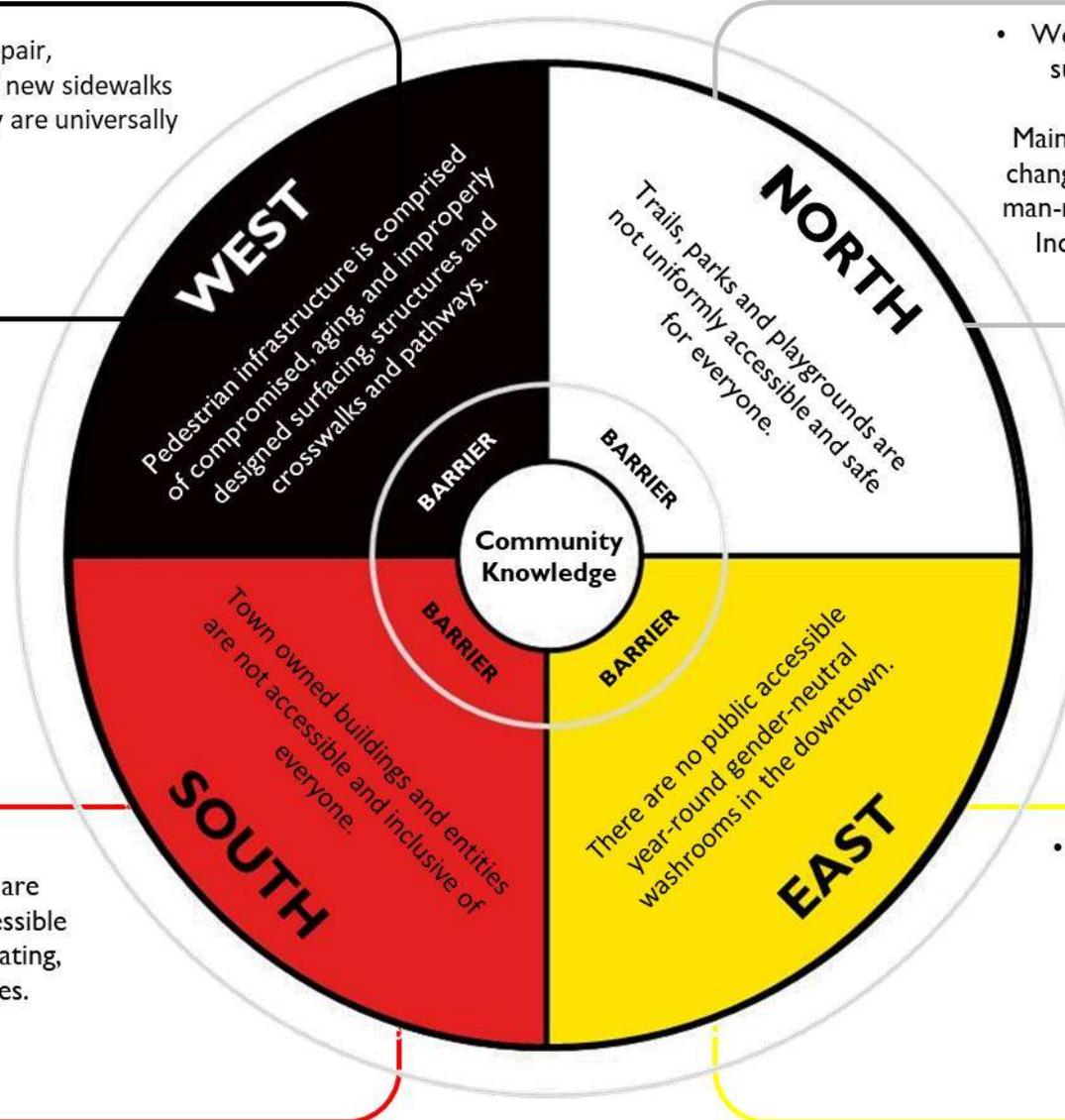
# BUILT ENVIRONMENT

#### Recommended Actions

- Implement policies for the repair, maintenance and creation of new sidewalks and crosswalks ensuring they are universally accessible.

#### Recommended Actions

- Work with industry leaders to provide sustainable, accessible pathways to all parks, trails and playgrounds. Maintenance scheduling around seasonal changes to better manage erosion where man-made structures meet natural space. Increase lighting, wayfinding, rest areas and access to water along all trails.



#### Recommended Actions

- Ensure that all Town-owned buildings and outdoor spaces are universally designed with accessible entrances, exits, pathways, seating, service counters, and amenities.

#### Recommended Actions

- Provide public, accessible, gender-neutral year-round washroom facilities in Centre Square and throughout town, along trails, in parks and playgrounds.

## 9 PILLARS OF ACCESSIBILITY

### 4.3 BUILT ENVIRONMENT

#### Policy:

The Town of Kentville will ensure that all buildings, streets, sidewalks, and shared spaces are accessible to all.

#### Current Offerings:

The Town of Kentville currently owns, operates, and maintains all roadways, sidewalks, crosswalks, and the following listed entities:

#### Parks and Trails:

Eaves Hollow  
Kentville Trail (Harvest Moon)  
Kentville Ravine Trail  
Burgher Hill  
Miners Marsh  
Oakdene Park  
Memorial Park (Baseball and soccer fields)  
The Gorge  
Kentville Skatepark  
Chester Ave Park

#### Buildings:

Town Hall  
The Recreation Hub  
The Recreation Center  
Public Works Building  
Parks out building and workshop  
Memorial Park washrooms & canteen  
Kentville Police Station  
Kentville Library (rented space)  
Kentville Centennial Arena  
Kentville Lions Club building  
Kentville Historical Society building  
Kentville Tennis Club building  
Kentville Information Centre

#### Other:

Tennis Courts  
Kentville Memorial Pool  
Kentville splash pads  
Center Square Gazebo

#### Survey Overview:

The top 3 most accessed public spaces in the Town of Kentville are: crosswalks/sidewalks, trails and parking lots/spaces. Otherwise mentioned are Town Hall and Memorial Park Ball Fields as the top 2 least accessible Town owned public buildings/entities. Unsurprisingly, ramps were identified as the #1 reason for inaccessibility.



Oakdene Park, Kentville



Eaves Hollow, Kentville

## 9 PILLARS OF ACCESSIBILITY

### 4.3 BUILT ENVIRONMENT

#### Successes (What We Heard):

- The Town has shown great effort in maintaining the Harvest Moon Trail system, community members commend the Town for this service and report using it regularly.
- The playground at the Memorial Park Recreation Hub (KCA) is an accessible playground which provides play opportunities for people of all ages and abilities.
- Based on the Active Transportation Plan 2018, plans have been put in place to increase safe and accessible transportation for pedestrians throughout the downtown core, and also highlighted the need to address safe and accessible sidewalks in the more residential areas on the north side of the river.
- The Active Transportation Plan acknowledges the need to make all crosswalks accessible, noting that this must include Accessible Pedestrian Signals (APS) with Audible Beaconing.

#### Barriers (What We Heard):

- Infrastructure (foot paths, sidewalks, crosswalks, roadways) is uneven and inaccessible.
- All trails, parks and playgrounds are not accessible and safe for everyone.
- There are no publicly, year-round, accessible, gender-neutral washrooms in downtown.
- Town owned buildings and entities are not accessible and inclusive of everyone.



Playground Located at Kings  
County Academy

#### Benchmarks:

- Create standards and implement policies for the repair, maintenance and creation of new sidewalks and crosswalks ensuring they are accessible to all.
- Ensure all trails are paved to ensure accessibility. Until then, schedule maintenance to better manage erosion and keep clear of leaves and snow. Additionally, increase lighting, wayfinding, rest areas and access to water along all trails.
- Provide public, accessible, gender-neutral washroom facilities in Centre Square and throughout town; incrementally along trails; in parks and at playgrounds.
- Ensure that all town owned buildings and outdoor entities have accessible entrances and exits, thoroughfare, seating, service counters, and amenities.

## 9 PILLARS OF ACCESSIBILITY

### 4.3 BUILT ENVIRONMENT

#### Community Partnerships:

- The Valley Regional Hospital (VRH) is a public building that is not in Kentville proper, but Kings County. It was noted in the Active Transportation Plan that public engagement showed a need for improved routes to and from the Valley Regional Hospital, connecting it to downtown and the surrounding residential areas. Improvements in this area will affect hospital employees, patients and visitors throughout the town and region. By having a member of the AAC on the board of the VRH, the Town of Kentville could give a voice to their community members. The following concerns were expressed:
  - “You get the odd one (staff) that doesn’t treat you like you are an inconvenience to them.... At times you can’t even find someone when you need them.”
  - Storing totes in hallways creates physical barriers, using a wheelchair or a walker becomes increasingly difficult navigating unpredictable barriers.
  - Hospital rooms are crowded with extra items, decreasing the space there is to safely maneuver and giving an overall feeling of unwelcome.
  - The entrance of the Emergency Room is not wheelchair accessible. One participant said that they fell out of their chair trying to get over a lip in the doorway.
  - There is not adequate equipment - lifts, chairs etc, for people with mobility issues. When equipment is the wrong size it is unsafe and can lead to accidents.
- The Town of Kentville should uphold the same standards used for Town owned physical entities for private developers, for all new builds.
  - Incentivise landlords/property owners to invest in accessibility upgrades. Provide information and resources needed to build to accessibility standards unless undue hardship. It was specifically noted that within the downtown core some rental units are inaccessible to people with physical disabilities due to the age of the buildings and there is a lack of communal housing or co-housing locally. An example of an intergenerational, accessible community living well through a co-housing model is example Threefold, in NY. <https://threefold.org/our-community/community-directory/>
  - 90% of those surveyed reported that private dwellings (private homes, apartments, shared-living) are not accessible.
  - Businesses need to be accessible on all floors (physically, visually and sensory/auditory) Encourage a sensory friendly hour where families can shop with lowered lighting and less noise (see Sobey’s example of Sunday afternoons).



Threefold Community, New York City



Threefold Community, New York City

## 9 PILLARS OF ACCESSIBILITY

### 4.3 BUILT ENVIRONMENT

#### Community Partnerships:

- Ensure accessible play opportunities for everyone by modelling the work done with the KCA playground and utilizing the [“Framework for Recreation in Canada”](https://www.cpra.ca/about-the-framework) <https://www.cpra.ca/about-the-framework> to increase accessibility in all of Kentville’s recreation areas, especially those noted as being inaccessible through community engagement such as Memorial Park (including playground, minor baseball fields, Wild Cats field).
  - Equitable access to play for all: wheelchair accessibility (swings, use of equipment, ramps, double railings), options for adults with developmental disabilities.
  - Access to play opportunities without going up onto the equipment.
  - Sensory options (quiet space away from the main pieces of equipment; noisy play options grouped together to keep noise centralized).
  - Accessible options for rest areas (benches vs. picnic tables) for parents and caregivers.
- As noted in the Active Transportation Plan, the following areas are priorities for further consideration:
  - North End Kentville: This neighbourhood has some of the highest densities in Kentville but comparatively less access to trails and recreation. There are concentrations of vulnerable populations in this community, and sidewalks and roads are in need of maintenance and connectivity.
  - The Recreation Hub: This area is both a recreational destination and a school zone. This key destination was selected to prioritize youth and encourage active transportation, building on existing assets.
  - Kentville Business Park: This major employment centre also contains a host of government services. Though a key destination, this area is currently inaccessible for active transportation users.



Wheelchair Swing, Auburn  
Casey Park



Gwynne School, Sensory  
Room, Wetaskiwin

## 9 PILLARS OF ACCESSIBILITY

### 4.4 INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION

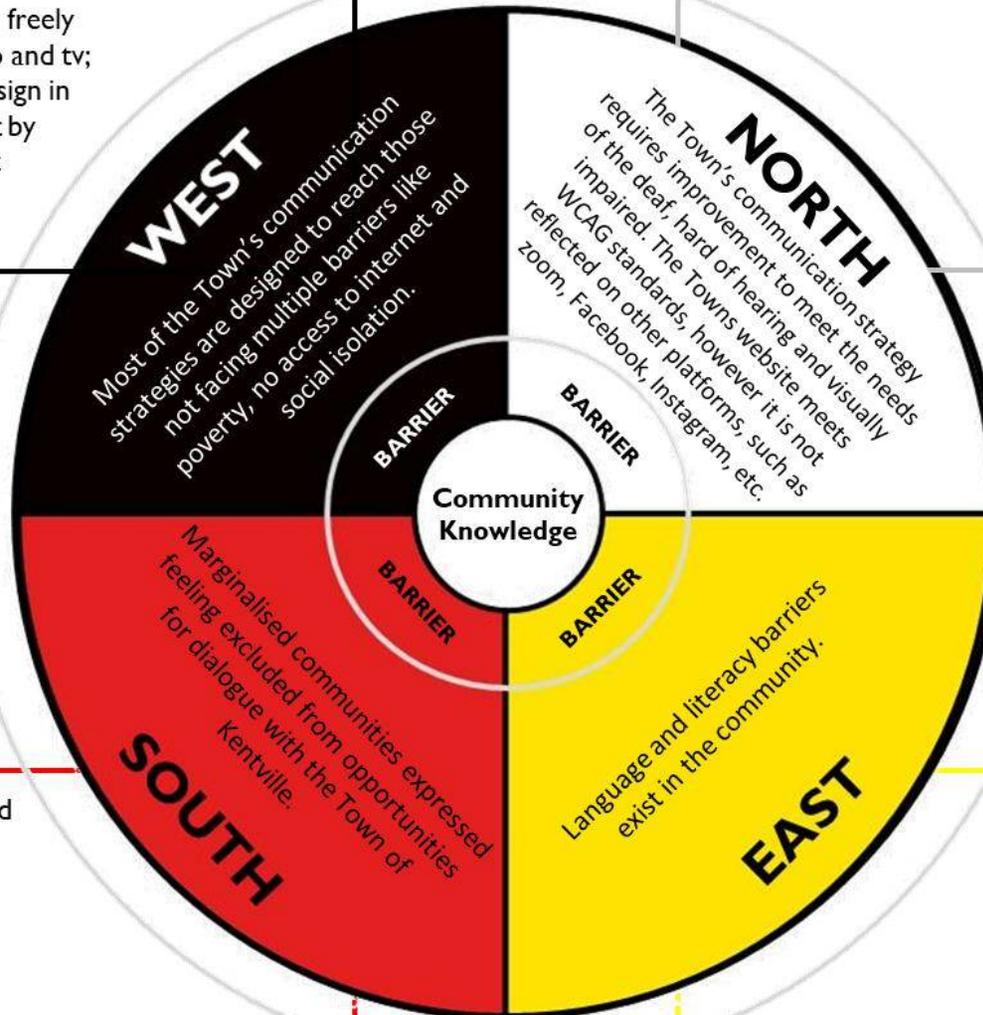
# INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION

#### Recommended Actions

- Create a communication strategy that includes those with barriers - use freely accessed mediums like local radio and tv; post important information on a sign in front of Town Hall; offer support by phone for those without internet access.

#### Recommended Actions

- Social media communication must have image descriptions; video content must include Sign Language translation and closed captioning in real-time (CART).



#### Recommended Actions

- A consistent relationship is needed to bridge the gap between marginalized communities and the Town. Invite a different agency or community to Town Council meetings each month and give them an opportunity to speak at the beginning of each meeting.

#### Recommended Actions

- Provide alternate forms of communication for those with literacy issues and/or those who do not speak English as first language. Audio files or translations could be made available.

## 9 PILLARS OF ACCESSIBILITY

### 4.4 INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION

#### Policy:

The Town of Kentville will ensure everyone can receive, understand and share the information provided by the Town of Kentville.

#### Current Offerings:

The town of Kentville currently sends important information in printed form to those who receive bills through the mail; posts information in enclosed public bulletin boards throughout Town; provides digital and written copies of a newsletter to community agencies for distribution and posts announcements and event information on their website and social media.

#### Survey Overview:

Social media (88%) and the Town of Kentville website (62%) were the top 2 most accessed means of communication for those digitally surveyed. However, 74% of those surveyed reported a monthly income of \$2000 +/-month. Our in-person engagement sessions, in contrast, resulted in the majority of those surveyed not being able to afford internet access.

#### Successes (What We Heard):

- The Town's Recreation Team consistently includes accessibility information on posters and online event information for participants to make informed decisions.
- The Town has a large following on social media which allows them to transmit information to a large number of people.
- The Town has a communications team that is dedicated to providing information to its citizens.
- The Town's website meets minimal WCAG requirements.

#### Barriers (What We Heard):

- Most of the Town's communication strategies are designed to reach those not facing multiple barriers like poverty, no access to internet and social isolation.
- The Town's social media presence and website are inaccessible to the deaf, hard of hearing and visually impaired.
- Language barriers are not taken into account with the current methods of information communications within the Town of Kentville.
- For the most part, marginalised communities do not engage with the Town of Kentville.



Closed Captioning



American Sign Language

## 9 PILLARS OF ACCESSIBILITY

### 4.4 INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION

#### Benchmarks:

- Ensure all communication is delivered in accessible formats and can support the use of assistive technology. Additionally, use freely accessed mediums like local radio and tv; post important information on a sign in front of Town Hall; offer support by phone for those without internet access.
- Social media communication must have image descriptions; video content must include Sign Language translation and closed captioning in real-time (CART).
- Provide alternative forms of communication for those with literacy issues and/or those who do not speak English first. This can be done by providing audio files of important information read aloud or by providing written copies, in different languages. A digital information kiosk with translation options can also do this.
- Communicate with marginalized communities directly, listen to their needs and wants and take action.

#### Community Partnerships:

- Build consistent relationships to bridge the gap between marginalized communities and the Town of Kentville. Invite a different agency or community to Town Council each month and give them an opportunity to present their work in the community at the beginning of each meeting.
- Partner with community organizations and businesses to provide and maintain better information sharing through a community digital kiosk. Available technology exists for interactive, accessible digital boards where community information can be shared, wayfinding is made accessible, events, business hours, contact information for Town Hall and community services can be readily available. Public notices, and even streaming content (like council meetings) could be made public. These boards are particularly helpful for newcomers and visitors.



Interactive Digital  
Information Kiosk



Interactive Digital Information  
Kiosk, Mt Tremblant

## 9 PILLARS OF ACCESSIBILITY

### 4.5 AWARENESS

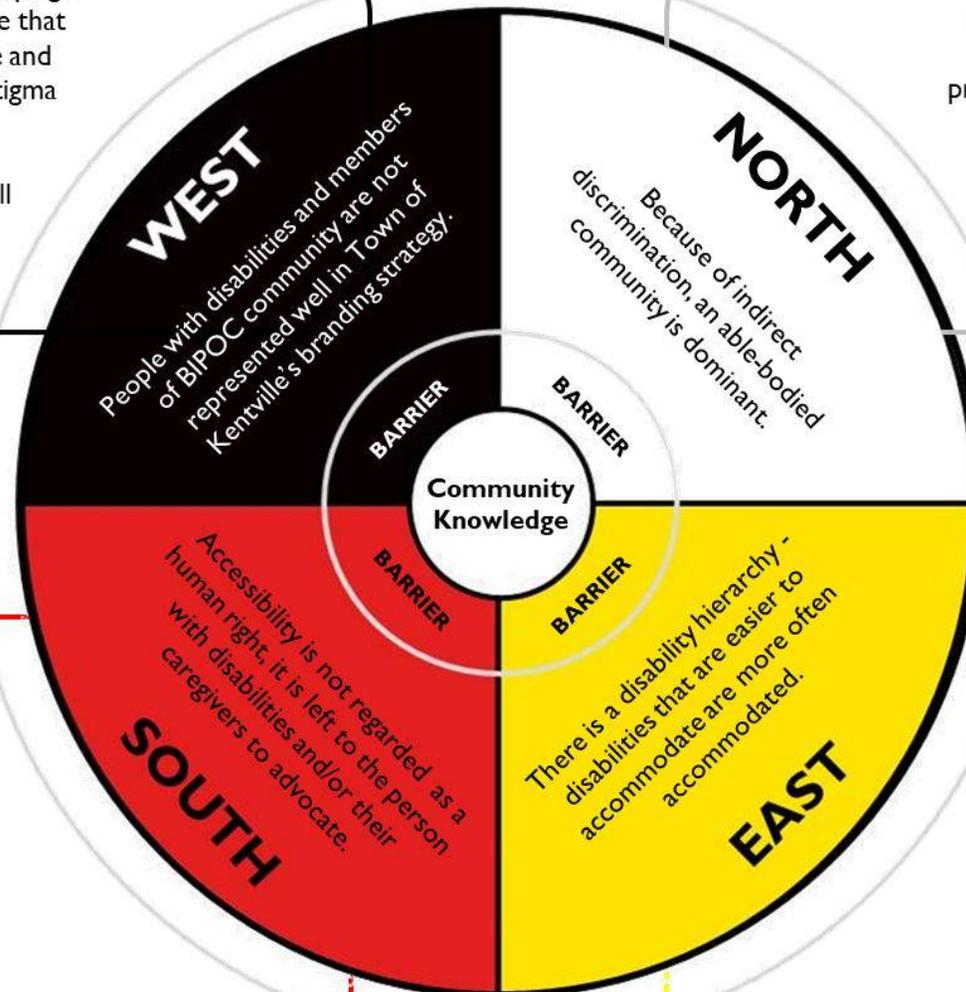
# AWARENESS

#### Recommended Actions

- Create an ongoing awareness campaign throughout the Town of Kentville that welcomes and includes all people and actively works to eliminate the stigma and discrimination. Ensure that photographs and videos used in branding represent diversity; a call out to community for authentic representation for photo and video shoots can be issued.

#### Recommended Actions

- Create “space” in all aspects of the community for people with a variety of disabilities. By being proactive in its practices, the Town of Kentville removes barriers to participation and offers an inclusive environment.



#### Recommended Actions

- Apply the RHFAC accessibility rating to Town owned spaces and built environment and post the results. This will empower people with disabilities to make informed decisions with dignity and hold accountable the Town to uphold accessibility as a human right, leading by example for private businesses and organizations to follow suit.

#### Recommended Actions

- Instead of accommodating one disability, create opportunities for all people with disabilities through Universal Design. Sensory kits are a great option for those with Autism; the equipment loan program should also include physically accessible items.

## 9 PILLARS OF ACCESSIBILITY

### 4.5 AWARENESS

#### **Policy:**

The Town of Kentville will promote awareness throughout the Town of Kentville about the importance of accessibility.

#### **Current Offerings:**

The Town of Kentville recently (2018) rebranded as “A Breath of Fresh Air” after a public engagement campaign. According to approximately 500 community participants, in Kentville “health and well-being are prioritized, getting outside is the pastime of choice, small business charm and convenience is preferred over big-box domination and coming together is a way of life. Ultimately, Kentville is the kind of place where *“healthy people can gather and grow.”* But, what about people with disabilities?



Breath of Fresh Air Branding

#### **Survey Overview:**

None of those surveyed online or in-person recalled receiving messaging directly from the Town of Kentville either verbally, through imagery, marketing, or through a policy, that everyone is welcome in the Town. As a result, participants indicated that the feeling generated from this realization is that everyone isn't welcome.

#### **Successes (What We Heard):**

- In January 2020 the Town of Kentville launched their Accessibility Advisory Committee to guide them through the process of meeting Access By Design 2030 legislation.
- In March 2020, the Town of Kentville's Recreation Department added 3 Sensory Kits to the Equipment Loan Program for those who wish to use them, for free.
- The Town of Kentville created a Physical Activity Strategy and, through their research found that accommodations, community involvement and advertising aren't being used to full potential. This has become a priority for the Town which aligns with our recommendations.

#### **Barriers (What We Heard):**

- People with disabilities are not represented within the Town of Kentville “picture.”
- Because of indirect discrimination, a community of ableism is very present.
- There is a disability hierarchy - disabilities that are easier to accommodate are more often accommodated.
- Accessibility is not treated as a human right, it is left to the person with disabilities and/or their caregivers to advocate for.

## 9 PILLARS OF ACCESSIBILITY

### 4.5 AWARENESS

#### Benchmarks:

- Create an ongoing awareness campaign throughout the Town of Kentville that welcomes people with disabilities to eliminate the stigma. Integrate information about disability rights and accessibility into school curriculum.
- Create “space” in all aspects of the community for people with a variety of disabilities. By being proactive the Town of Kentville can anticipate who may want to participate, remove barriers to participation, and offer an inclusive environment.
- Create opportunities for all people with disabilities. Sensory kits are a great option for those with Autism; the Equipment Loan Program should also include physically accessible items.
- The Town of Kentville should adopt an Accessibility Rating System and post on their rating accessibility for town owned buildings and built space. This will: enable people with disabilities to make informed decisions with dignity; encourage the Town to improve upon those spaces with lower accessibility ratings and lead by example for private businesses and organizations to follow suit.

#### Community Partnerships:

- Partner with the Kentville Business Community and/or individual businesses and services to encourage private businesses to become leaders in accessibility and utilize the Town led Accessibility Rating System. The rating system can state things like: fully accessible to all, fully wheelchair accessible, partially accessible to wheelchair users (will need assistance), inaccessible to all, enabling people with disabilities to make informed decisions before they travel.
- Partner with agencies that support people with disabilities on a regular basis for events, programs, and learning opportunities and do so in the public’s eye. Promote the partnerships and encourage the community to join in.
- Incorporate volunteerism into Town of Kentville employee policies and encourage staff to volunteer within the community with organizations that support people with disabilities and marginalized communities.



## 9 PILLARS OF ACCESSIBILITY

### 4.5 AWARENESS

#### Cultural History Example: Black History of Kentville

During outreach to the BIPOC community, our team had an informed conversation with longtime resident Juanita Pleasant who seeks to revive an understanding and truth of Black History in Kentville and communities throughout Nova Scotia. Ms Pleasant has studied archives, oral knowledge and produced her own written work over the last 20 years including two books containing Black History and Poetry, and a Calendar set to release in 2021, titled 'Aaliyah's Walk Through History 1604-2021' emphasizing Black History in Nova Scotia (and across Canada). Through her efforts, she hopes to inspire in the next generation of Black Youth a proud understanding of who they are, their resilience and where they come from. We recommend that the Town of Kentville work with historians, artists and researchers in the community to highlight and share the knowledge through public communications, exhibits, art installations, honouring the work.



Image via Gibson Woods Hall

#### THE HUMAN CHAIN

Underground they were called the human chain, without it where would I be  
 My great-great grandmother arrived there through it  
 Hidden in a wagon with a false bottom  
 We talked of freedom, but what of you lent a helping hand  
 Where would I be without you - I know not the answer  
 Whipped and shackled, hungry and abused you ran  
 Thinking freedom was the answer it was a long time coming  
 But we are truly free deep down I search for hidden truth  
 You're beside me but I feel like I'm standing alone  
 I know I should have gratitude but my humble beginning keeps rushing forth  
 The chains, the hunger the humiliation that my people so humbly wore  
 An ingrate within my very being, there is no escape this is my history  
 Harriet Tubman words are brought to my mind "live or die"  
 Freedom was her quest for all



Juanita Pleasant, Reviving an Understanding and Truth of Black History.

The Human Chain, Poem from the book *Golden Reflections, from the Valley and Beyond*, by Juanita Pleasant.

# 9 PILLARS OF ACCESSIBILITY

## 4.6 TRANSPORTATION

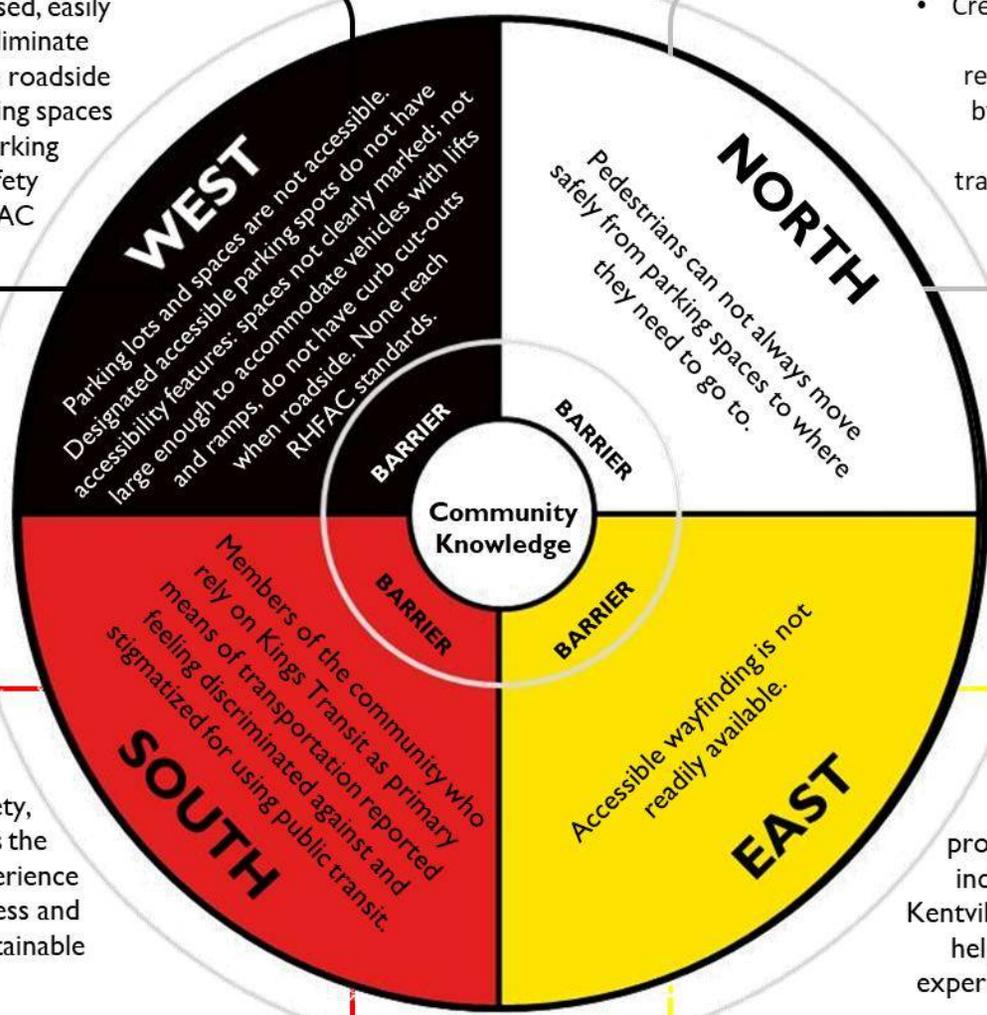
### TRANSPORTATION

#### Recommended Actions

- Create accessible parkades in unused, easily accessed, downtown spaces and eliminate parking in Centre Square. Remove roadside parking except for accessible parking spaces and allow for proper accessible parking and increased pedestrian traffic safety with wider sidewalks. Ensure RHFAC standards for parking and lots.

#### Recommended Actions

- Create accessible access to the downtown core by connecting amenities, stores, recreational facilities and outdoor spaces by well lit and clearly marked pedestrian corridors to promote active transportation as highlighted by the Town as a priority.



#### Recommended Actions

- Work with Kings Transit on a comprehensive plan that works to increase public access, ensures safety, security, accessibility, and supports the move to human centric urban experience and a culture which celebrates access and use of public transportation as sustainable and integral to the future.

#### Recommended Actions

- Provide an accessible, virtual, navigation system to help with wayfinding. Technology apps can provide blind and visually impaired citizens independence when travelling throughout Kentville. Well designed universal signage will help with placemaking, wayfinding, and the experience of Kentville as a welcoming place.

## 9 PILLARS OF ACCESSIBILITY

### 4.6 TRANSPORTATION

#### Policy:

The Town of Kentville is committed to making it easier for everyone in the Town of Kentville to get where they need to go.

#### Current Offerings:

The Town of Kentville does not currently own/operate any public transportation businesses or systems. They do however have a Council representative on the Board of Kings Transit, the main public transportation option. The Town also has a fleet of Town owned vehicles which some employees use daily for work. Additionally, the Town is responsible for building, repairing and updating all roadways, parking spaces and parking lots, and other infrastructure within the town's geographical area.

#### Survey Overview:

Walking and personal vehicles were identified as the most accessed form of transportation for those who were surveyed online. For those who participated in our in-person sessions, walking and use of public transportation via Kings Transit, were the two highest reported transportation methods. Of those surveyed, parking was the #1 barrier identified for transportation.

#### Successes:

- Kentville has a new bridge (Provincial project) which provides safer vehicle access from “North Kentville” (Aldershot area and beyond).
- There have been recent repairs to some roadways and sidewalks (Aberdeen).

#### Barriers:

- Parking lots and spaces throughout the town are not accessible. Designated accessible parking spots do not have accessibility features: spaces are not clearly marked, are not large enough to accommodate vehicles with lifts and ramps, and do not have cut-outs in curbs when roadside. None of Kentville’s parking reaches RHFAC standards.
- Pedestrians can not move safely from parking spaces and otherwise, to where they need to go.
- Accessible wayfinding is not readily available throughout the Town’s many roads, trails and parks.
- Kings Transit, the only means of affordable public transit throughout Kentville, is inaccessible to many who need it as their primary means of transportation. Some respondents identified feeling unsafe using Kings Transit.



Bicycle Lanes, New York City



Braille Signage

## 9 PILLARS OF ACCESSIBILITY

### 4.6 TRANSPORTATION

#### Benchmarks:

- Create accessible parkades in unused, easily accessed, downtown spaces and eliminate parking in Centre Square. Remove roadside parking except for accessible parking spaces and allow for proper accessible parking and increased pedestrian traffic safety with wider sidewalks.
- Create accessible access to the downtown core by connecting the main amenities of stores, recreational facilities and outdoor spaces by well lit and clearly marked transportation corridors to encourage the use of the spaces and promote active transportation as is highlighted by the Town in their Active Transportation Plan.
- Provide an accessible, virtual, navigation system to help with wayfinding around the Town of Kentville. Provide RFID type tags programmed for each business in Town that will coincide with a free wayfinding app. This app will provide blind and visually impaired citizens independence when travelling throughout Kentville.
- Eliminate barriers to using affordable public transportation by creating a plan with Kings Transit to increase bus routes in outer-lying areas; train transit staff on inclusion and diversity; create parking spaces for buses to move out of traffic; ensure all buses have accessible entrances and exits; increase lighting at all bus stops, and ensuring all bus shelters are accessible to everyone.

#### Community Partnerships:

- In partnership with local emergency services, ensure more accessible vehicles throughout service providers: ambulance, police, etc. [See EHS pilot project](#) The Province is partnering with EHS to roll out vans for non-emergency transport. The Town of Kentville could communicate with EHS to ensure these will be accessible vehicles, otherwise people with disabilities will feel like burdens having to use ambulance resources. <https://www.thechronicleherald.ca/opinion/regional-perspectives/peter-simpson-pilot-project-aims-to-free-up-nova-scotia-ambulances-527678/>
- Increase accessible transportation within the downtown core and partner with the local business community to install a downtown core accessible shuttle system perhaps offering day-time free transportation (post-Covid) throughout the Town limits. This could be done as a tourism initiative as the Federal government has increased tourism spending for municipalities, especially when it pertains to accessibility.



Interactive Signage,  
London

# 9 PILLARS OF ACCESSIBILITY

## 4.7 EDUCATION

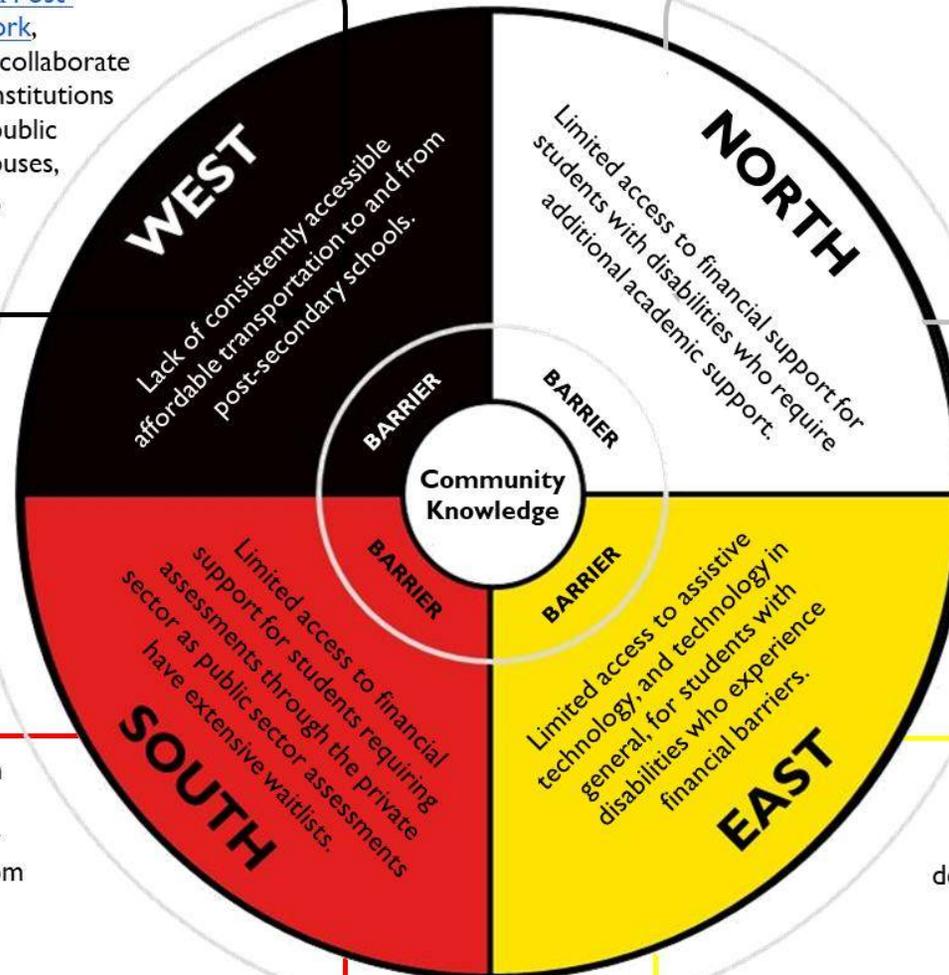
### EDUCATION

Recommended Actions

- As referenced in the [Nova Scotia Post-Secondary Accessibility Framework](#), Municipal Government needs to collaborate with post-secondary education institutions to ensure accessible, affordable public transportation to and from campuses, including bus stop infrastructure, sidewalks, and signage.

Recommended Actions

- Make available information listing non-profit agencies offering free or affordable assistive devices; funding sources, and provide staff to assist students with disabilities with funding applications. Work with community groups to create after-school programs to assist with tutoring.



Recommended Actions

- Advocate for more mental health and assessment supports in and around the Town of Kentville for people with disabilities and/or from marginalized community groups.

Recommended Actions

- Support the development of bursaries for post-secondary students requiring additional funding for assistive devices and/or technology. Make available resource information listing non-profit agencies offering free and/or affordable assistive devices; funding sources, and provide staff to assist students with disabilities with funding applications.

## 9 PILLARS OF ACCESSIBILITY

### 4.7 EDUCATION

#### Policy:

The Town of Kentville will work with educational bodies to ensure that the Provincial standards in this area, created to make learning environments in which all students can participate, are implemented to the best of their ability. These standards could address how students with disabilities get the instruction and learning materials they need. These standards will apply to primary, secondary, and post-secondary education.

#### Overview:

The Town of Kentville aims to build and foster relationships with all public and private forms of education in and surrounding the Town.

#### Current offerings:

- Kings County Academy (KCA): pre-primary to eighth grade
- Nova Scotia Community College, Kingstec Campus
- North-East Kings Education Centre (NKEC): Kentville students attend for grades 8-12 (not located within geographical area of Kentville)

#### Survey Overview:

Many who currently have children or work with organizations for youth and children feel engaged in the education process and noted that this “makes all the difference.” They felt there was ample opportunity for extracurricular involvement within the Town and commended the obvious partnerships among agencies, schools and Town.

#### Successes (What We Heard):

- Kings Point to Point has partnered with the school board to provide accessible transportation to and from school.

#### Barriers (What We Heard):

- Lack of consistently accessible affordable transportation to and from schools.
- Limited access to financial support for students with disabilities who require additional academic support.
- Limited access to assistive technology, and technology in general, for students with disabilities who experience financial barriers.
- Limited access to financial support for students requiring assessments through the private sector as public sector assessments have extensive waitlists.



Wheelchair Accessible  
School Bus



Assistive Technology

## 9 PILLARS OF ACCESSIBILITY

### 4.7 EDUCATION

#### Benchmarks:

- Collaborate with educational institutions to ensure accessible, affordable public transportation, including bus stop infrastructure, sidewalks, and signage as stated in the [Nova Scotia Post-Secondary Accessibility Framework](https://www.nsc.ca/about_nsc/news-and-events/media/2020/accessibility-framework-dec-2020.asp).  
[https://www.nsc.ca/about\\_nsc/news-and-events/media/2020/accessibility-framework-dec-2020.asp](https://www.nsc.ca/about_nsc/news-and-events/media/2020/accessibility-framework-dec-2020.asp)
- Offer bursaries for post-secondary students requiring funding for accessibility needs. Make available information listing funding sources and provide staff to assist students with disabilities with funding applications.
- Assess and harmonize existing government programs providing access to assistive devices and supports. When these supports are unavailable or inaccessible to students with disabilities, offer bursaries. Make available information listing non-profit agencies offering free or affordable assistive devices; funding sources, and support staff to assist students with disabilities with funding applications.
- Advocate for more mental health and assessment supports in and around the Town of Kentville for people with disabilities and/or from marginalized community groups.

#### Community Partnerships:

- Partner with NSCC to build inclusive relationships with students: offer internships, work placements, hire students directly from the graduating classes to ensure our skilled tradespeople stay in Nova Scotia.
- Collaborate with Kings Transit to increase affordability for students attending NSC offer student pricing if this doesn't already exist.



## 9 PILLARS OF ACCESSIBILITY

### 4.7 EDUCATION

#### Continuing Professional Training & Education:

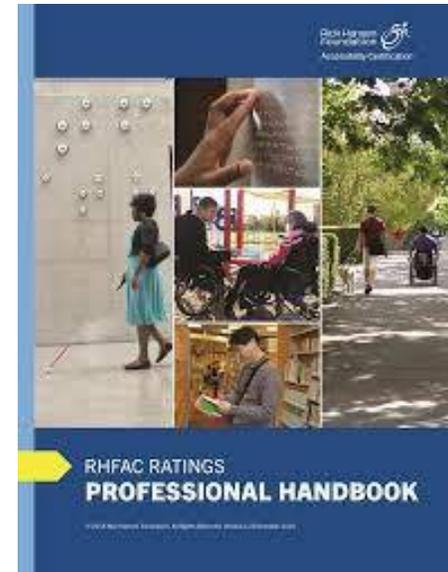
During Citizen Engagement frustration was expressed regarding accessible design not meeting the Nova Scotia Building Code Regulations: they asked, if the construction industry cannot meet the minimum standards of the Provincial Building Code what chances are there to meet RHFAC standards for accessibility?

In some instances it may not be possible to fully implement accessible design principles due to a barrier - architectural, structural or economical - leaving professionals tasked with making difficult decisions. However, the issue may be lack of education.

**Recommendation:** The Town can work with trades and construction industry to initiate continuing education opportunities via information sessions or workshops. This is an important role the Town of Kentville can take to ensure that projects in Kentville have meaningful access and meet RHFAC and Provincial Building Code standards. The Town of Kentville must be prepared to ask questions and hold accountable all professionals and officials when it comes to accessibility.

Educating its citizens through dialogue about urban planning will assist the Town of Kentville in becoming a leader in accessibility. For example, hosting and supporting activities like “Jane Jacob Walk & Rolls” which are community based, on the ground tours to review existing places, urban layouts, nature and histories. These walks gives citizens a chance to assess and discuss their own views regarding what makes a human-centered Town.

Kentville can support lectures on Architecture & Urban Planning, sustainability, accessibility and activism, celebrating excellence and ideas that represent diverse perspectives in experience and design. Design Competitions create excitement, dialogue and education about what makes human-centred design great. Competitions for the Centre Square design and architectural components, and for Miner’s Marsh to create pavilions similar to the Winnipeg Warming Huts, will engage the public to photograph, discuss and critique the designs, and create an atmosphere of continual learning in this realm.



RHFAC Rating,  
Professional Handbook



Jane Jacobs, Jane Walks

# 9 PILLARS OF ACCESSIBILITY

## 4.8 EMPLOYMENT

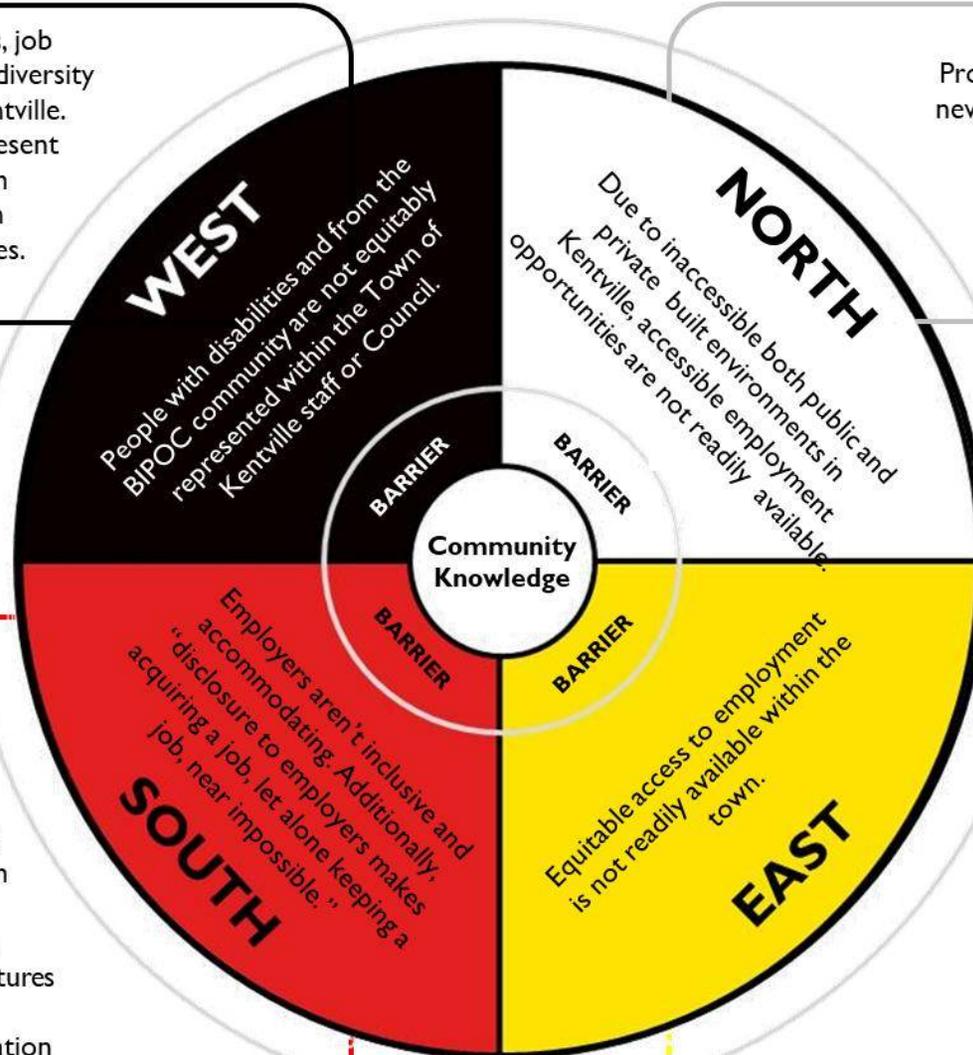
### EMPLOYMENT

Recommended Actions

- Revisit and revise hiring policies, job descriptions, and inclusion and diversity policies within the Town of Kentville. Partner with agencies that represent people with disabilities and from marginalized communities when hiring and commit to equity hires.

Recommended Actions

- Adhere to legislated Built Space and Procurement policies for new business and new buildings within the Town of Kentville.



Recommended Actions

- Partner with Kentville Business Community to offer monthly training sessions to business owners and managers on: the ease of accommodation, the laws and what they mean, inclusion and diversity, hiring and retention from the hidden talent pool, etc.
- Highlight inclusive employers with “employer of the month” type features on website and social media. (provide a small token of appreciation – ie: plaque or dinner gift card).

Recommended Actions

- Adopt Human-Centre Design policies and regulations for eliminating barriers and improving equitable access for everyone in the Town of Kentville.

## 9 PILLARS OF ACCESSIBILITY

### 4.8 EMPLOYMENT

#### **Policy:**

The Town of Kentville is committed to being an accessible workplace, and supporting young people with disabilities in finding and maintaining meaningful employment.

#### **Current Offerings:**

As per Senior Management, there aren't any visible minorities employed within the current Town of Kentville. Due to limited feedback from Town employees we do not have self identification information to report in regards to disabilities.

#### **Survey Overview:**

Meaningful employment was defined as being able to obtain and maintain employment that meets the needs and values of the individual. These needs include: feeling engaged in the process; earning a living wage; having access to benefits and pensions; and having the ability to disclose your disability in the workplace and be given accommodations. 68% agree that people with disabilities are accepted in the workplace, however, only 35% are aware of inclusive employers.

#### **Successes (What We Heard):**

- There are supportive employment agencies within the Town of Kentville that can provide support for both the individual and the employer like: NS Works/Community Inc.; PeopleWorx; Native Council, and the Valley African Nova Scotia Development Association etc. with whom the Town of Kentville's Parks and Recreation Department currently partners to hire youth at risk in seasonal jobs.
- The Town of Kentville is actively collaborating with the Dalhousie College of Continuing Education for the Mentoring Plus Program, a program that aims to draw upon the skills and knowledge of retirees to help support young adults (16 - 35+) explore and connect to career paths through team mentoring and support.



Accessible Design for  
Everyone

## 9 PILLARS OF ACCESSIBILITY

### 4.8 EMPLOYMENT

#### Barriers (What We Heard):

- There isn't representation within the Town of Kentville employing people with disabilities and/or people from visible minority groups.
- Due to inaccessible built environments, accessible employment opportunities are not prevalent in the Town of Kentville.
- Equitable access to employment is not readily available within the town.
- Employers aren't inclusive and accommodating. Additionally, "disclosure to employers makes acquiring a job, let alone keeping a job, near impossible".

#### Benchmarks:

- Revisit and revise hiring policies, job descriptions, and inclusion and diversity policies within the Town of Kentville. Ensure recruitment, hiring, and career development processes are accessible.
- Update policies for managers to help in meeting obligations to provide reasonable accommodations needed by employees with disabilities.
- Train all levels of Town of Kentville employees in unconscious bias, inclusion, diversity and emotional intelligence. Training to be made available online for current employees; new employees to be provided onboarding materials around inclusion and diversity, and policies in place to process issues and concerns should they arise.
- Improve access to government buildings and offices to ensure employees are able to access washrooms, workspaces, common rooms, boardrooms, and kitchens.

#### Community Partnerships:

- Partner with KBC to offer monthly free (or in-expensive) training sessions to TOK business owners and managers on: the ease of accommodation, the laws and what they mean, inclusion and diversity, hiring and retention from the hidden talent pool, tourism benefits of accessibility etc.
- Partner with agencies that represent people with disabilities and marginalized communities when hiring and commit to equity hires.
- Highlight inclusive employers with "employer of the month" type features on website and social media (provide a small token of appreciation ie. plaque or dinner gift card) or create Kentville Accessibility Awards to yearly celebrate positive changes in the community.



Assistive Devices in the Workplace



Barrier-free Workplaces

# 9 PILLARS OF ACCESSIBILITY

## 4.9 PROCUREMENT

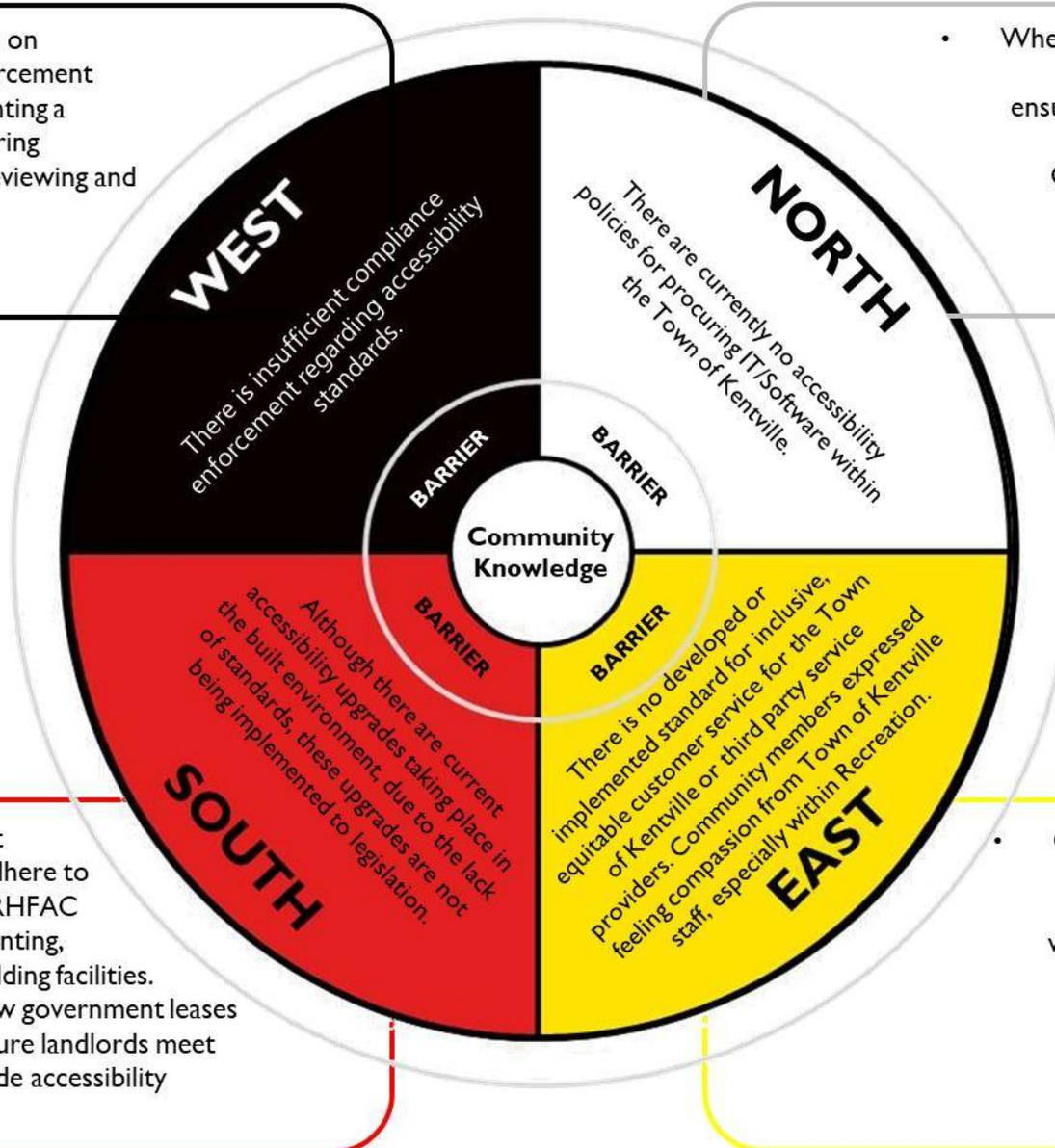
### PROCUREMENT

Recommended Actions

- Establish an immediate focus on compliance by creating enforcement mechanisms including appointing a person responsible for ensuring Compliance and routinely reviewing and reassessing.

Recommended Actions

- When procuring IT/Software when at all possible the Town of Kentville will ensure that providers can confirm their product/service meets all of Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0 standards.



Recommended Actions

- The Town of Kentville must consider accessibility and adhere to the Built Environment and RHFAC standards, when they are renting, renovating, acquiring or building facilities. Incorporate clauses into new government leases for occupied spaces to ensure landlords meet the Nova Scotia building code accessibility requirements.

Recommended Actions

- Create a customer service standard which third party service providers can be trained in and must comply with, in order to provide services to and on behalf of the Town of Kentville.

## 9 PILLARS OF ACCESSIBILITY

### 4.9 PROCUREMENT

#### Policy:

The Town of Kentville will ensure purchase of accessible goods, services and facilities, and when not possible, will ensure they explain why and how they plan to alleviate the accessibility issue moving forward.

#### Current Offerings:

Through this project the Town of Kentville aims to be compliant with both Bill 59 and the Accessible Canada Act (ACA). The Accessible Canada Act mandates that public sector organizations incorporate accessibility criteria in their processes for buying and acquiring goods, services and facilities while considering accessibility, quality, cost, accessible design and accessible features where possible.

#### Survey Overview:

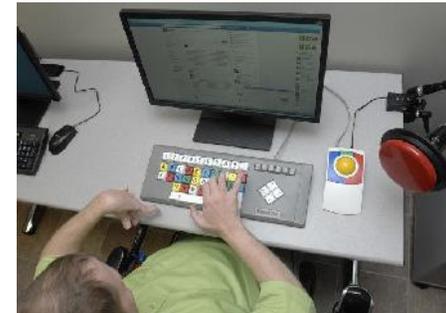
Community members surveyed want to see consistency in accessibility in the form of policy and procedure, when it comes to new, renewed, and updated built space, contracts, programs and services.

#### Successes (What We Heard):

- As highlighted in the Municipal Planning Strategy, under the Municipal Government Act there are policies to “establish policy with regard to the management of land uses, healthy growth and community development, and the provision of public services and facilities. Policies within this Strategy shall focus on methods to address limitations and opportunities related to the development of land in Kentville.” This enables the Town of Kentville to make change within their policies for the better of their community.

#### Barriers (What We Heard):

- There are currently no accessibility policies for procuring IT/Software.
- There is no standard developed or implemented for inclusive, equitable customer service, either for the Town of Kentville or for its third party service providers. It was noted that community members feel compassion from Town of Kentville staff, especially from the Recreation Department.
- Although there are current accessibility upgrades taking place within the built environment but because of the lack of standards, these upgrades are not being implemented to legislation.
- There is insufficient compliance/enforcement regarding accessibility standards to uphold standards and/or building codes.



Accessible Technology



Upgrades to Accessibility

## 9 PILLARS OF ACCESSIBILITY

### 4.9 PROCUREMENT

#### Benchmarks:

- Ensure that providers can confirm their product/service meets all of WCAG 2.0 standards when procuring IT/Software, when at all possible.
- Create a customer service standard which third party service providers can be trained in, and must comply with, in order to provide services to the Town of Kentville.
- Consider accessibility and adhere to the Built Environment standards, when the Town of Kentville rents, renovates, acquires or builds facilities. Additionally the Town of Kentville will incorporate clauses into new government leases for occupied spaces to ensure landlords meet the Nova Scotia building code accessibility requirements.
- Establish an immediate focus on compliance by creating enforcement mechanisms including appointing a Director of Compliance and routinely reviewing and reassessing to ensure compliance.

#### Community Partnerships:

- Town of Kentville procurement policies must be enforced on the municipal level when acquiring services or goods through the Regional Agency process.
- Partner with the Kentville Business Community to ensure the customer service standard is understood, and adhered to by all businesses within the Town of Kentville.
- Consult with agencies and organizations supporting people with disabilities and/or people from marginalized communities when making decisions and/or creating policies to ensure they are being done without bias, and with full consideration and engagement of these communities.



Design for Accessibility &  
Inclusion

# 9 PILLARS OF ACCESSIBILITY

## 4.10 HUMAN CENTERED DESIGN

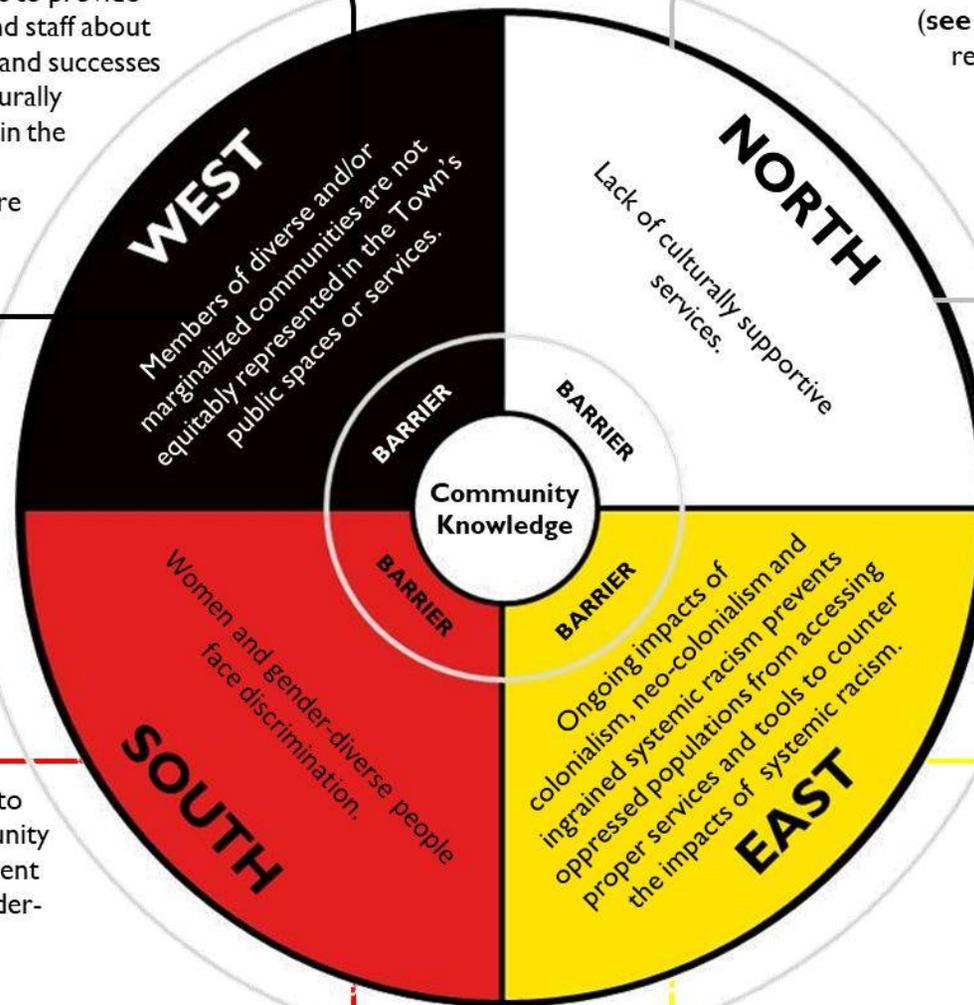
### HUMAN CENTRED DESIGN

Recommended Actions

- Partner with diverse populations to provide knowledge to the community and staff about historical and current injustices and successes of BIPOC community; hire culturally diverse individuals to work within the Town of Kentville, and develop policies to ensure equity hires are prioritized.

Recommended Actions

- Hire an Indigenous outreach worker (see **funding support**) to provide culturally relevant services to meet the needs of the community.



Recommended Actions

- Partner with diverse populations to provide knowledge to the community and staff about historical and current injustices against women and gender-diverse peoples. (See appendix Final Report MMIWG2SLGBTQ+)

Recommended Actions

- Implement a decolonization framework in partnership with First Nations peoples for the Town of Kentville and adopt sections of the recommended reports for reconciliation. (See appendix Truth & Reconciliation Final Report)

## 9 PILLARS OF ACCESSIBILITY

### 4.10 HUMAN CENTERED DESIGN

**Policy:** The Town of Kentville has chosen to add implicit bias and decolonization to their list of priorities to create an inclusive and accessible community for all of its members.

#### **Current Offerings:**

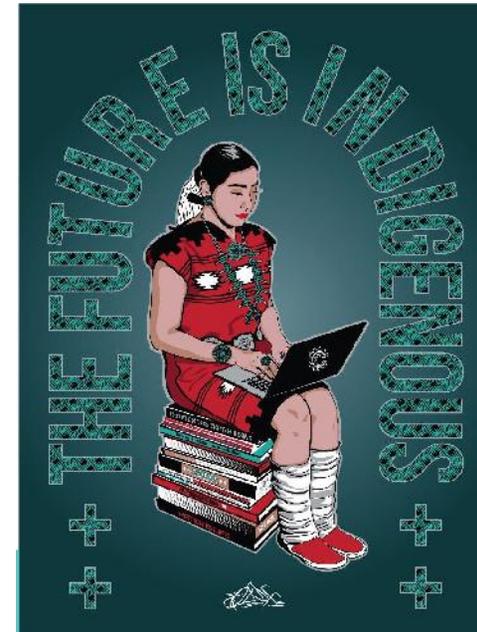
By adding implicit bias and decolonization to priorities, the Town recognizes the need to identify risk areas where implicit biases may affect behaviors and judgments. Specific procedures to guide decision making encourages employees to be mindful of the risks of implicit bias that are contrary to values and beliefs. The Town of Kentville acknowledges the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's final report and Calls to Action and will include these calls to action as part of their decolonization plan. This is a long process and will need to start by decolonizing policies and procedures within the Town.

#### **Survey Overview:**

65% of those surveyed do not feel directly discriminated by the Town of Kentville. One participant noted that there is room for improvement and that as we move forward we need to "be mindful of how to engage folks that historically have not been engaged."

#### **Successes (What We Heard):**

- Members of diverse cultural backgrounds were pleased to hear the Town is adding implicit bias and decolonization to their list of priorities. They stated "the fact that the Town of Kentville is reaching out to get this type of information speaks volumes."
- As per the Integrated Community Sustainability Plan, the Town of Kentville has made access to services and recreation priorities for both economic and social sustainability, including: encouraging diversity and entrepreneurship in the local economy, promoting safe and accessible public spaces, recognizing and planning for demographic diversity, and encouraging diversification in community recreation, arts and culture.
- The Town of Kentville is working with the First Nations community to remove inaccurate historical information regarding Cornwallis. ([See story here](https://www.thechronicleherald.ca/news/provincial/kentville-council-commits-to-renaming-cornwallis-street-as-new-bridge-nears-completion-475923/))  
<https://www.thechronicleherald.ca/news/provincial/kentville-council-commits-to-renaming-cornwallis-street-as-new-bridge-nears-completion-475923/> Renaming infrastructure that represents inaccurate history/BIPOC oppressors is a pivotal act of meaningful reconciliation. Belcher Street is another renaming opportunity to reflect the Black history in Kentville. This can be achieved by working with the Indigenous and Black communities on solutions. The Appendix has resources for working with Indigenous communities on processes to guide reconciliation actions.
- The Recreation Department is committing time and space to the involvement of women and girls in recreational activities as identified in the Town of Kentville's Physical Activity Strategy.



Artist, Jared Yazzie

## 9 PILLARS OF ACCESSIBILITY

### 4.10 HUMAN CENTERED DESIGN

#### Barriers (What We Heard):

- Members of diverse and/or marginalized communities are not represented in the Town's public spaces, services or within their employ.
- There is a lack of culturally supportive services in all areas.
- Ongoing impacts of colonialism, neo-colonialism and ingrained systemic racism prevents oppressed populations from accessing services and tools to counter systemic racism.
- Women and gender-diverse people face discrimination. Town of Kentville's Physical Activity Strategy indicates women and youth are not getting equitable access to recreation.

#### Benchmarks:

- Hire culturally diverse individuals to work for Town of Kentville. Create equitable hiring policies with measurables for diversity and inclusion to ensure diversity in staff. Put a diversity and inclusion statement on all job ads.
- Hire an Indigenous outreach worker to provide culturally relevant services to meet community needs.
- Implement a decolonization framework in partnership with First Nations peoples and adopt sections of the recommended measures for reconciliation.
- Provide knowledge and training to all staff about historical and current injustices and successes of Indigenous peoples.
- Adopt the Recreation for All policy and update language to include LGBTQ2IA+

#### Community Partnerships:

- Partner with community groups that support diverse populations to provide knowledge about historical and current injustices against women and gender-diverse peoples.
- Address child poverty as a major concern in the Town of Kentville (see [2020 Report Card on Child Poverty in Nova Scotia](https://www.policyalternatives.ca/sites/default/files/uploads/publications/Nova%20Scotia%20Office/2020/12/Child%20poverty%20report%20card%202020.pdf))

<https://www.policyalternatives.ca/sites/default/files/uploads/publications/Nova%20Scotia%20Office/2020/12/Child%20poverty%20report%20card%202020.pdf>

- With a percentage of 27.8% (4.3% higher than the provincial average) ensure all children are fed while attending school. The Town's Recreation Department provides lunches at no cost during summer day camp programming and have noted the benefits to the community by doing so.
- Partner with the aforementioned agencies to find qualified, dedicated staff to fill permanent and seasonal positions out of the hidden talent pool the Town would not otherwise have access to because of the restrictions imposed with current job calls and hiring processes.



Accessible Workplace

## UNIVERSAL DESIGN OF DOWNTOWN KENTVILLE

### 5.1 DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION THROUGH ACCESSIBILITY

#### A. 7 Principles of Universal Design

In accordance with the the Citizen Engagement results, the Imagine Kentville Map presents a preliminary and imaginative Urban Plan based on principles of Universal Design with accessibility and diversity being anchor tenants.

Although there are elements suggested on the Map that may not seem doable at present time, the activity to visualize what the possibilities are inspires long term vision and identifies short term goals.

For example, while a riverside path at present may not seem feasible, given the right time, circumstances, landowners, public will, policy and investment, it could be made a future reality, creating naturalized beautification, with accessible, public enjoyment to the waterfront for health and wellness. A first step to explore the possibilities of this vision would be a Riverfront Pathways Study which would include an economic impact study.

However, the focus on the creation of an accessible downtown through promenades and active transportation routes with consistent, smooth surfacing was a key highlight from Citizen Engagement. Outdoor public gathering spaces, fully accessible public washrooms, and relocation of excess parking to the perimetre (except for accessible parking spots) were identified as key components to enhancing the downtown core through accessibility and Universal Design strategies.

The 7 Principles of Universal Design are as follows, with the goal of ease of use and accessibility for all.  
Principle 1: Equitable Use

Principle 2: Flexibility in Use

Principle 3: Simple and Intuitive Use

Principle 4: Perceptible Information

Principle 5: Tolerance for Error

Principle 6: Low Physical Effort

Principle 7: Size and Space for Approach and Use



Imagine Kentville  
Map,  
houdinidesign  
ARCHITECTS  
See Next Page for  
Enlargement.

[These principles project social values, make good business sense, support independence and promote a positive public image: http://universaldesign.ie/what-is-universal-design/benefits-and-drivers/#bus](http://universaldesign.ie/what-is-universal-design/benefits-and-drivers/#bus)

# UNIVERSAL DESIGN OF DOWNTOWN KENTVILLE

## 5.1 DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION THROUGH ACCESSIBILITY

### B. IMAGINE KENTVILLE MAP



Imagine Downtown Kentville,  
houdinidesign ARCHITECTS

## UNIVERSAL DESIGN OF DOWNTOWN KENTVILLE

### 5.1 DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION THROUGH ACCESSIBILITY

#### C. COMPONENTS OF UNIVERSAL DESIGN

Participants in Citizen Engagement sessions contributed their ideas, experiences and points of view to envisioning a future, accessible and inclusive Kentville. The Imagine Kentville Mapping Exercise focused on the components of Universal Design and the following ideas were expressed by participants:

##### **Logical Plan**

The Town needs a logical intuitive plan with clear pedestrian promenades, interconnected routes and nodes which create a loop around the Town.

##### **Place Making**

Pedestrian focussed planning.

Investment in culture.

Create strong relationships between businesses, community, and tourism through a joyous celebration of place.

A public train (solar or electric) around the downtown would be a tourism attraction as well as solve traffic and parking issues.

##### **Centre Square & Market**

Centre Square is central to orienting oneself in the Town.

It should be car-free, with an accessible, digital information kiosk.

Welcoming, a beautiful place of gathering, pride, and exchange; a true hub: a theatre of life.

A clear marker of democratic public space, welcoming of diversity, it belongs to all.

Washrooms/Comfort Station, fully accessible.

The Farmer's Market should have a permanent home here, with merchants and patios facing inwards into the square, increasing the dynamics and energy of Centre Square.



Place-Making, Outdoor Street Life, Barcelona Spain



Santa Caterina Market, Barcelona, Spain

## UNIVERSAL DESIGN OF DOWNTOWN KENTVILLE

### 5.1 DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION THROUGH ACCESSIBILITY

#### C. COMPONENTS OF UNIVERSAL DESIGN

##### **Pedestrian Promenades**

Link public buildings (e.g., Town Hall) to Centre Square with wide, safe promenades. Promenades need to be fully accessible. Public exterior gathering spaces need to be linked to public buildings. Sheltered seating available at regular intervals.

##### **Crosswalks & Sidewalks**

Crosswalks must have visual and auditory communication. Crosswalks must have tactile indicators and visually identified, properly designed, curb cuts. Sidewalks must be of accessible width, even and aligned.

##### **Nature, Squares, Gardens, Playgrounds & Paths**

Tree-lined streets. Public squares, playgrounds, gardens and paths connect the amenities of the Town so people of all levels of abilities can move freely throughout. Included in outdoor spaces are diverse public art, fountains, and places for people to sit. Accessible Washrooms are imperative.

##### **Parking**

Accessible parking for cars and busses needs to be the focus of street parking. The rest of parking should be at the perimeter of Town. Parking garages would make available more green space or room for housing developments.

##### **Speed Limits & Pedestrian Streets**

Pedestrian only streets add significant value to areas. Aberdeen could be made a pedestrian-only street connecting to Centre Square. Maximum speed limits must be posted and enforced to create a culture of pedestrian friendly and safe streets.



Teatro del Mondo, Venice,  
Architect, Aldo Rossi



Street Life San Antonio  
Square, Texas

## UNIVERSAL DESIGN OF DOWNTOWN KENTVILLE

### 5.1 DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION THROUGH ACCESSIBILITY

#### C. COMPONENTS OF UNIVERSAL DESIGN

##### Historical Buildings

Significant historical buildings need to be identified and invested in. Historical buildings create a visually interesting backdrop for street life. Historical architecture is a tourism driver for cultural experiences.

##### Inclusive Public Art

Investment and effort is required to engage diverse communities in public art creation and representation.

Art representing diversity displayed in Town Hall shares a strong vision with its citizens.

##### Density

Residential and mixed-use buildings infill where empty lots exist.

“The 15-Minute City” urban plan results in amenities and necessities being within a 15 minute walk from home.

The creation of cul-du-sac communities do not allow people independence to access the things they need.

New community plans need to respond to the existing historical layouts.

Large areas of parking spaces and lots make it very difficult to negotiate Town on foot.

##### Library & Museums

Libraries & Museums are significant public spaces. The Town should invest in these important places. The Library should be linked by pedestrian promenades and crosswalks to Town Hall, Centre Square and other public spaces.

The outdoor area of the Library could include seating and welcoming gathering space.

Outdoor reading rooms, picnic areas and paths encourage visiting the Library.

Investment and support for Museums draws community, business and tourism.

Kings County Museum requires significant renovation to be made accessible and meet the future needs of visitors and tourism.



Outdoor Seating, Spain



Public Square, Montreal

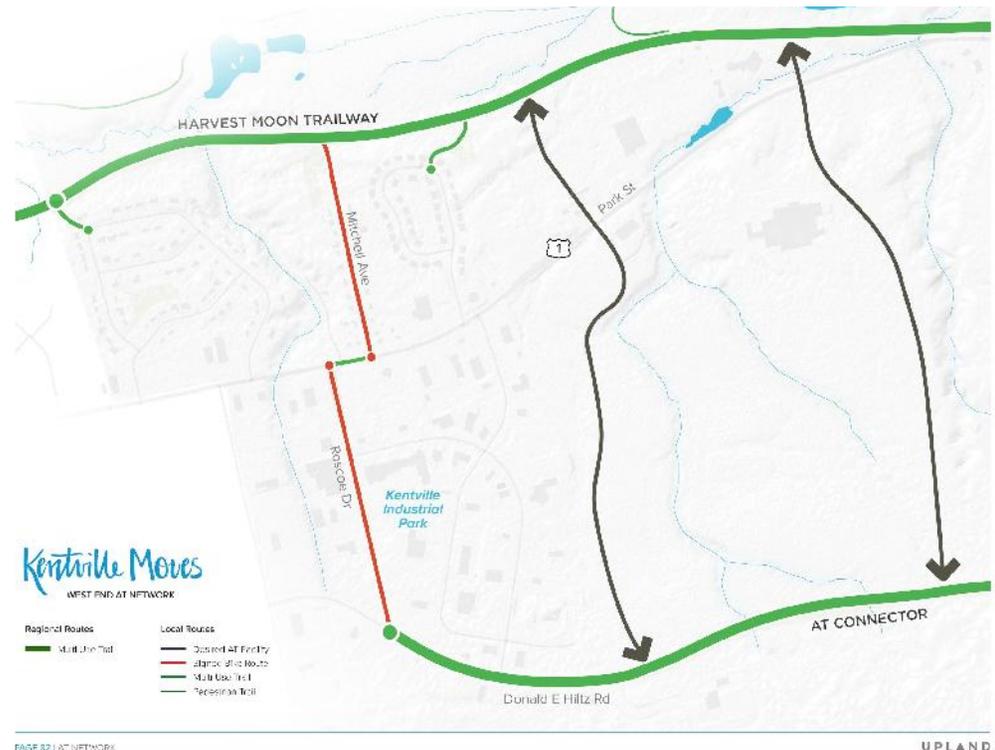
## 5.1 DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION THROUGH ACCESSIBILITY

### D. MAP OF CONNECTORS (UPLAND)

The work of Upland on the Active Transportation Plan and the work of houdinidesign ARCHITECTS needs to be carried forward as one vision - in small steps by a combination Architecture & Urban Planning Team. This combined Team needs to fully understand the marco plan and the micro plan.

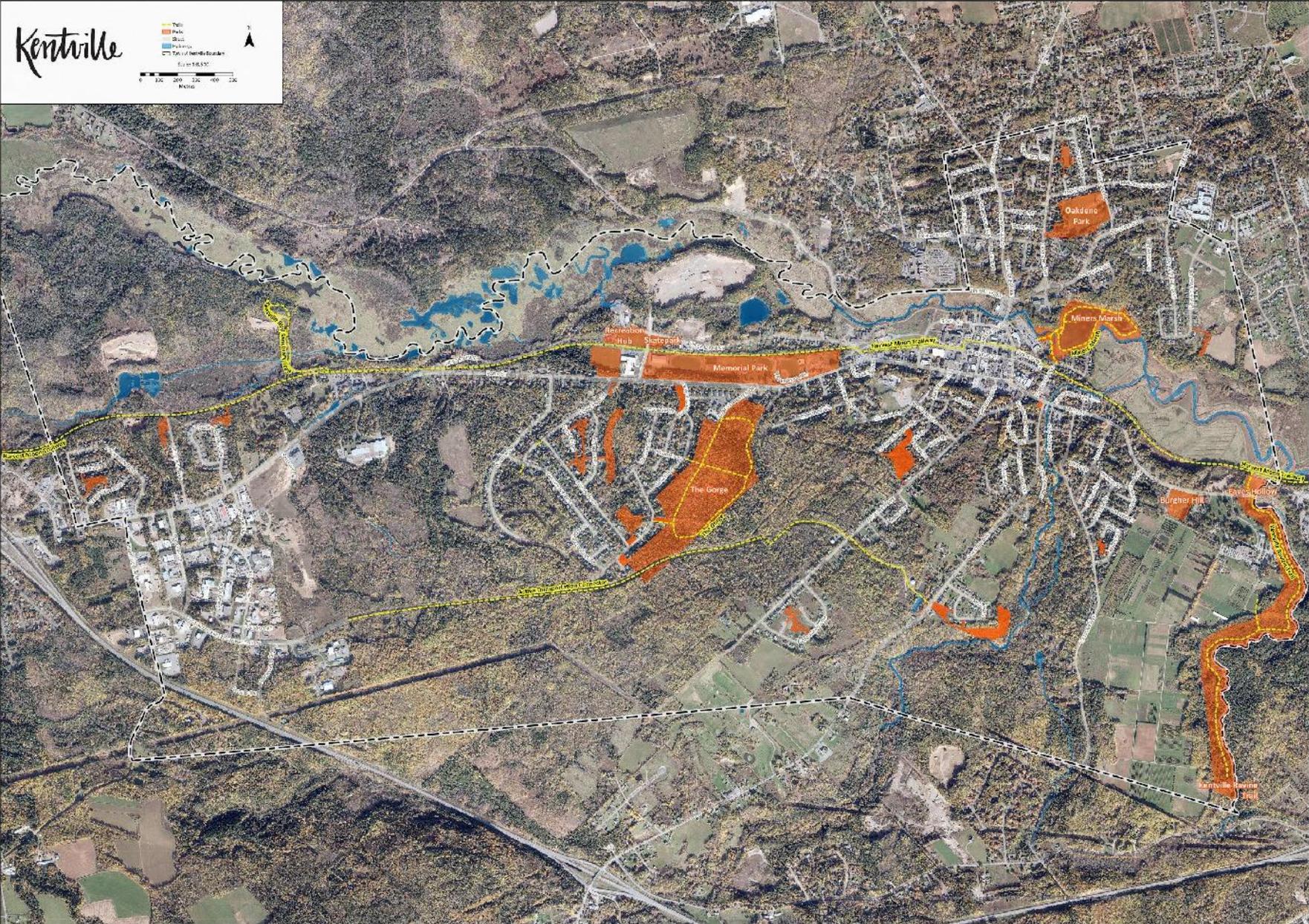
The Active Transportation Plan needs to be paired with Universal Design principles and reflect the Town's brand. Bylaws need to be updated to ensure the Citizen Engagement is respected to allow the Active Transportation Pedestrian Routes, development of Centre Square, and the Visitors Centre, be implemented.

A holistic vision will provide solutions that move in the direction of a walkable, enjoyable, livable and future-forward Town.



5.1 DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION THROUGH ACCESSIBILITY

E. AERIAL MAP OF KENTVILLE



## UNIVERSAL DESIGN OF DOWNTOWN KENTVILLE

### 5.1 DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION THROUGH ACCESSIBILITY

#### F. SCHEMATIC DESIGN OF SIDEWALKS EXAMPLE (UPLAND)

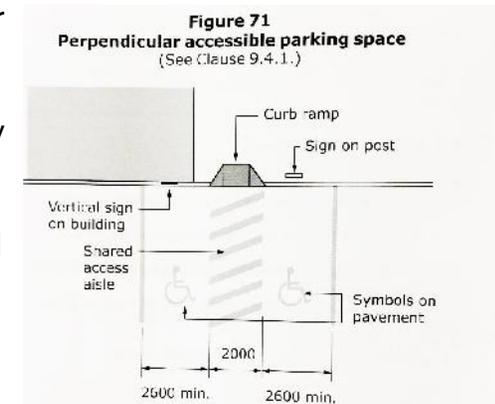
houdinidesign ARCHITECTS supports the recommendations of Upland regarding the importance of Accessible Pedestrian Signals to crosswalks, and curb cuts with yellow markings and tactile curb indicators.

Key recommendations for accessible sidewalks include: good lighting; objects on path of travel are cane detectable; portable signage and sandwich boards not in the path of travel; proper drainage; bases of trees have cane detectable guards; railings that block driver view of pedestrians are eliminated; barriers have visual contrast; provide edge protection where suitable; gutters provides a flush transition; sidewalk width suitable for wheelchairs, scooters, and service dogs; pathways must be wider in front of shops and bus stops.

The list of requirements is too extensive to incorporate into this report; however, this information is outlined in detail through the Rick Hansen Foundation Accessible Certification (RHFAC) Handbook - design and construction should not proceed without the RHFAC document being used and Silver or Gold Certification in Accessible design being the objective.

The big takeaway from this report is that the necessary information for accessibility standards is readily available through RHFAC, the Provincial Building Code and CSA B651HB18.

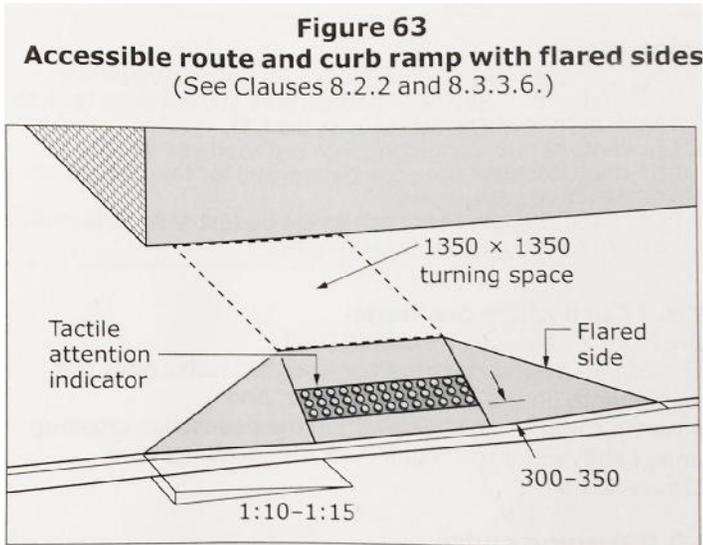
Contractors need to use these essential documents, the RHFAC guides, and adhere to the Local Authorities Having Jurisdiction for all projects.



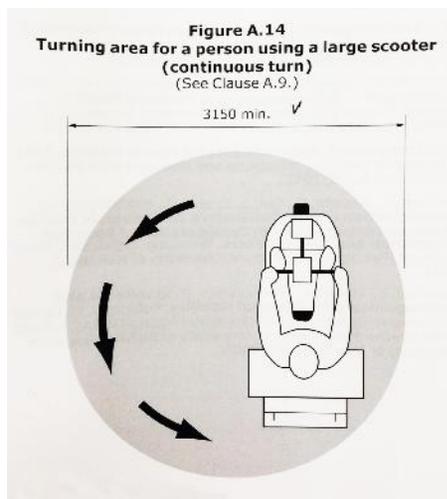
Accessible design for the built  
environment,  
Implementation handbook,  
B651HB-18

2.1 DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION THROUGH ACCESSIBILITY

F. SCHEMATIC DESIGN OF SIDEWALKS EXAMPLE (UPLAND)



Accessible design for the built environment - Implementation handbook, B651HB-18



Accessible design for the built environment - Implementation handbook, B651HB-18

**Introduce Accessible Pedestrian Signals to crosswalks**

Most, if not all, of the crosswalks in Downtown Kentville would be extremely difficult to cross for pedestrians with low vision, who are hard of hearing or who use a wheelchair to get around. Pedestrians with low vision rely on audible and tactile cues at street crossings. Cues in the environment include the sound of traffic, presence of curbs, ramps, audible tones in pedestrian signals, and detectable warnings.

Important road crossing information should be provided in formats that use more than one sense. Pedestrian information includes signage, Accessible Pedestrian Signals (APS), and detectable warnings.

Accessible Pedestrian Signals (APS) are devices that communicate information about the "Walk" and "DON'T WALK" intervals to pedestrians with visual impairments to pedestrians who are blind or who have low vision. Audible beeping is the use of an audible tone to indicate when blind pedestrians can proceed on the crosswalk coming from the largest corner as they cross the street. Crosswalk buttons must be placed directly at crosswalks within reach of all heights (including wheelchair users), and able to be effectively cleared of snow and ice.

Detectable warnings are standardized surfaces placed at crosswalks consisting of a grid of raised, truncated domes, placed at crossing areas to people who are blind or who have low vision.



Top  
Detectable Warning Strip  
Bottom  
Accessible Beeping  
Accessible Pedestrian Signal

Kentville Moves Active Transportation Plan

AT NETWORKS | PAGE 71

Upland Active Transportation Plan

## UNIVERSAL DESIGN OF DOWNTOWN KENTVILLE

### 5.1 DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION THROUGH ACCESSIBILITY

#### G. COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Quality public spaces create nodes where community can gather, shop, eat and exchange ideas. These quality public spaces create sound barriers from traffic noise and pollution. They create spaces where people who experience sensory overload can sit quietly, relax and recoup.

#### Centre Square

Great work has been done by the Town to invigorate Centre Square with culture and activity through successful, incremental strategies, and citizens have responded in kind by participating, promoting, and contributing to the events. Citizen Engagement identified additional opportunities to further develop Centre Square including: enhanced representation of diverse cultures in programmatic design; removal of parking; adherence to accessibility standards for surfacing; and the addition of a permanent Market with public washroom/comfort station.

Many of the existing businesses on the Centre Square perimeter can be renovated for both Street and Square access allowing people to flow through stores in keeping with Universal Design and accessible Wayfinding. Cafes and restaurants would have outdoor sitting areas in the Centre Square for people to enjoy food, conversation and community, with protection from traffic noise and movement.

Market stalls would be additionally utilized outside of Market days as flex spaces to rent for part-time crafters, small business launches, or fairs (cultural, special events, etc). Having a designated space for music, dance and theatre in the Square connects to tourism priorities in the Province and creates community engagement opportunities that naturally evolve in the space as citizens respond to it.



Centre Square, houdinidesign  
ARCHITECTS



Centre Square, houdinidesign ARCHITECTS

# UNIVERSAL DESIGN OF DOWNTOWN KENTVILLE

## 5.1 DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION THROUGH ACCESSIBILITY

### G. COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

#### Visitors Centre

A Visitors Centre should be reintroduced along the main bike path through Town. Wayfinding is integral to accessibility and the enjoyment of a community and a Visitors Centre fulfills this role as a central hub of information. Currently, the Kentville Museum building is the logical solution for the Visitors Centre due to its location and opportunities to promote tourism, downtown businesses, and pedestrian and cycling routes, as identified by Uplands in the Active Transportation Plan. A Visitors Gift Shop could provide opportunities to sell local books, wares, crafts, art while promoting the makers and the place.

This building is on the the major axis through Kentville, linking to Town Hall with the Centre Square in between, and is a Town-owned replica Train Station, tying into the Main Street Station branding and would beautifully support an electric/solar powered hop-on, hop-off train around the downtown.

This building previously served as the location for the Annapolis Valley Chamber of Commerce and Tourism Info and is on a public transportation stop. The current tenants house an archival collection of Kentville's history; however, this is a volunteer run operation with limited resources. The Kentville Museum would do well to partner and collaborate with the Kings County Museum to best house the collection, share resources and offer programmatic opportunities together. The renewed Visitors Centre would include a garden, public washrooms, water station, bike repair and rentals. These rentals can include a range of vehicles which are accessible like the all-terrain Rigg for travel along wilderness paths, or in the winter, snowshoes or skis can be borrowed.



Kentville Moves, Upland's Map of Bike Path Through Kentville



Pedestrian Routes Through Town, houdinidesign ARCHITECTS



Historical Train Station, Kentville NS

## UNIVERSAL DESIGN OF DOWNTOWN KENTVILLE

### 5.1 DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION THROUGH ACCESSIBILITY

#### G. COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

##### Active Transportation: Pedestrian Routes Throughout Downtown

To create an accessible and inclusive community Kentville needs to move away from being car-centric and towards being human-centred. People can be self-reliant on public transit to access downtown and community, and with nodes of pedestrian routes connecting amenities and recreational pathways, an accessible, enjoyable hub experience is created.

The sounds, noises and smells of traffic can be overwhelming to many people. Navigating safely in Kentville's downtown is a current issue, with traffic ruling the downtown square as a thoroughfare. Importance should be placed on improving the human experience of the downtown without the external noise pollution, traffic navigation, speed, and confusion.

Increasing accessibility through Universal Design increases the opportunities for Active Transportation to and throughout the downtown, encourages people's health and wellness through physical activity, reduces car pollution, and increases social interactions. Enjoyable pedestrian routes throughout downtown encourage people to linger and enjoy the offerings of downtown, whether they be cultural, businesses, or the ambiance of a beautiful outdoor setting and experience.

Wayfinding and signage is a an important component to the pedestrian experience of Universal Design. Traffic calming and safety of pedestrians and cyclists must be of utmost importance. Areas to sit, socialize, relax, refresh must be provided.

A central pedestrian route connecting Town Hall to a revived Visitors Centre along the main bike path is a critical piece to placemaking for the Town. An RHFAC Architectural & Planning Team could put the first pieces of the puzzle together - Centre Square and the Visitors Centre. This could be a competition to encourage the best designs and generate a dialogue in Kentville about what an amazing opportunity Kentville has to be a leader in small Town Universal Design, accessibility and sustainability.



Imagine Downtown Kentville,  
houdinidesign ARCHITECTS



Design Pedestrian Routes  
through Town to Separate  
People & Cars

# UNIVERSAL DESIGN OF DOWNTOWN KENTVILLE

## 5.1 DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION THROUGH ACCESSIBILITY

### G. COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

#### Parking Garage

Investing in an innovative parking garage on the edge of downtown would leave both bus and accessible car parking available in the downtown core. A talented firm could design a very aesthetically attractive and sustainable parking garage. Other areas, for example, like behind Town Hall, could be designed by a talented urban planner to properly lay out accessible parking spots with the proper aisle sizes, island trees and gardens to create safe human centered parking areas. In Paris parking is combined with vegetable gardens. Solar panels can create energy to run the electric cars and at the same time provide greenhouse space. This has the added benefit of making the parking areas not create a heat island effect, be aesthetically attractive and create shade for pedestrians (see images to the right).



Parking 2.0, NAB Studio Paris

Currently, parking in the downtown core is limited in time, forcing people to pay more attention to the possibility of being ticketed than enjoying downtown offerings. A parking garage could have a \$4/day rate with \$2 going towards Active Transportation initiatives, and \$2 going to a rotating community group as a fundraiser.



Parking 2.0, NAB Studio



Parking Garage with Sled Slope, White Arkitekter + Henning Larsen Architects

## UNIVERSAL DESIGN OF DOWNTOWN KENTVILLE

### 5.1 DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION THROUGH ACCESSIBILITY

#### G. COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

##### Brand Realization

##### Championing Diversity and Inclusion Through Organizational Culture

Embracing diversity in Kentville’s communications, content, and hiring practices to represent a wide range of races, genders, orientations, and abilities will showcase its commitment and accountability to diversity and inclusion. Actively embracing these elements in practice and promotion will move Kentville into its brand realization, into building upon the “Breath of Fresh Air”: something different, a pleasant surprise for small town rural Nova Scotia that will attract more diversity to Town as a successful brand engagement result, with real people consistently represented in communications and within the organization.

Championing accessibility through Universal Design in the Town will help to push Kentville to the forefront of social transformation in small town Nova Scotia, attracting visitors, tourists, and future residents and business owners who recognize the ease of accessibility, enjoyment of active transportation routes, and care of its citizens experience in its brand realization.

Example: *Nike*

One of the most recognized brand names of all time, Nike’s recent campaigns amplify the voices of underrepresented communities. Nike created a campaign called “Until We All Win” highlighting the stories of Indigenous peoples and LGBTQIA+ athletes. The campaign’s goal is “to unite and inspire people to take action in their communities” using the power of sport. The brand has a history of speaking out in support of causes that reflect their values, and employs a diverse range of models to best represent their brand.

Empowering all citizens through championing accessibility, health and wellness well earns Kentville the moniker of “A Breath of Fresh Air”.



Celebrating Pride in  
Community



Nike’s Until We all Win  
campaign highlighting  
Gender Equity and Black  
Lives Matter 2020

# UNIVERSAL DESIGN OF DOWNTOWN KENTVILLE

## 5.1 DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION THROUGH ACCESSIBILITY

### G. COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

#### Brand Realization

##### Actions:

1. Use Halifax's [Diversity and Inclusion Framework](https://www.halifax.ca/sites/default/files/documents/city-hall/Diversity%20%26amp%3B%20Inclusion%20Framework%20Final%20Version%20Aug%202023%20External.pdf) as a reference point to develop a clear vision and strategy for Town of Kentville to make change both within the organization and at the community level.  
<https://www.halifax.ca/sites/default/files/documents/city-hall/Diversity%20%26amp%3B%20Inclusion%20Framework%20Final%20Version%20Aug%202023%20External.pdf>
2. Issue a call for diverse community members to model for new Town of Kentville brand photos and videos to be used in communications and campaigns. Ensure adequate compensation for honorariums. Rotate new photos into marketing and communications. Work with [Screen Nova Scotia](https://screennovascotia.com/) if unsure as to how to word and issue a call for diverse talent.  
<https://screennovascotia.com/>
3. Engagement results indicate that citizens wish to see more diversity represented in Town beautification: this can be achieved through flags, such as the Rainbow Flag which represents a visible commitment to diversity and inclusion. Flags celebrating cultures in Centre Square, celebrations and acknowledgments are simple ways to demonstrate inclusiveness, be welcoming, and inspire curiosity. Multi-cultural dance troupes welcome invitations to perform, as do musicians, authors to do readings, and artists to exhibit. Incorporating diversity in culture through cultural programming will support brand realization and openness in the community.
4. Strengthening relationships with migrant workers through food and culture events in partnership with farms. The Kentville Farmers Market would be a great opportunity to host a Jamaican Barbecue or a Mexican Salsa making workshop with Tacos for a Farm Market Lunch program.



Commitment to Diversity in Representation



Ladysmith's Rainbow Banners



Keddy Farms Migrant Workers in Coldbrook

## UNIVERSAL DESIGN OF DOWNTOWN KENTVILLE

### 5.1 DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION THROUGH ACCESSIBILITY

#### G. COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

##### Brand Realization

##### Actions:

5. Springboard on the passion and success behind the Multicultural Festival with the development of a strategic plan to create long term viability for this Festival as a signature experience for the Valley, as hosted by Kentville. The plan should include a commitment to diversity on the board/planning committee, volunteer base, and programming. Funding could be achieved through Federal and Provincial grants to hire two part-time staff: a Festival Coordinator and a Festival Programmer to be fully committed to the implementation of a solid growth plan. Build partnerships outside of Kentville to help expand program offerings (for example, FIN could provide film programming, Music Nova Scotia or Halifax Jazz Festival could assist with music programming). Find a 'role model' for which the Kentville Multicultural Festival could aspire to and learn from, which would be highly beneficial.

For example, Sunfest in London, ON <https://sunfest.on.ca/about-us/> brings in a ¼ million people to its signature Festival each summer, with year-round activities to support it: *Sunfest is a non-profit arts organization with a strong mandate to support diversity and artistic excellence in music, dance and the visual arts. Sunfest prioritizes accessibility and inclusivity in a range of year-round activities, representing and programming to all members of the London community.* Sunfest began in 1989 with humble beginnings but kept focus on a commitment to accessibility and diversity in its programming and operations. Developing a relationship with an established festival to be mentored by will expedite success. Such a Festival would generate brand alignment, economic activity from tourism, and economic development from spin-offs.



Mi'kmaq PowWow Dancers,  
Tourism NS



Ukrainian Dancers



Charlottetown's DiverseCity  
Multicultural Street Festival

## UNIVERSAL DESIGN OF DOWNTOWN KENTVILLE

### 6.1 REVIEW OF AMENITIES THROUGH THE RICK HANSEN FOUNDATION CERTIFICATION (RHFAC) LENS

#### A. Town Hall

Site visit: November 16, 2020

We utilized the RHFAC scoring sheets to evaluate overall accessibility of Town Hall. This assessment is preliminary, meant to provide a general overview and is not comprehensive.

In terms of the Urban Plan, the Town Hall's central location and its proximity to Centre Square is exemplary.

Town Hall is perhaps the most important public building in the Town of Kentville. As a public space, it is symbolic of the interconnectivity between interior and exterior gathering spaces. A wide range of citizens can communicate directly with community leaders and access services here.

Barriers should not prevent community members from meeting with their representatives.

As a building that belongs to the community, it must set a precedent for excellence in design and adhere to Universal Design principles. However, the age and layout of the current building falls very short of meeting these expectations and has numerous barriers to achieving Universal Design.

Direct street access is good, however the existing Town Hall's street presence is not inviting and impacts the streetscape. The major issue entering Town Hall is a steep set of stairs in the lobby which leads to the Main Atrium. This prevents all community members from safely negotiating the entrance. The building design therefore does not welcome all community members to come in and share their vision for Kentville.

Unfortunately there is little space on the exterior to redesign the Main Entrance to allow for equitable entry to the building. A detailed design study is required to determine if it is feasible to resolve this serious issue to find an innovative solution that opens the building to the street and provides accessibility.



Main Entrance,  
Kentville Town Hall



Main Entrance,  
Kentville Town Hall



Main Floor, Kentville  
Town Hall

# UNIVERSAL DESIGN OF DOWNTOWN KENTVILLE

## 6.1 REVIEW OF AMENITIES THROUGH THE RICK HANSEN FOUNDATION CERTIFICATION (RHFAC) LENS

### A. Town Hall

Another serious challenge is the interior Main Floor consists of two levels separated by risers and a ramp. The ramp design does not meet RHFAC guidelines and therefore is not fully accessible.

Although the Main Atrium space itself is lovely with natural light, it requires a major redesign due to the changes in levels.

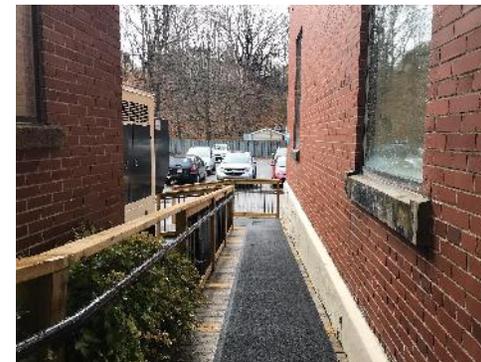
The only means of accessing Town Hall for people with disabilities is through the back door, where a ramp and door operator are available. This is an example as to how Universal Design is a solution to changing the culture of ableism. The exterior flow of Town Hall suffers from issues similar to those of the interior. There is no logical or intuitive way to find the only accessible entrance. There are no protected pathways or sidewalks to access this back entrance. The barrier-free parking spot is not clearly defined and there is no protected path of travel to the building. The parking lot in general is not designed in a manner to provide islands and crosswalks to allow visitors to negotiate the parking area and make their way safely to the building.

The lack of a logical and intuitive pathways within the building makes it difficult to provide meaningful wayfinding. Hence it is difficult for a visitor to know how to locate the Main Reception Desk, Elevator, Public Washrooms and Departments. The Town has made efforts to provide signage and wayfinding, but it is difficult to overcome these initial interior flow challenges.

Town Hall has an elevator creating access to most of the building. However, the Elevator does not link to the Recreation Centre which can only be accessed by stairs. Emergency Exits from this level have unexpected and unsafe steps impeding safe passage.



Interior Ramp, Kentville Town Hall



Back Entrance Ramp, Kentville Town Hall



Accessible Parking, Kentville Town Hall

## UNIVERSAL DESIGN OF DOWNTOWN KENTVILLE

### 6.1 REVIEW OF AMENITIES THROUGH THE RICK HANSEN FOUNDATION CERTIFICATION (RHFAC) LENS

#### A. Town Hall

Washrooms, kitchen and offices have insufficient space for accessibility. Fixtures and millwork are not up to date with modern requirements for Universal Design; they are not at accessible heights, do not allow for leg room, etc.

Floor coverings are multi-patterned, which lead to visual issues, and stair risers are a multitude of sizes, including some which are too steep and the tread not deep enough. Emergency muster points for wheelchair users are blocked in some cases (outside Chambers the designated space has technical equipment placed there). The wheelchair ramp installed to make Chambers accessible has no railing on it. There are several office spaces which are not wheelchair accessible and countertops that are accessible have objects on them preventing them from their intended use.

The preliminary overall results indicate that in order to meet RHFAC standards Town Hall would require either a major renovation or a new facility, and we suggest a facility study commence to determine the most viable, sustainable and suitable option given the accessibility goals of the Town.



Access to Emergency Exit,  
Kentville Town Hall



Access to Recreation Centre,  
Kentville Town Hall

# UNIVERSAL DESIGN OF DOWNTOWN KENTVILLE

## 6.1 REVIEW OF AMENITIES THROUGH THE RICK HANSEN FOUNDATION CERTIFICATION (RHFAC) LENS

### B. Centennial Arena

Site Visit November 24, 2020

The building was built in 1968 and opened in 1969. It was the site for Canada's first hockey school. houdinidesign ARCHITECTS found the building well-sited: central, on the Harvest Moon Trailway, and has bus access. It has a significant amount of parking, good pedestrian access, and supports active living for the Town.

All of these elements make it an important gathering space in downtown Kentville and it is clearly well used and loved.

A one-storey arena with an exposed open-web steel-joint roof, it is a large space mostly occupied by the ice, bleacher-style seating and locker room/change room spaces. On the exterior, there is posted accessible parking signage and the pavement is properly painted with the accessibility symbol. The accessible parking area is located in close proximity to the front entrance, including four accessible parking spaces with the appropriate side-lane for exiting the vehicles. While there is no dedicated sidewalk for accessing the building, there is a large lobby at grade, making the entrance fairly accessible. The front entrance has door operators.

A small office near the main door does not have the appropriate reception counter for people with mobility challenges. There is wayfinding and signage that meets some of the basic standards for universal design, although it could be clearer. For instance, there is room number signage on the locker rooms only.

Several upgrades have been done to retrofit this building to make it more accessible. The men's and women's washrooms are sufficiently large and accessible. The locker rooms are also relatively accessible; however, there are no barrier-free or accessible showers. The corridors and hallways are of sufficient width and do not have obstructions.

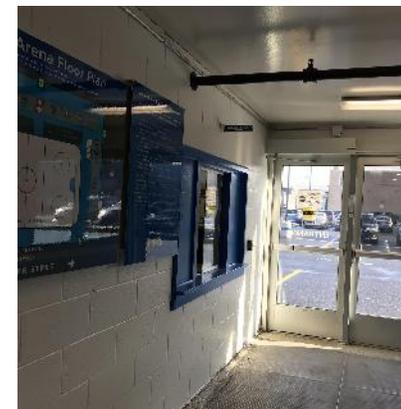
The bleachers are inaccessible: there is no bleacher area where a person anyone with mobility issues can watch the ice activity as a member of the general public. While a ramp opposite the general seating provides an area for a person in a wheelchair to view the ice, this ramp meets neither the building code or RHFAC requirements for ramps. As well, the platform end is open, creating a hazard for wheelchairs.



Centennial Arena, Front Entrance



Centennial Arena, Accessible Parking



Centennial Arena, Entrance Reception Counter

# UNIVERSAL DESIGN OF DOWNTOWN KENTVILLE

## 6.1 REVIEW OF AMENITIES THROUGH THE RICK HANSEN FOUNDATION CERTIFICATION (RHFAC) LENS

### B. Centennial Arena

The snack bar does not have an accessible counter. There is a glass enclosed space higher up in the volume and a viewing booth oriented toward the ice, but it is unclear whether a person in a wheelchair could access this to view the ice.

The arena building is in need of either a major renovation to bring it up to RHFAC standards, or a new building to meet its needs, and we recommend that a facility study be done to determine the best options.

Clearly the Town and the Arena Manager have put lot of effort into keeping the building standards as high as possible. The location and condition of the building is good, but houdinidesign ARCHITECTS does question whether its size and what it offers the community are enough to meet demand and opportunity.



Centennial Arena, Accessible Sink



Centennial Arena, Toilet, Requires Back Support & L Grab Bar

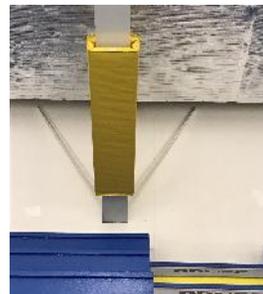
Centennial Arena, Ramp to Separated Accessible Seating



Centennial Arena, Wayfinding



Centennial Arena, Signage



Centennial Arena, No Headroom Clearance in Locations



Centennial Arena, No Accessible Seating this Side



Centennial Arena, No Accessible Showers

## UNIVERSAL DESIGN OF DOWNTOWN KENTVILLE

### 6.1 REVIEW OF AMENITIES THROUGH THE RICK HANSEN FOUNDATION CERTIFICATION (RHFAC) LENS

#### C. Kentville Police Station

Site Visit November 28, 2020

houdinidesign ARCHITECTS visited the Kentville Police Station and met with the Chief of Police. The Police Station is centrally located in the Town of Kentville, significant for building strong ties within the community.

Presently, a new Women's Shelter is being constructed across from the Police Station, the location for which should provide strong security.

The Police Station is all on one level and has a large parking area beside it. There are accessible parking spaces close to the Main Entrance. The entrance to the building is a little tight outside the building as there are columns which need to be negotiated if one approaches the entrance from the Parking area.

The signage on the building is difficult to read if one is driving by. The signage is tasteful and placed on the side of the building in brass lettering and there is a sign near the door. A well-designed lawn sign near the street would be very helpful for those driving by.

One of our team members drove by the building a number of times prior to finding it. We understand that many people now use Google to find a building however signage is important and part of RHFAC requirements.

When we visited the Main Entrance accessible door operator was not functioning and we did ask the clerk about this issue. We were told that the repair company had been contacted and that this occurs from time to time due to late night visitors to the Station abusing the mechanism.

The two accessible washrooms were not in use at the time due to Covid. The main lobby is sufficiently large enough for wheelchair access.

The main counter was not fully accessible and in need of renovation to meet RHFAC standards.



Police Station, Accessible Parking, No access lane for driver & passengers



Police Station, Access from Parking Area



Police Station, Signage

## UNIVERSAL DESIGN OF DOWNTOWN KENTVILLE

### 5.2 REVIEW OF AMENITIES THROUGH THE RICK HANSEN FOUNDATION CERTIFICATION LENS (RHFAC) (CONTINUED)

#### C. Kentville Police Station

The main section of the building is radial with the Constables being located around the perimeter of the circle in a set of accessible workstations. Although the building is not that old, technology and approach to policing has changed. We discussed this layout with the Chief of Police and although we can all appreciate that at the time of design this idea of transparency may have been desired. The practical challenges of managing a police force require a level of privacy for phone calls and there are sound issues when there are a number of officers in the space. There are not dedicated rooms for making phone calls.

The building was designed when the building code had accessible requirements but since then these requirements have become more stringent. Therefore a number of aspects of the building would not meet the present building code requirements.

We reviewed the washrooms and although the male washrooms are large, the shower has a 6" step down to access it. This does not meet the RHFAC requirements.

The female washroom was built at a time when there were fewer women expected to be policing. Consequently, the washrooms are not sufficient for the number of female staff presently working there. This washroom also has a shower with a 6" step down. Furthermore there is not sufficient space for womens' lockers which are tightly squeezed into a corner of the washroom. This locker area is not accessible.

As well, the kitchen is not designed to be used by a person in a wheelchair or with a disability. We asked the Chief of Police if an officer was to have a temporary disability or a permanent disability if they could continue to work in the Kentville Station. She noted that unfortunately given the existing conditions of the space an officer would not be able to work there, at least not easily.

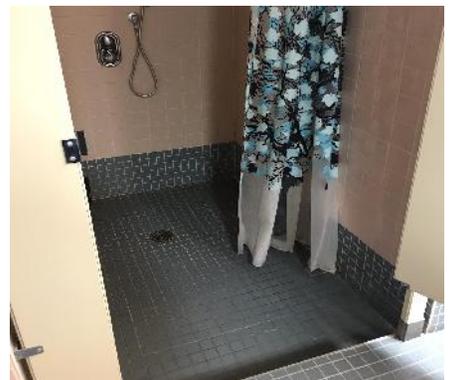
Other than the staff washrooms, the police station has two accessible washrooms within the main office area (not including the two in the controlled Lobby) however the door widths are below the RHFAC requirements.



Police Station, Reception



Police Station, Lobby Washrooms



Police Station, Shower

## IMAGINE KENTVILLE

### 5. 2 REVIEW OF AMENITIES THROUGH THE RICK HANSEN FOUNDATION CERTIFICATION LENS (RHFAC) (CONTINUED)

#### C. Kentville Police Station

A review of these washrooms noted a number of items which do not meet RHFAC standards.

It appears there is not sufficient file storage areas for the work to be accomplished and these areas are not accessible. As well, there appears to be a need for more dedicated office space and the main reception area requires a renovation.

There is not a Community Room which is not used for other policing requirements at the station. This is significant in terms of inclusion because there is not a safe, non-intimidating space for the community to meet with a police officer to discuss their concerns.

Our firm does not have expertise in the design of police station. However, the principal architect does have some previous experience in projects with the RCMP at the Stanfield International Airport.

In our opinion, the garage prisoner drop-off area, inspection rooms, do not meet modern standards for accessibility. If a prisoner was brought in with a wheelchair, they would have to be carried by an officer into most of the rooms, creating dignity issues.

Given the age of the building we recommend that a Facility assessment be done to determine if the Police Station requires a major renovation or replacement.



Police Station, Waiting Area



Police Station, Screening Area



Police Station, Meeting Room with Public

## UNIVERSAL DESIGN OF DOWNTOWN KENTVILLE

### 5.1 REVIEW OF AMENITIES THROUGH THE RICK HANSEN FOUNDATION CERTIFICATION (RHFAC) LENS

#### D. Miner's Marsh

Site Visit November 27, 2020

Miner's Marsh is a great asset to the Town of Kentville as it supports active living in Kentville. It is widely used by the community and potential to be a significant gathering space within Town.

There are some lively works of Festival Architecture such as the Winnipeg Warming Hut Competitions which houdinidesign ARCHITECTS had the opportunity to participate in. Winnipeg developed an amazing winter event to bring the community out for skating, food and cultural events. Our understanding is that for Winnipeggers during a long winter this is a major architectural event highlight and brings both famous architects, artists and tourists from around the world to participate in the Warming Hut Competitions. This is a great example of pairing culture and active living that could be the genesis for a similar project at Miner's Marsh.

During our site visit we noticed the wildlife that calls Miner's Marsh home and we recognize the importance of protecting this asset. Throughout the site visit we found nice lookoff points along the path, however we noted that many of these do not meet RHFAC standards.

While walking we noticed a man with a walker standing at the leading edge of a platform looking longingly out at the ducks on the Marsh. He appeared to be contemplating the risk to himself of attempting to step up onto the platform approximately 7" above the grade, so he could get a closer look. These subtle but extremely powerful moments are where we see how our built environment can prevent access. It is difficult to determine why this platform is not accessible. We visited other platforms along the path at the Marsh and many on them even if level at grade did not have proper safety railings. This could create a serious hazard for the public. A senior, person with a physical disability, or child could accidentally trip over the edge of a platform and fall into the Marsh water.

Some areas along the path do not have proper edge protection so that a person with a physical challenge, who is blind or in a wheelchair can negotiate the path independently. At one of the viewing platforms there are a series of steps up to view and this can only be accessed by an able bodied person. This platform could have been created using a ramp system to access the viewing platform and be accessible to all.



Miner's Marsh, Wildlife



Miner's Marsh, Entrance Signage



Miner's Marsh, Bridge - Grading Required

## UNIVERSAL DESIGN OF DOWNTOWN KENTVILLE

### 5.1 REVIEW OF AMENITIES THROUGH THE RICK HANSEN FOUNDATION CERTIFICATION (RHFAC) LENS

#### D. Miner's Marsh

The trails are adequately wide to allow for a person with a seeing eye dog, or parent with stroller to move comfortably. However, we noticed that more maintenance of the trails is required; in some areas the gravel is bare and some areas would be very difficult for persons with disabilities to negotiate independently.

All new infrastructure projects must have an RHFAC professional as part of the design team to ensure access for all.

Although there is some signage at Miner's Marsh which meet many of the RHFAC standards, particularly as one enters the Marsh, there is no clear wayfinding on the trails. At one point we followed a trail/road with no signage which took us up a hill to a residential neighborhood and very close to a private residence. Better wayfinding that follows the RHFAC standards is required.

There are great opportunities to develop Miner's Marsh as a fully accessible RHFAC certified community gathering space. With proper interpretive signage, Miner's Marsh could become a place to celebrate and educate the community about local wildlife in a Marshland. These interpretive panels could be both aesthetically beautiful as well as educational. The design of these interpretive panels would allow for people of all ages and abilities to interact with the panels. Artist renderings could be in relief to allow those in the community with visual impairment to touch the different species of plant and animal life specific to the Marsh. As well, audio stories regarding First Nation knowledge, science and naturalists descriptions would be a big draw in the community and for tourism.

Miner's Marsh with a capital investment could significantly contribute to a more active and accessible Kentville.

Public accessible washroom, better designed and safer platforms, wayfinding and interpretation, and the creation of a gathering place which is a exemplary architectural design befitting of this natural setting would bring together active living and culture.



Miner's Marsh, Look-Off



Miner's Marsh, Look-Off



Miner's Marsh,  
Look-Off

## UNIVERSAL DESIGN OF DOWNTOWN KENTVILLE

### 5.1 REVIEW OF AMENITIES THROUGH THE RICK HANSEN FOUNDATION CERTIFICATION (RHFAC) LENS

#### E. Oakdene Park Site Visit November 27, 2020

During our site visit we noticed that landscape panels with a design for the park were posted on a small building near the parking area which is presently not being used.

While reviewing the landscape panels, we believe a fair amount of community involvement and efforts on the part of the Landscape Architect were invested into the Concept Design and execution of a number of projects in the park.

The work is well done and there are some nice features such as a rolling landscape that connects the higher terrain in the park off of Campbell Street to the lower side of the park off of Mountain View St. The layout is well considered with the inclusion of local woods, a pond, outdoor performance space and community garden.

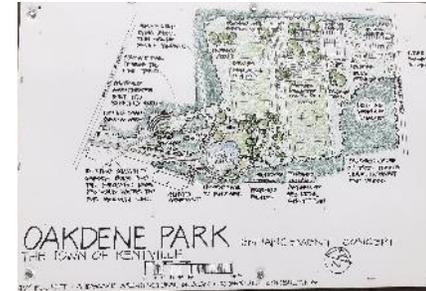
This entrance and parking area off of Campbell Rd. allows for sufficient parking, however there are no designated accessible parking spots properly marked. As well, some work is required to ensure the surfaces are level and firm.

There is a lovely and what appears to be well used play area on the site with some innovative play equipment that contributes to Kentville's Active Living Plan. While on site there was a father and son enjoying the swings and other equipment. As well, there were some young people using the basketball courts.

This projects seems very much to be community inspired and we commend Kentville. The work done to date lays an excellent foundation to further develop the park on, particularly in regards to accessibility.

One of the challenges we noticed is that there is no barrier-free access from the Campbell street side to the park including the soccer fields. An accessible access at the more level terrain would need to be installed to allow access from this side of the park. The natural grade on the other side of the park does seem to be accessible but it does not have accessible access to some of the soccer fields.

houdinidesign  
ARCHITECTS



Oakdene Park, Concept Design, Landscape Architect: Joy Elliott



Oakdene Park, Future Accessible Washrooms



Oakdene Park, Signage

# UNIVERSAL DESIGN OF DOWNTOWN KENTVILLE

## 5.1 REVIEW OF AMENITIES THROUGH THE RICK HANSEN FOUNDATION CERTIFICATION (RHFAC) LENS

### E. Oakdene Park

houdinidesign ARCHITECTS also visited a small memorial park for a young person in Kentville who sadly took her own life.

Our team was extremely moved by this memorial park and deeply saddened. We believe that this memorial park speaks to the need for all possible efforts to be made for Diversity and Inclusion. We also want to acknowledge the power we experienced of community while visiting the memorial. Our team is honoured to be involved in Kentville's Accessibility Plan to support the community.

Our firm noticed a small apartment building off of Mountain View. It appears the community gardens were intended for the tenants and perhaps other local families in the neighborhood. We recommend reinstating these gardens. Successful community gardens and urban food forests require a lot of volunteerism and passion. We recommend looking at <https://beaconfoodforest.org/> Seattle's 7 acre community food garden for inspiration.

We believe that Oakdene Park must build upon the excellent work and that capital funds should be invested into RHFAC certification for this Park. This park should be developed to make it more accessible and add the equipment required to make the play area more accessible such as:

- Inclusive Swing
- Inclusive Whirl
- Inclusive Glide Along
- Inclusive Music Sets
- Sensory Tunnels
- Garden Sensory Walls
- Sensory Maze

There is great infrastructure to build upon to create an amazing gathering space. The Park is an important asset and with the ongoing help of a talented Landscape Architect and an RHFAC certified professional, this park could be very inclusive.



Oakdene Park, Basketball Court



Oakdene Park, Gathering Space



Oakdene Park, Play Area-Glide Along

## UNIVERSAL DESIGN OF DOWNTOWN KENTVILLE

### 5.1 REVIEW OF AMENITIES THROUGH THE RICK HANSEN FOUNDATION CERTIFICATION (RHFAC) LENS

#### F. Kentville Library

Site Visit November 25, 2020

houdinidesign ARCHITECTS acknowledges that our firm was hired by the Town of Kentville as the Architect for the interior renovation of the new Kentville Library in 2018. The Library is located in the former United Church of St. Paul and St. Stephen United Church (built in 1914 by CH Wright). The Library's space is leased by the Town of Kentville from the owner-developer.

This building provides an important historical anchor for the Town. Even more, its history gives it an important place in the heart of Kentville. Many local people mention their fond memories of the Church.

Aesthetically, it is a beautiful building. It is an impressive stone structure with stained glass windows and an oak and douglas fir interior.

Notably, the Library is near Town Hall and other public gathering spaces including Centre Square. It is easy to access because it's located on a bus route and is pedestrian friendly. Yet the building does not have any accessible parking near the main entrance to the Library. Accessible parking is on the street near the exit to the parking lot.

A lot can be done to make the exterior grounds of the Kentville Library a gathering space for the community. Benches outside the Library entrance would be good for seniors or people with mobility issues. The outdoor book return receptacle is too high for a person in a wheelchair to return books.

The main entrance has a power operator. The main lobby is wheelchair accessible and has an elevator, but the elevator has keyed access which does not conform to universal design because it cannot be used by people who haven't accessed a key. The elevator cab is quite small and does not meet RHFAC standards. For instance, a mobility scooter does not fit.

The Library's exterior signage was salvaged from the previous library, and the colour contrast is not sufficient for someone with visual challenges. The main lobby has insufficient signage to direct the public into the Library, but it does have a signage board indicating the tenants; it is difficult to interpret where the Library is unless you have been there before. The lobby also requires better lighting for people with visual impairment.



Kentville Library, Accessible Parking not near entrance



Kentville Library, Accessible Parking does not have safe path to Library entrance



Kentville Library, Street Bench

# UNIVERSAL DESIGN OF DOWNTOWN KENTVILLE

## 5.1 REVIEW OF AMENITIES THROUGH THE RICK HANSEN FOUNDATION CERTIFICATION (RHFAC) LENS

### F. Kentville Library

Washroom access on the first floor requires that Library patrons open a set of doors and descend a ramp. The washrooms do have an accessible barrier-free stall, but the washroom would need renovation to meet RHFAC requirements.

The Library itself is fairly accessible: it has an accessible ramp to the community room, and seating throughout allows for a range of options for people with differing levels of ability. There is a fire exit with a ramp to allow for safe emergency exit by people with mobility challenges. We did not inspect the ramp at the time of the site visit due to restricted access (COVID).

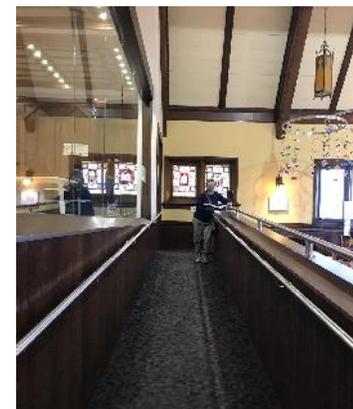
The washroom on the Library level does not meet RHFAC standards. Efforts were made to have it meet the accessibility standard, but structural challenges with the masonry did not allow full accessibility.

The Library would benefit from a renovation of the building exterior, such as the addition of an outdoor gathering space with seating, gardens, walking paths and benches. South of the building could be developed with walking paths to the Library, possibly a café and terraced area. It would benefit the community to create a fully accessible reading room at the front of the building on ground level. As well, the elevator should be replaced with one that has a larger cab size so that is fully universal.

The Kentville Library as an historical building and its central location is a great opportunity for the Town of Kentville to work with the developer and enhance this site. This will be good in terms literacy, tourism and the creation of significant gathering spaces within the Town on accessible, Active Transportation routes.



Kentville Library, Elevator



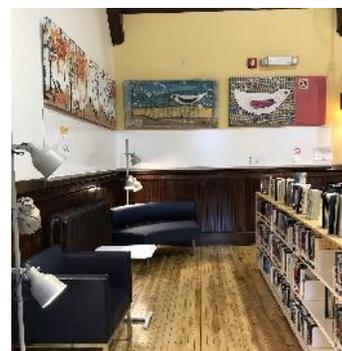
Kentville Library, Ramp to Community Rm.



Kentville Library, Children's Area



Kentville Library, Children's Area, above



Kentville Library, Teen's Area

## UNIVERSAL DESIGN OF DOWNTOWN KENTVILLE

### 5.1 REVIEW OF AMENITIES THROUGH THE RICK HANSEN FOUNDATION CERTIFICATION (RHFAC) LENS

#### G. Kings County Museum

Site Visit November 23, 2020

We recognize that the Kings County Museum is not owned by the Town, however the Museum is an important public space in the Town that attracts visitors and tourists, and hosts programming that generates social and economic activity.

We met with the Board of the Kings County Museum and discussed the following topics:

- It is important to maintain unique historical buildings in the Town. Specifically, this is one of a limited number of courthouses that have been preserved in Nova Scotia. Buildings like it are crucial to tourism and they contribute to a vibrant streetscape in the Town of Kentville.
- We recommend that work be done to improve the existing condition of the building. It requires roof repairs and its masonry is so damaged and deteriorated that bricks have fallen off the building and created a very serious hazard on the street for passersby.
- The main entrance of the Museum takes one into a lobby where a steep set of stairs goes up to the main level, and another set of stairs descends to the archives in the basement. We discussed the requirement for an elevator in the building — the lobby would be the preferred place — to make both floors accessible to the general public.
- The basement would also need to be renovated to make it accessible. Alternatively, the archives could be relocated upstairs.
- Presently, a ramp provides access only to the main floor at the side of the building. This does not however, meet the RHFAC expression of universal design: someone who can't use the main entrance is treated like a second-class citizen. A person who has mobility issues should have equal access to both areas of the Museum. The ramp is in poor condition and requires maintenance.
- An accessible washroom on the main floor would need to be upgraded to meet the RHFAC. It is a fairly large washroom which could be upgraded.
- There was a general conversation regarding the number of community members who house large collections of artifacts documenting the history of Kentville in their homes and basements. These artifacts could be lost if the Museum is not developed to meet the provincial conservation standards.
- The main level exhibition space could be redesigned and opened up to create room to expand exhibits and programming on diverse populations, stories of Mi'kmaq, African Nova Scotian and Acadian peoples.

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Kings County Museum,  
Exterior



Kings County Museum,  
Exterior



Kings County Museum,  
Exterior Ramp

## UNIVERSAL DESIGN OF DOWNTOWN KENTVILLE

### 5.1 REVIEW OF AMENITIES THROUGH THE RICK HANSEN FOUNDATION CERTIFICATION (RHFAC) LENS

#### G. Kings County Museum

- Interestingly, the Museum is holder of one of the most important Acadian history collections.
- houdinidesign ARCHITECTS discussed the opportunities for funding for an elevator addition, and for cultural and heritage grants.
- We also discussed the impressive courtroom on the upper level. If the existing T-bar ceiling was removed and the barrel-vault ceiling visible was restored, this would be an attraction for the Town of Kentville.
- The courtroom is an acoustically rich space with a mix of uses: it is used for First Nations drumming circles, tea parties, student plays and live demonstrations of our justice system.
- Windows in the Museum need to be replaced. There is an opportunity to replace the aluminum windows with wood-frame windows.
- The heating system needs to be upgraded as does the mechanical/electrical system.
- Parking on the street out front of the Museum is risky for visitors due to the speed of oncoming cars turning into that section of the street.
- Internally, many rooms or pathways were not accessible to wheelchairs, and dim lighting would make it hard for those with visual challenges to navigate.
- Tourists often visit the Museum specifically for wayfinding in Kentville and visitor information and access to washrooms.
- The cross walk is on the other side of the street and it was noted pedestrians often risk running through traffic to get to amenities on the other side vs walking to cross walk, crossing, and walking back down: the crosswalk is not well placed for the activity.

In conclusion, we recommend that a facility study be done of Kings County Museum, that the Town recognize that preserving this historical building is important, and that programming opportunities be increased to encourage more tourism to downtown Kentville. We also recommend a collaborative partnership between the Kings County Museum and the Kentville Museum group to share resources and re-home the Kentville collection to Kings County Museum. It could have its own Kentville Room within the Museum.

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Kings County Museum, Main Entrance Stairs



Kings County Museum, Main Exhibit



Kings County Museum Courtroom

## UNIVERSAL DESIGN OF DOWNTOWN KENTVILLE

### 5.1 REVIEW OF AMENITIES THROUGH THE RICK HANSEN FOUNDATION CERTIFICATION (RHFAC) LENS

#### H. Interior Review of A Downtown Business

Site visit: November 23, 2020

Upon entering the business we visited, we noted that the interior of the store is almost entirely inaccessible from first glance. We noted a main floor utilized by customers for shopping, offices and staff washroom. A lower floor was accessed by stairs only and we did not go down.

Like many stores in downtown Kentville, this business is in need of a renovation and redesigned floor plan to make it universally accessible.

This business is large and level, and has excellent street frontage with a nice facade with an inviting entrance. It has a great opportunity to become universally accessible.

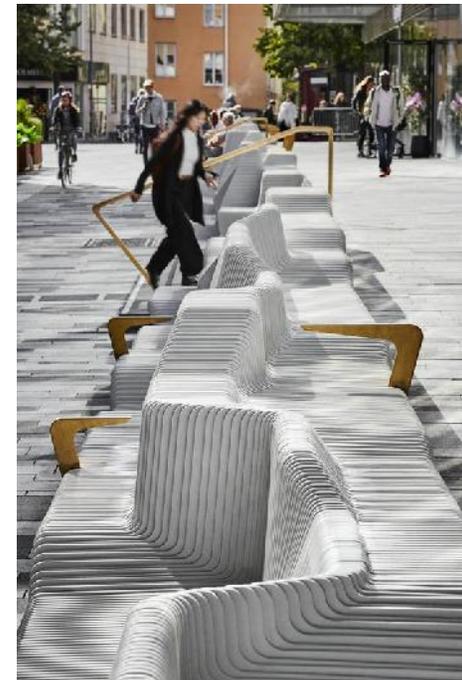
This project would be a good fit with the Province's [Business ACCESS-Ability Grant Program](https://cch.novascotia.ca/business-access-ability-grant-program) <https://cch.novascotia.ca/business-access-ability-grant-program> for up to \$100,000 to make the business fully, univerrally, and beautifully accessible, while pursuing Gold Standard RHFAC in the redesign and delivery of their business, which is already a well-loved destination.

The following are some observations and recommendations to assist in making downtown businesses accessible:

- Designated accessible parking spaces in front of stores. These parking spaces would need to meet the RHFAC standards including: properly marked pavement accessibility symbol, posted signage, properly located curb cuts with visual cues and tactile indicators.
- The front entrance doors should have door operators on both sides.
- Well placed signage with easy to read, high-contrast lettering.
- The layout of the store needs to be logical, intuitive with wide uncluttered ailes.
- The main counter must be at an accessible height.
- An accessible washroom and a staff washroom installed.
- The office area and staff areas need to be without steps and have accessible layouts.



Accessible Office Spaces



Accessible Outside Seating & Public Art

## UNIVERSAL DESIGN OF DOWNTOWN KENTVILLE

### 5.1 REVIEW OF AMENITIES THROUGH THE RICK HANSEN FOUNDATION CERTIFICATION (RHFAC) LENS

#### H. Interior Review of A Downtown Business

Other aspects of stores could be adapted to make it more user friendly to people with all abilities.

Reduced visual distractions, enhanced illumination, and barrier free flow including sight planes would greatly improve the shopping experience overall.

The shop we evaluated is not unique; many stores in Kentville face the same challenges. Encouraging business owners to learn more about accessibility and what changes are needed in their buildings to become universally accessible is an integral step towards changing the culture of ableism in the Town.

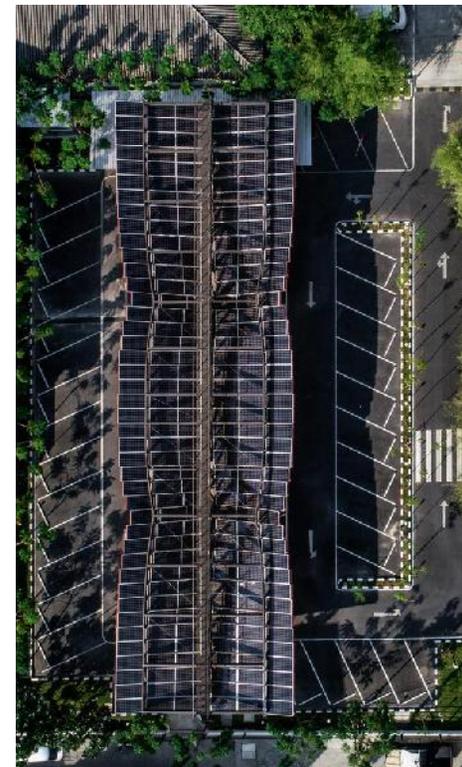
Increasing the opportunity for access to a business is never a negative. With an increasingly aging population in Nova Scotia and a large percentage of our community having disabilities at some point in our lives, investing in Universal Design is investing in a sustainable future for all - including the business owners.

It is recommended that the Kentville Business Community support the opportunity to pursue RHFAC audits to develop the vision and goals of the Accessibility Action Plan within the business community.

A coordinated, collective effort to achieve Universal Design in the Kentville shopping and services district would make a significant impact in the community and establish a very strong brand story reflecting diversity and inclusion through this action, and generate messaging and opportunities to build destination tourism.



Solar Powered Parking Structures



Solar Powered Parking Structures

## UNIVERSAL DESIGN OF DOWNTOWN KENTVILLE

### 5.1 REVIEW OF AMENITIES THROUGH THE RICK HANSEN FOUNDATION CERTIFICATION (RHFAC) LENS

#### I. **Downtown Business Core** Site Visit Dec 10, 2020

Our firm made a site visit to downtown Kentville and we recognized a number of challenges that store owners face. The first is the age of the existing buildings. Many of the buildings were built when accessibility was not at the forefront of design. Some of the approaches to storefronts are however, quite conducive to a redesign for accessibility.

Many of the stores are either on grade or slightly above grade. Many have large glazed areas which face the street. It is important to recognize that some of these buildings may not be able to be made completely accessible or meet RHFAC standards. However, significant changes can be made to allow them to function better. Some storefronts address their challenges in innovative ways.

One owner selected to take up some of the interior storefront space to allow for a ramp which provides enough space for a wheelchair to access the building. There is a door operator set back away from the door to allow a person with mobility issues to not be hit by the door when it is in operation. A railing provides seniors and others with mobility issue to have a graspable handrail for additional support. At the same time the storefront still allows a high level of transparency and potential for display. We did not visit the interior of this business but with sufficient interior space to maneuver and an accessible washroom - this business would be quite successful in meeting accessibility needs.

The majority of businesses have the challenge of a change in height from street level to the business floor height. A redesign of the business front that allows for a low ramp and door operator to make that transition, a door operator and accessible washroom go a long way to improve overall accessibility.

We noticed that many of the businesses have door widths are too tight to allow access. We are aware that Covid will impact the future of the design of our businesses and it is no surprise that Universal Design concepts will be both in the best interest of accessible design and designing for challenges like Covid 19. Providing larger entrance allow for more space for the public to past through. As well, the reduction of requirement to touch surfaces makes good sense.

Where it is possible lifts allow visitors to the business to access all levels. Where this is not possible it is very important that employees of the business can access all necessary spaces: offices, meeting rooms, washrooms, etc.



Downtown Business Front



Downtown Business Front

# UNIVERSAL DESIGN OF DOWNTOWN KENTVILLE

## 5.1 REVIEW OF AMENITIES THROUGH THE RICK HANSEN FOUNDATION CERTIFICATION (RHFAC) LENS

### I. Downtown Business Core

Due to existing conditions in many of these businesses a person with physical challenges could not work in many of the businesses. In these circumstances, an elevator or ramp should be added. Where this is not possible the main floor should allow for employees with disabilities to work comfortably in the space and have access to whatever amenities required: staff washroom, photocopier, supplies and staff kitchen. These can be designed to be on the main level.

Some of the upper floors are rentable tenant apartments and for these a lift can be installed. Although there may be the exceptional case where this is not possible, provided there is sufficient affordable and accessible housing, this is less of a concern.

The Town of Kentville could provide incentives to encourage developers and business owners to make the downtown core as accessible as possible. Grants are available to developers and business owners. A similar program to the Facade improvement Program could be developed to allow business owners to initiate these changes. Business owners can be educated on the revenue lost when a business is not accessible and inclusive. Education and awareness campaigns are important to ensuring that business and property owners understand the requirements of legislation, human rights, and the goals of the Town to become inclusive and accessible.



Downtown Business Front



Downtown Business Front



Downtown Business Front



Downtown Business Front



Downtown Business Front



Downtown Business Front

## UNIVERSAL DESIGN OF DOWNTOWN KENTVILLE

### 5.1 REVIEW OF AMENITIES THROUGH THE RICK HANSEN FOUNDATION CERTIFICATION (RHFAC) LENS

#### J. Main Street Station Site Visit Dec 10, 2020

Our firm made a visit to Main Street Station. The rejuvenation of the building is a positive change for Kentville. The former Inn was a destination for people across Canada when people travelled by train. There is a lot of archival information about the hotel, industry and events.

The rebranding as Main Street Station responds to this history and references these times with the design and details in theme for signage and artwork, and leads to further train/railway branding of businesses in the building to capitalize, as Maritime Express has nicely done.

A major contributor to the renovations to Main Street Station appear to be the cider house/restaurant, barber shop, washroom and the fit-ups on the far end of the building. Only some aspects are accessible, and would not meet RHFAC requirements. There are important services such as legal aid in this building, and signage and access to these services are not well marked or made welcoming. This building has incredible potential as an anchor attraction in the Downtown core given its history, ambiance, train-branding associations and location to the downtown core. It would appear that new tenants might be moving into the front location and this would be a good time to discuss building code requirements and renovations to ensure accessibility.

This building has a large number of apartments and the Town can work with developers to ensure the apartments meet a basic standard of safety and comfort. The building has the potential to undergo further renovations to upgrade the the building to potentially have more accessible affordable housing options.

The large parking area at the front of the building could be developed to have a better parking layout that has pedestrian safe walkways.

The property could be developed to make access to the building more accessible and develop the landscaping to have exterior gardens and places to sit. Pedestrian access to the building is challenging due to the speed at which cars travel the one-way intersections at that point, and the lack of lighting at the cross walks makes for risky pedestrian access.



Main Street Station, Parking



Main Street Station, Elevator



Main Street Station, Lounge

## 6. PRIORITY PHASING

### 1. High Priority Recommendations

- Download the Rick Hansen Accessibility Handbook  
<https://www.rickhansen.com/sites/default/files/2019-07/rhfac-professional-handbookdec2018.pdf>
- Purchase CSA Accessibility design for the built environment  
[https://www.orderline.com/b651-18-accessible-design-for-the-built-environment?gclid=CjwKCAiA1eKBBhBZEiwAX3gqI45F1tUoNwvXkt5dISl-AkfBP7gIDvCICf1sIWQ8PI7eRXmZ-YhUTRoCF7oQAvD\\_BwE](https://www.orderline.com/b651-18-accessible-design-for-the-built-environment?gclid=CjwKCAiA1eKBBhBZEiwAX3gqI45F1tUoNwvXkt5dISl-AkfBP7gIDvCICf1sIWQ8PI7eRXmZ-YhUTRoCF7oQAvD_BwE)
- High Level Urban Plan designed based on Universal Design Principles
- Active Transportation Plan implementation
- Feasibility Study for Town Hall
- Feasibility Study for Centennial Arena
- Public Washroom/Comfort Station development
- ToK Employee Accessibility Awareness, Emotional Intelligence Training
- Resurfacing of pedestrian routes to accessibility standards
- Address Diversity & Inclusion in Brand Marketing & Communications
- Establish Diversity Procurement Policy
- Adopt Recreation for All Policy
- Erect an exterior Digital Information Kiosk that is fully accessible for Town Hall and KBC information sharing, with wayfinding, events, news, important dates, registrations, etc

### 2. Medium Priority Recommendations

- Work with Indigenous Leaders on de-colonization processes and reconciliation practices
- Ongoing Cultural Competency Training
- Education & Awareness Public Campaigns including workshops for Businesses and Trades Contractors on Accessibility and RHFAC
- Support Kentville Business Community on Accessibility initiatives
- Development of the Centre Square Plan and Design, including permanent home for Farmers Market
- Visitor's Centre Development
- Promenades, Walkways, Garden Development
- Parking Plan from Urban Plan implemented with priorities for Accessible Parking delineated
- Address Accessibility of Parks & Trails amenities (paths, equipment, lighting, washrooms)
- Feasibility Study for Police Station

## 6. PRIORITY PHASING

### 3. Low Priority Recommendations

- Parking Garage Development
- Identify opportunities and processes for Public Art installations
- Feasibility Study for Riverfront Trail & Public Space revitalization
- Kentville Business Park: next stage of Accessibility Plan for Active Transportation and Universal Design upgrades - a further study should commence

### 4. Opportunity Based Recommendations

- Library - further development of accessibility improvements inside and outside
- Kings County Museum - support the Museum's capacity for partnership, collaboration to pursue renovation and accessibility improvements
- New Hub Development
- Support Multi-Cultural Festival development to be a premiere event
- Establish formal relationship with NSCC for partnerships with students and faculty for on-going projects in the areas of Human Services, Tourism, Business, Horticulture
- Develop the Town-Led Accessibility Rating System to inform user decision making
- Continue to work with Kings Transit on best practices, opportunities for enhanced service and routes



Accessible, Exterior Digital Communications



Interactive Digital Signage, Mt Tremblant, QC

## GRATITUDE:

This report was made possible with much appreciation for the foresight, passion and commitment to accessibility and inclusion by Kentville Accessibility Advisory Committee, past and present. Many thanks to Town of Kentville Staff including Rachel Bedingfield, Director of Parks & Recreation and Jennifer West, Executive Assistant for the additional support during research and engagement, as well as Lydia Broderick, Active Living Coordinator, Lindsay Young, Community & Economic Development Coordinator, and Kirsten Duncan, Planning Technician, for all of your expertise contributing to the solutions.

We are very appreciative of the time Town of Kentville staff took to accommodate us during the RHFAC review of facilities, as well as to the members of the community who engaged us in discussions regarding making their services accessible and inclusive. Kate Adams, Manager of Kings County Museum and members of her board generously afforded us a lot of their time and vision for the future of the Museum, as well as Chief Julia Cecchetto, Kentville Police Service who provided insight into the functionality of police buildings for public interface. We are grateful for KCA Principal Victoria Laurence and teachers who facilitated the engagement module with students to contribute opinions, experiences and ideas to the future of their Town. Thank you to all the KCA students! We are so pleased with the youth participation in this project. Thank you so much to all the citizens who participated in the engagement process, either digitally or in person, and bravely shared their stories, concerns, and vision for a more inclusive, welcoming and accessible community for all. We heard you, and we hope we represented you well.

Thank you to the team at reachAbility who contributed their vast knowledge of disabilities, accessibility and inclusion to the work aligning the Town's goal's with provincial and federal legislation, in particular to Jessica Ward, Project & Programs Manager, a passionate, focused advocate, and Jacob Cuvelier, Business Developer, who assisted us behind the scenes on digital outreach.

Wela'lin to Kayla Mansfield-Brown Dancing Deer, Engagement Coordinator for houdinidesign ARCHITECTS whose passion and commitment to justice, education and equity inspires us all, and to Julie Glaser, our Creative Strategist who helps keep the big picture in focus and pulls all the pieces (all 200+ pages) together.

We wish the Town of Kentville the very best with this endeavour.



Handwritten signature of Lisa Tondino

Lisa Tondino  
Principal Architect, NSAA, RHFAC, houdinidesign ARCHITECTS

## APPENDIX

### Glossary of Terms

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### Resources

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8.2 RHFAC Parking Standards..... page 99.

8.3 Funding Alignments..... page 104.

### Citizen Engagement Results

9.1 Summaries..... page 105.

9.2 Survey Results..... page 119.

9.3 KCA Engagement Booklet..... PDF attachment.

9.4 #ShowUsYourKentville Citizen Photography Submissions.. page 121.



Accessible Play Structures

### 7.1 GLOSSARY OF TERMS

**Accessibility:** The prevention and removal of barriers (physical, attitudinal, technological, or system) to allow equitable participation for persons with disabilities or others who experience barriers to accessibility.<sup>1</sup>

**Accessibility Act:** The provincial legislation enacted in 2017 to prevent and remove barriers to accessibility for people with disabilities with the goal of an accessible Nova Scotia by 2030. The Act outlines responsibilities for municipalities, universities, and others, including developing accessibility plans and establishing an accessibility committee. It allows the Government to develop and implement standards (regulations) in education, the built environment, the delivery and receipt of goods and services, transportation, information, communication, and employment.<sup>1</sup>

**Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC):** Kentville's Accessibility Advisory Committee advises Council on the elimination of barriers faced by people with disabilities and acts as a liaison with external bodies on barriers to participation in public life and to the achievement of social, cultural and economic well-being of people with disabilities.

**Accessible Employer:** Reducing and preventing barriers in hiring, retaining, career development and advancement for employees, and addressing employee needs with individualized, flexible accommodations.<sup>1</sup>

**Accessible Customer Service:** Ensuring all persons have the same opportunity to seek, obtain, use or benefit from the service. Accessible services are easy for all people to use, interact with, and understand.<sup>1</sup>

**Accessible Pedestrian Signals (APS):** Devices that communicate information about the WALK and DON'T WALK intervals at signalized intersections in non-visual formats to pedestrians who are blind or who have low vision.<sup>2</sup> APS's do so by using audible beaconing (the use of an audible signal in such a way that blind pedestrians can hone in on the signal coming from the target corner as they cross the street).

**Barrier:** Anything that hinders or challenges the full and effective participation in society. Barriers can be physical, attitudinal, technological, or systemic (policy or practice). Accessibility barriers may be related to areas such as employment, education, the built environment, transportation, the delivery and receipt of goods and services, or information and communications.<sup>1</sup>

## APPENDIX

### 7.1 GLOSSARY OF TERMS

**Barrier-Free:** A barrier-free environment is one which enables people with disabilities to move about safely and freely and use all facilities within the built environment, roads, parks, gardens and other places.

**Communication Access Real-Time (CART):** The professionally translated transcription of speech to text through a third party. It enables culturally Deaf, oral deaf, deafened and hard of hearing people to have visual access to the spoken word. CART services can be provided on-site or remotely.<sup>8</sup>

**Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CRP):** A teaching method that acknowledges the cultural knowledge, prior experiences, and frames of reference of students and uses it to make learning more relevant and effective. It ensures that students from diverse cultures have equitable opportunities and supports for success within school systems and that design is reflected in pedagogy, not just additional targeted services.<sup>1</sup>

**Deaf:** A sociological term referring to those individuals who are medically deaf or hard of hearing who identify with and participate in the culture, society, and language of Deaf people, which is based on Sign language.<sup>3</sup>

**Disability:** 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.<sup>3.1</sup>

**Equity/Equitable:** Equity is fair treatment of individuals, acknowledging and making provisions for their differences by ensuring that employment and educational processes are free from systemic barriers. Equity does not mean ignoring differences and treating everyone the same. Instead it means recognizing and valuing differences, removing systemic barriers and accommodating individual differences, as needed.<sup>4</sup>

**First Voice:** First voice perspectives generally refer to the knowledge generated by persons with disabilities and others who experience barriers to accessibility that emerges from lived experience, community connections, knowledge traditions, and scholarly activities that are typically undervalued and under-represented.<sup>1</sup>

**Inclusion:** The process of improving the terms of participation in society, particularly for individuals or groups of individuals who are disadvantaged or under-represented, through enhancing opportunities, access to resources, voice and respect for rights. This creates a sense of belonging, promotes trust, fights exclusion and marginalization and offers the opportunity of upward mobility and results in increased social cohesion.<sup>5</sup>

### 7.1 GLOSSARY OF TERMS

**Implicit Bias:** Bias that results from the tendency to process information based on unconscious associations and feelings, even when these are contrary to one's conscious or declared beliefs.<sup>9</sup>

**Inclusion In Action:** A five step process designed by reachAbility Association to guide businesses, organizations and government bodies to become compliant with Accessibility Legislation by using a first-voice led, holistic approach based on the inclusion of all people no matter their age, gender, race, ability or otherwise.

**Indigenous Sign Language:** In addition to the spoken word, some Indigenous cultures historically have used sign languages to communicate. Though a small number of people know Indigenous sign languages, American Sign Language and Quebec Sign Language have largely replaced Indigenous sign languages in Canada. Efforts are underway in a variety of Indigenous communities to revitalize these lost systems of communication.<sup>10</sup>

**Kentville Business Community (KBC):** Represents the collective interests of the downtown businesses in Kentville. KBC works with, and for, the business community, acting in both an economic development role as well as an advocacy role. It is the mandate of KBC to help support, promote, and grow the Kentville business community. The organization is governed by a dynamic board of directors drawn directly from the business community.

**Marginalized Populations:** Groups and communities that experience discrimination and exclusion (social, political and economic) because of unequal power relationships across economic, political, social and cultural dimensions.<sup>11</sup>

**Meaningful Access:** When referring to the built environment, meaningful access is the intent to meet the needs of all users of a site (a building or outdoor space) regardless of their ability. It means that not only individual features of a site, such as an entrance or washroom, must be accessible, but the entire experience throughout.<sup>1</sup>

**Medicine Wheel Framework:** The Medicine Wheel is a comprehensive tool that looks beyond western methodological frameworks, by looking at all interconnected systems. It is a framework developed by Indigenous peoples, with the oldest form appearing over 5000 years ago. Since its origins, the framework has been adapted and adopted by other Indigenous communities across Turtle Island. The frameworks look at relations between people and all living worlds. The Wheel typically consists of four quadrants that represent various aspects of life (season, age, medicine, animal, element, cultures, etc.). Each quadrant is equally valued and showcases its unique and combined knowledge to this life.

## APPENDIX

### 7.1 GLOSSARY OF TERMS

**Neurodivergent:** Neurodivergent means having a brain that functions in ways that diverge significantly from the dominant societal standards of “normal”. It recognizes diverse neurology and ways of being, as variation of human experience, rather than deficiency in need of remediation or cure. It includes those who identify with autism spectrum disorder, ADHD, Tourette’s syndrome, and dyslexia, to name a few. <sup>6</sup>

**Rick Hansen Foundation Accessibility Certification (RHFAC):** A national rating system that measures and certifies the level of meaningful access of buildings and sites. It measures the level of meaningful access beyond building code, and is based upon the holistic user experience of people with varying disabilities affecting their mobility, vision, and hearing. <sup>7</sup>

**Sensory:** A sensory disability affects a person’s senses; their sight, hearing, smell, touch, taste or spacial awareness. People with sensory disability may feel sensory input more or less intensely than other people which impacts on a person’s ability to interact in different environments and perform daily activities. <sup>12</sup>

**Universal Design:** Universal Design is the design and composition of an environment so that it can be accessed, understood and used to the greatest extent possible by all people regardless of their age, size, ability or disability. <sup>7</sup>

**Universal Design for Learning (UDL):** An educational approach to designing instructional goals, assessments, methods and materials, and policies that work for a diversity of learners. It employs flexible approaches that can be customized and adjusted for individual student needs. <sup>1</sup>

**Two-Eyed Seeing:** Two-Eyed Seeing is a concept created by Elder Albert Marshall that refers to the knowledge and strength of Indigenous ways combined with western worldviews utilized together as a powerful tool that can benefit all, leaving the world a better place with respect to the next seven generations.

## APPENDIX

### 7.1 GLOSSARY OF TERMS

#### References

<sup>1</sup> Nova Scotia Post Secondary Framework

<sup>2</sup> Accessible Pedestrian Signals (<http://www.apsguide.org/>)

<sup>3</sup> Nova Scotia Accessibility Act

<sup>4</sup> Nova Scotia Community College Educational Equity Policy

<sup>5</sup> Nova Scotia Community College Educational Equity Policy

<sup>6</sup> Scorgie, K. & Forlin, C. (2019). Promoting Social Inclusion: Co-Creating Environments that Foster Equity and Belonging. P. 153.

<sup>7</sup> Rick Hansen Foundation

<sup>8</sup> Canadian Hearing Services

<sup>9</sup> Racial and Social Injustice: Microaggressions & Implicit Bias (<https://library.untDallas.edu/racism/implicitbias>)

<sup>10</sup> The Canadian Encyclopedia - Indigenous Sign Languages

<sup>11</sup> National Collaborating Centre for Determinants of Health

<sup>12</sup> Disability Support Guide  
(<https://www.disabilitysupportguide.com.au/information/article/sensory-disabilities>)

## RESOURCES

### 8.1 TRAINING & EDUCATION

Rick Hansen Foundation - Making the Business Case for Accessibility

[Homepage | Rick Hansen Foundation](#)

<https://www.rickhansen.com/sites/default/files/2018-08/cboc-final-report-feb2018-accessible-1.pdf>

CSA Group B651-18 - ACCESSIBLE DESIGN FOR THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

[https://www.orderline.com/b651-18-accessible-design-for-the-built-environment?gclid=CjwKCAiA1eKBBhBZEiwAX3gqI45F1tUoNwvXkt5dISl-AkfBP7gIDvCICf1sIWQ8PI7eRXmZ-YhUTRoCF7oQAvD\\_BwE](https://www.orderline.com/b651-18-accessible-design-for-the-built-environment?gclid=CjwKCAiA1eKBBhBZEiwAX3gqI45F1tUoNwvXkt5dISl-AkfBP7gIDvCICf1sIWQ8PI7eRXmZ-YhUTRoCF7oQAvD_BwE)

Halifax Today: Societys Ableism Exposed

<https://www.halifaxtoday.ca/local-news/societys-ableism-exposed-by-covid-19-pandemic-disability-rights-advocate-2857247>

[https://www.halifax.ca/sites/default/files/documents/city-hall/Diversity%20%26amp%3B%20Inclusion%20Framework\\_Final%20Version%20Aug%203\\_External.pdf](https://www.halifax.ca/sites/default/files/documents/city-hall/Diversity%20%26amp%3B%20Inclusion%20Framework_Final%20Version%20Aug%203_External.pdf) - Diversity & Inclusion Framework, Halifax: identifies

CBC Spark Article and Podcast: Designing for Disability

<https://www.cbc.ca/radio/spark/disabled-people-want-disability-design-not-disability-dongles-1.5353131/designing-for-disability-full-episode-transcript-1.5353287>

Alexander Society - <https://www.alexandersociety.org/>

Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada [Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada \(TRC\)](#)

<https://nctr.ca/map.php>

Congress of Aboriginal Peoples - Reconciliation Tool Kit

[www.abo-peoples.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/WP-Revised-Reconciliation-Toolkit\\_Digital\\_May12-compressed.pdf](http://www.abo-peoples.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/WP-Revised-Reconciliation-Toolkit_Digital_May12-compressed.pdf) ([abo-peoples.org](http://www.abo-peoples.org))

The Final Report of the Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls:

[Final Report | MMIWG \(mmiwg-ffada.ca\)](#) <https://www.mmiwg-ffada.ca/final-report/>

Annapolis Valley Chapter of Autism Nova Scotia- [Annapolis Valley Chapter | Autism Nova Scotia](#)

[autismannapolisvalley.ca](http://autismannapolisvalley.ca)

Valley African Nova Scotia Development Association- [Services - VANSDA](#) <https://vansda.ca/services/>

Native Council of Nova Scotia - [www.ncns.ca](http://www.ncns.ca)

## RESOURCES

### 8.1 TRAINING & EDUCATION

The Blanket Exercise: Kairos Canada <https://www.kairosblanketexercise.org/about-us/>

[Note: we recommend working with local Indigenous and First Nations for this training to ensure encompassing of local realities.]

Acadia University and Glooscap First Nations: Indigenous Speakers Series (January 6th - 12th)

<https://www2.acadiau.ca/home/news-reader-page/acadia-and-glooscap-first-nation-launch-indigenous-speakers-series.html>

Recommended Indigenous Reads - [35 books to read for National Indigenous History Month | CBC Books](#)

[Indigenous Reading List: Colonization, Fallout, and Reconciliation | Edmonton Public Library | BiblioCommons](#)

Black Recommended Books - [44 Books by Black Authors to Read 2020 - List of Black Writers \(oprahmag.com\)](#)

[CBL List of Recommended Books by Black Authors \(centerforblackliterature.com\)](#)

Black Business Initiative - [Black Business Initiative | BBI](#) Native Women's of Nova Scotia - [www.nsnwa.ca/](http://www.nsnwa.ca/)

Annapolis Valley First Nation - [www.avfn.ca](http://www.avfn.ca) Mi'kmaw Conservation Group - <https://mikmawconservation.ca/>

IKANAWTIKET - [Maritime Aboriginal Peoples Council \[MAPC\] - Species at Risk Ikanawtiket Initiative](#)

Glooscap First Nation - [Home | Glooscap First Nation](#)

Maritime Aboriginal Peoples Council - [Maritime Aboriginal Peoples Council | MAPC \(mapcorg.ca\)](#)

The Confederacy of Mainland Mi'kmaq - [The Confederacy of Mainland Mi'kmaq | Promoting and assisting Mi'kmaq communities in mainland Nova Scotia for over 25 years. \(cmmns.com\)](#)

Unconscious Bias and Emotional Intelligence for Leaders Training: In alignment with the identified priorities of Access By Design 2030 and the Deputy Minister's Commitments (released in October 2020) from the Federal Government of Canada, we recommend that the Town of Kentville as per capacity building, complete Unconscious Bias/Emotional Intelligence Training.

Working with Indigenous Peoples - 2018, Acadia University

[https://indigenous.acadiau.ca/tl\\_files/sites/indigenous/Acadia-IndigProtocolsHandbook\\_27February2018.pdf](https://indigenous.acadiau.ca/tl_files/sites/indigenous/Acadia-IndigProtocolsHandbook_27February2018.pdf)

8.2 RHFAC PARKING STANDARDS

1.1 PARKING Maximum Score: 41 Points		Max. Points	Mandatory
1.1.1	<b>Number of designated spaces</b>	5	✓
	<p><b>Minimum requirements:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides total number of designated accessible parking spaces for standard cars and vans following current CSA standards.</li> </ul> <p><b>Maximum points:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides additional designated parking spaces for people with disabilities</li> <li>Where parking serves multiple entrances to a site or trail, disperses accessible spaces among accessible entrances</li> <li>Provides adequate number of designated accessible parking at specific entrances to meet the needs of all users of the facility (e.g. medical facilities, community centres and trails or pathways used by seniors, and adaptable sports programs will need more accessible parking than CSA standard)</li> <li>In residential facilities, provides guest parking with accessible spaces designated for people with disabilities</li> </ul>		
1.1.2	<b>Dimensions of designated spaces for expected vehicles</b>	5	✓
	<p><b>Minimum requirements:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For designated accessible parking, provides required dimensions for parking space and access aisle</li> </ul>		

1.1 PARKING Maximum Score: 41 Points		Max. Points	Mandatory
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides an access aisle adjacent to the parking space and running the full length of the space; two spaces can share one aisle; ideally, access aisles are available on both sides of the parking space to provide choice</li> </ul> <p><b>Maximum points:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides designated parking accommodating vans and rear lift equipped vehicles</li> </ul>		
1.1.3	<b>Surface is level, stable, firm and slip resistant</b>	5	✓
	<i>Please refer to Fundamental Requirements section.</i>		
1.1.4	<b>Clear signage</b>	3	✓
	<p><i>Uses designated signage; may include designated reserved space labelled for specific tenant or staff</i></p> <p><b>Minimum requirements:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensures designated accessible and courtesy and limited mobility parking spaces are clearly marked both on the pavement and on a vertically mounted sign</li> <li>Ensures signs are visible while vehicles are parked in spaces</li> <li>Uses the International Symbol of Access to identify designated parking</li> <li>Ensures signs identifying van spaces indicate they are van accessible</li> <li>Ensures the access aisle is clearly marked</li> <li><b>Note:</b> Some accessible spaces meeting standards of CAN/CSA B651, Item 9.5.2 for size may be</li> </ul>		

8.2 RHFAC PARKING STANDARDS

1.1 PARKING Maximum Score: 41 Points		Max. Points	Mandatory
	<p>private or personal parking for the tenant or owner and therefore not marked using the international symbol to prevent confusion with parking available for guests or the public.</p> <p><b>Maximum points:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides clear directional signage indicating route to designated accessible, courtesy, and limited mobility spaces, and to ticket machines, as appropriate</li> <li>Ensures signs at garage entrances indicate vertical clearances and location of van spaces</li> <li>Provides adequate setback for nature and landscaping to ensure overgrowth does not obscure signage</li> <li>Provides a variety of clear wayfinding cues</li> </ul>		
<b>1.1.5</b>	<b>Safe and direct access to pedestrian pathway</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>✓</b>
	<p><i>Includes parking space to pedestrian pathway</i></p> <p><b>Minimum requirements:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensures access aisles connect directly to accessible pedestrian pathways</li> <li>In a parking garage, ensures access aisles connect directly to accessible pedestrian route to closest accessible pedestrian entrance</li> <li>Ensures pathways are in a convenient location close to an accessible entrance</li> <li>Ensures route is accessible and easy to understand</li> <li>Ensures there are no obstructions</li> </ul>		

1.1 PARKING Maximum Score: 41 Points		Max. Points	Mandatory
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides security</li> </ul> <p><b>Maximum points:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensures the route runs in front of and not behind parking spaces; access does not require passing behind vehicles or across roadway</li> <li>Ensures route is on the most convenient level for access to facility, if multi-storey or underground car park</li> </ul>		
<b>1.1.6</b>	<b>Curb ramps (if level change en route to exterior pathway)</b>	<b>5</b>	
	<p><i>Only applies if there is a level change between the parking space and the pedestrian pathway</i></p> <p><b>Minimum requirements:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides curb ramp in close proximity to pedestrian pathway</li> <li>Ensures curb ramp does not project into parking space, access aisle, or vehicle traffic lane to accommodate wheelchair transfers and vehicle ramps or lifts</li> <li>Ensures curb ramps have landings at top</li> <li>Ensures curb ramps have returned curb sides (side flares); or provides a dropped sidewalk or blended transition as alternative to curb ramps</li> </ul> <p><b>Maximum points:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides dedicated curb ramp with safe access to pedestrian pathway from each designated parking space</li> </ul>		

8.2 RHFAC PARKING STANDARDS

1.1 PARKING Maximum Score: 41 Points		Max. Points	Mandatory
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Incorporates appropriate tactile attention indicator, including truncated domes</li> <li>Provides score lines indicating direction of travel</li> <li>Ensures gutter provides flush transition from pathway to minimize tripping hazards</li> </ul>		
1.1.7	<b>Clearly marked pedestrian route and crossings (if in path of traffic)</b>	3	
	<p><i>Includes traffic crossings and travelling behind vehicles</i></p> <p>Minimum requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensures routes are logical and understandable</li> <li>Provides directional signage</li> <li>Ensures crosswalks are clearly marked on pavement in high-contrast colour</li> </ul> <p>Maximum points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides a variety of clear wayfinding cues</li> <li>Ensures crosswalks have additional alerts (e.g., flashing lights, audible signal or embedded LED lighting)</li> </ul>		
1.1.8	<b>Height clearance (if sheltered or parkade)</b>	4	
	<p>Minimum requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides vertical clearance to accommodate vans at van parking spaces and along the vehicle route to and from these spaces</li> <li>If clearance is not adequate to accommodate van converted for wheelchair access (higher than standard van), provides suitable parking</li> </ul>		

1.1 PARKING Maximum Score: 41 Points		Max. Points	Mandatory
	<p>alternative and sufficient warning in advance of entry and directions to appropriate location</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensures there are no projecting elements, such as signs and lighting</li> </ul> <p>Maximum points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fully accommodates a van that is converted for wheelchair access (higher than standard van)</li> </ul>		
1.1.9	<b>Well illuminated (if site expected to be lit)</b>	3	
	<p><i>N/A if no power to site or policy for outdoor day use only (e.g., remote outdoor park)</i></p> <p><i>Please refer to Fundamental Requirements section.</i></p>		
1.1.10	<b>Shelter for designated spaces (if outdoor parking)</b>	2	
	<p><i>N/A only if indoor parking garage</i></p> <p>Minimum requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides minimal protection from weather</li> </ul> <p>Maximum points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides full coverage from weather</li> </ul>		
1.1.11	<b>Ticket dispensers or paying machines convenient and accessible (if paid parking)</b>	3	
	<p>Minimum requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensures dispensers are close to parking spaces</li> <li>Provides clear floor space for forward or side approach</li> <li>Ensures location is within accessible reach ranges</li> <li>Provides safe access</li> </ul>		

8.2 RHFAC PARKING STANDARDS

1.1 PARKING Maximum Score: 41 Points		Max. Points	Mandatory
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensures there are no obstructions or interference from other parked vehicles</li> <li>Provides a level ground surface</li> <li>Ensures dispensers have one-hand operation</li> <li>Ensures machines are easy to use and understand</li> <li>Ensures the visual display is easy to see and read</li> <li>Provides clear instructions</li> </ul> <p>Maximum points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensures machines are available at different heights</li> <li>Ensures machines contrast visually with surrounding surface</li> <li>Provides intercom available for communication with operator</li> </ul>			

Number of vehicle parking spaces	Number of designated parking spaces for people with disabilities
2–50	1–3
51–100	2–4
101–200	4–8
201–300	5–10
301–500	6–12
500 plus	6–12 plus 1–3 for every 100 additional spaces over 500

Source: Table 7, p. 197, CSA 8651-12 © 2012 CSA Group

1.2 General Vehicular Access

General vehicular access includes passenger drop-off or loading areas and nearby public transit.

Passenger drop-off areas allow people to immediately access a site. They are generally required at medical care facilities, long-term care facilities, airports and hotels. They are useful at outdoor recreation facilities, especially if picnics and other activities are planned. They may be provided in addition to designated parking and are very helpful where designated parking is not close to a facility, or where weather conditions are often poor.

Those who are unable to drive often rely on public transit to get around. While transit is often beyond the control of a site owner, it still impacts a facility’s level of accessibility. In fact, when selecting a location for a site, proximity of public transportation is often one of the criteria.

Here are some general guidelines to follow when reviewing the accessibility of these areas:

- As with designated parking, passenger drop-off areas should be accessible, easy to use, and sufficient enough to support the needs of all intended users. They should not impede vehicular or passenger traffic. The size and number of drop-off areas depends on the size and intended use of the site.
- As with any drop-off or pick-up area, the ideal transit stop should be close to the facility. Provision of a level, stable and firm surface, adequate lighting for security, a shelter and a seating area are all important features. There should be safe access to the pedestrian pathway, and the pedestrian pathway should be safe and accessible.
- Basic requirements for accessible passenger drop-off zones include:
  - the size of drop-off spaces and access aisles
  - vertical clearance
  - surfaces
  - identification and signage

## RESOURCES

### 8.2 RHFAC PARKING STANDARDS

- protection from the elements
- illumination
- Basic requirements for transit are similar to those for passenger drop-off zones. Other considerations include the provision of seating and shelter, and the safety of any road crossings.

Refer to CSA B651-12, 9.3 Passenger pick-up areas, p. 194-195, for additional details.

1.2 GENERAL VEHICULAR ACCESS Maximum Score: 20 Points		Max. Points	Mandatory
1.2.1	<b>Passenger drop-off (if required for expected usage)</b>	10	
	<p><i>N/A only if clear case that passenger drop-off is not expected or possible (e.g., busy urban street)</i></p> <p>Minimum requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Ensures drop-off areas are located close to facility and accessible main entrance(s)</li> <li>● Ensures the surface is level, stable, firm and slip resistant to support safe loading/unloading</li> <li>● Ensures the access aisle is clearly marked, level with vehicle drop-off space, and wide enough for expected usage</li> <li>● Ensures access aisle provides safe and direct access to pedestrian pathway</li> <li>● Provides clear, easy-to-locate signage</li> <li>● Provides a curb ramp if level changes from access aisle to pedestrian pathway</li> <li>● Provides tactile walking surface indicators (TWSIs) for people who are blind or have low vision</li> </ul>		

## RESOURCES

### 8.3 FUNDING ALIGNMENTS

Multicultural Festival: Events - Community Support, Multiculturalism, and Anti-Racism Initiatives Program (Federal)

<https://www.canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage/services/funding/community-multiculturalism-anti-racism/events.html>

Festival and Community Event Development (Provincial):

<https://cch.novascotia.ca/festival-and-community-event-development> - Due Feb 28,2020

Support4Culture (Provincial): <https://cch.novascotia.ca/support4culture> - opportunities to support diversity in cultural programming.

Business Accessibility Funding:

<https://cch.novascotia.ca/business-access-ability-grant-program>

Not-for-profit Accessibility Funding:

<https://cch.novascotia.ca/investing-our-future/community-funding-and-awards/community-access-ability-program>

Enabling Accessibility Funding:

<https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/services/funding/enabling-accessibility-fund-small-projects.html>

Active Transportation Funding: Connect2 program <https://novascotia.ca/low-carbon-communities/>

Federation of Canadian Municipalities Program Funds: <https://fcm.ca/en/programs>

Federal initiatives to hire Indigenous youth

<https://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1386258314245/1386258376973>

## CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT RESULTS

### 9.1 SUMMARIES

#### Centre Square Survey Kiosk

November 4th, 2020

Survey services were offered with in-person access, online, in-person or on paper to 12 people in total.

Centre Square proved to be a focal point in the community with many people exploring the Farmers Market and other local businesses. Some were interested in having a conversation vs completing the survey, or simply looking to understand the purpose of the Kentville and You, Moving Accessibility Forward project.

Key points of conversation were:

- **Public Services:** a 'buddy program' similarly designed to the very successful S.M.I.L.E. (Sensory Motor Instructional Leadership Experience) Program offered through Acadia University. This program is volunteer based and supports people's development needs.



#### The Acadia S.M.I.L.E. Program

(Sensory Motor Instructional Leadership Experience)

*Smile at the possibilities for individuals with disabilities!*

- **Built Environment:** Centre Square uneven stones and bricks make it difficult for wheelchairs, walkers and other assistive devices. Parking was also a hot topic: "If the Town wants us to stay they are sending the wrong message. How does it say 'Please stay and shop' when the by-law officers are chalking your tires before you even get out of the car? To us that says 'hurry up and leave'."
- **Employment Barriers:** people with mobility issues stated that employment opportunities are not the same as per able bodied people, due to inaccessible built environments. Many places do not accommodate larger entry ways, ramps or elevators, or barrier free washrooms.

houdinidesign  
ARCHITECTS



Jessica Ward, Project Manager at reachAbility Association & Kayla Mansfield-Brown, Community Engagement Coordinator with houdinidesign ARCHITECTS at Centre Square Survey Kiosk

## CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT RESULTS

### 9.1 SUMMARIES

#### Centre Square Survey Kiosk

November 12th, 2020

25 interactions: 11 who completed the survey, 10 who wanted to converse regarding Accessibility, and 4 who wanted to learn about the project.

Key points of conversation were:

- **Goods and Services:** many shared concern about the lack of essentials available like affordable clothing for all family members; supplies for babies and toddlers; supplies and food for pets; dentistry; affordable groceries. The Town was commended for providing play kits for young children and for continuing to keep the community engaged throughout the pandemic.
- **Transportation:** concerns were expressed regarding the operating hours of public transportation as a barrier for night shift workers. Inaccessible entrances and exits on buses can lead to barriers for access to public transportation: often a bus will have only one end with an accessible entrance. Walking is not always safe for people with disabilities, especially those with visual impairment, noting unsafe and unlit sidewalks, lack of pedestrian walkways and poorly marked crosswalks.
- **Sustainable Employment:** many mentioned that sustainable, meaningful employment is not readily available to them and barriers such as transportation, affordable child care, living wage were again discussed. Another participant mentioned that they have been self-employed since they finished school because they could never find gainful employment.



Smart Canes, Innovative Technologies



Innovative 3D Models being developed for Wayfinding



Innovative 3D Models being developed for Education

## CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT RESULTS

### 9.1 SUMMARIES

#### Cafe Style Engagement Session

Thursday, November 12th, 2020 Town of Kentville, Lower Recreation Centre.  
American Sign Language (ASL) Interpretation was provided.

Based on the Accessible Canada Act, questions were formed around Employment, Goods & Services, Built Environment, Education, Access to Information and Communications, Awareness and Culture.

Additionally, the Kentville Parks and Recreation Department hosted a Stakeholder engagement session and allowed our team to cross reference any points of discussion within our questions below. Combined, there were 9 organizations and 10 participants, including:

1. Nova Scotia Health
2. Kings County Family Resource Centre
3. Department of Community Services
4. Valley Community Learning Association
5. Evergreen Home for Special Care
6. The Portal Outreach Centre
7. Chrysalis House
8. Annapolis Valley Regional Centre for Education
9. Western Community Health Board



#### Question:

**How do you define meaningful employment?** Meaningful employment was defined as being able to obtain and maintain employment that meets the needs and values of the individual. These needs include: feeling engaged in the process; earning a living wage; having access to benefits and pensions; and having the ability to disclose your disability and be given accommodations. Additionally, community members stated having equitable access to employment without layers of barriers such as reliable transportation, childcare, finances and reasonable working hours is not something that is readily available within the Town.



Safe Bike Paths

## CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT RESULTS

### 9.1 SUMMARIES

**Share with us what it would mean to you for Kentville to be a barrier-free community.** A barrier-free Kentville isn't too far of a stretch according to those who engaged with us. Having basic amenities like equitable access to clean, safe and accessible public spaces like trails and parks with benches and accessible gender neutral washrooms were common requests. Other basic needs like having areas for nursing mothers to be comfortable, and increasing the number of covered seating areas in outdoor areas would make these spaces safer and more welcoming for everyone. Making these updates with an inclusive, diverse and environmentally sustainable lens would make the Town more culturally welcoming, warm, safe and sustainable.

Eliminating physical barriers like increasing bus routes, giving those who don't live within the core access to affordable public transportation, is something that was shared repeatedly. Additionally, creating accessible access by connecting the main amenities of stores, recreational facilities and outdoor spaces by transportation corridors would encourage the use of the spaces and promote active transportation as is highlighted by the Town in previous projects.

**When it comes to education and access to education, how are we doing?** Of those who joined our in-person engagement sessions, we didn't have many who currently have children within the school systems, but when recollecting their experiences, they had positive things to say. In their experience, they felt engaged in their children's education and noted that this “makes all the difference.” They felt there was ample opportunity for extracurricular involvement within the Town and commended the obvious partnerships among agencies, schools and the Town. One participant noted that there is room for improvement and that as we move forward we need to “be mindful of how to engage folks that historically have not been engaged.”

**What challenges do you experience when travelling in the Town of Kentville?** Transportation whether by foot, wheelchair, car, bus, bike or otherwise is a hot topic. Most of the feedback was in regards to trails, sidewalks and crosswalks. Many would like to see better maintenance of trails. Erosion causes accessibility issues; paving would be ideal. With access to trails for biking, we are in need of bike repair stations and rest spots with water access.

Putting a ramp at the back of Town Hall and at back entrances for businesses shows lack of respect for people with disabilities. Additionally, without access to public transportation throughout all of Kentville, the cost of taxis and other reliable transportation, particularly when travelling up and down steep areas in Town, is a barrier for anyone, especially those with mobility issues and small children. The ball fields are not accessible; this is a barrier when viewing Wild Cat games. Parking needs to also improve in this area.



Map of the Town of Kentville where participants envision their future Kentville



The Rigg, a fully accessible off road vehicle.

## CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT RESULTS

### 9.1 SUMMARIES

#### Zoom Sessions:

November 12th, 16th and 19th, and December 9th, 2020

The sessions combined resulted in the participation of 30 citizens from various backgrounds all with commitment to addressing accessibility and inclusion in the Town of Kentville.

Questions & Responses included:

*Q: Is there a culture of accessibility in the Town of Kentville? Have you heard, seen or felt messaging from or within the Town of Kentville that everyone is - or isn't - welcome? If so, how?*

Two major themes emerged:

- No one could recall receiving messaging directly from the Town of Kentville either verbally, through imagery, marketing, or a policy, that everyone is welcome.
- As a result, participants indicated that the feeling generated is that that everyone isn't welcome.

*Q: Are your needs being met by the Town of Kentville, and within the Town of Kentville. If so, how? If not, please explain.*

The major themes that emerged included:

- Access to sufficient mental health supports specifically to those facing multiple systemic barriers such as Indigenous families, youth, people with disabilities, 2SLGBTQ+ folks and those suffering with addictions, is lacking.
- Lack of sufficient internet access, or any internet access at all, affects children, youth, seniors, people with disabilities - the entire community - both through further social isolation and access to education.
- Housing – affordable, accessible - for both adults and youth is challenging to secure. *It was specifically noted that within the downtown core rental units are inaccessible to people with physical disabilities due to the age of the buildings.*
- Food security - the number of low income families increases daily. Access to free, nutritious breakfast and lunch programs can be improved in schools. *The Town of Kentville Recreation Department offers free lunches for their day camps throughout the summer and it makes a huge difference for such a small cost.*



Multicultural Festival



Multicultural Festival

## CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT RESULTS

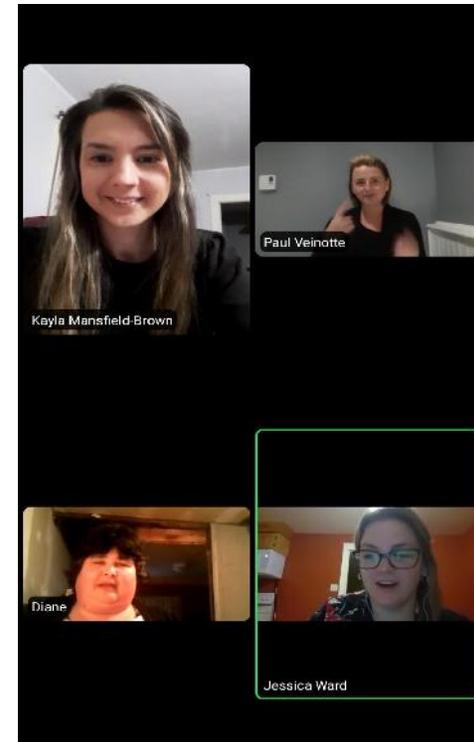
### 9.1 SUMMARIES

#### Zoom

Q: *What types of barriers make accessing what you need, difficult?*

Responses included:

- Most accessible parking is within Centre Square, however Centre Square is not a safe place to travel by foot, wheelchair or with a mobility assistive device. Pedestrians can not move safely from parking spaces to where they need to go as traffic moves quickly in Centre Square. One person remarked, *“It is very dangerous for us.”*
- Physical barriers like rough and broken sidewalks, lack of ramps and accessible doorways make accessing Town amenities very difficult. The inconsistency of what is available makes these barriers more frustrating. *“Every business is different: one may have a ramp and then a door knob, another may have a huge square step which makes navigating alone or even with help almost impossible in a wheelchair.”*
- Public transportation is an issue: both the entrance and the exit on the bus are not always wheelchair accessible. The routes aren’t sufficient enough and in certain weather conditions it is impossible for someone with a mobility issue to get to a bus stop in order to access the bus. Bus shelters are not all accessible; the hours of the buses do not allow for their users to maintain employment outside of a very small window of service; *people feel that they are ‘lesser than’ especially when travelling on the bus with a large family.*
- Public washroom facilities: there aren’t any. Additionally, washroom facilities that are available within businesses are not accessible - toilets, handles, sinks, door knobs, door locks, hand dryers vs paper towel dispensers, buttons to enter and exit are non existent, changing tables for adults are not available. Overall there is no consistency in building codes or methods and no compliance or accountability for how this affects the dignity of members of the public.



Zoom Meeting November  
19th

## CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT RESULTS

### 9.1 SUMMARIES

#### Zoom

*Q: Do you believe that people with disabilities can find meaningful and sustainable employment in the Town of Kentville? If not, please explain.*

The major themes that emerged included:

- There are limited opportunities to make a living wage in the Town of Kentville, especially if you face barriers to employment, as a member of minority group, require access to affordable childcare and housing, or need transportation outside of the set bus schedule.
- Low literacy, disability, mental health, addictions and/or dealing with food insecurity are barriers.
- Accommodating employers are hard to find. Disclosure to employers makes acquiring a job, let alone keeping a job challenging.
- Employers need more education around the ease of accommodation and the business benefits to creating an accommodating culture within their organizations.
- Employment supports are available but not many know about them.
- Employers aren't aware of how to transition employment support participants into permanent roles within their organizations so more barriers are faced by participants when this doesn't happen well.



Employment for People with Disabilities



Making Office Spaces fully Accessible



The role of Artificial Intelligence for People with Disabilities

## CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT RESULTS

### 9.1 SUMMARIES

#### Zoom

*Q: What accessibility improvements need to be made to public spaces in Town of Kentville?*

Due to its close proximity to Kentville, many people believe that the Valley Regional Hospital (VRH) is located in Kentville, and participants wanted to share experiences.

We felt that it was important to acknowledge references to the hospital, as citizen advocacy falls under the Committee's terms. And, for instance, a member of the Committee might sit on the NS Health Patient, Family & Public Advisory Council to ensure that voices of Kentville residents are represented.

Additionally, visitors to and employees of the hospital, whether Kentville or other area residents, use services and shop in Kentville while accessing the hospital. There is an important relationship, for many reasons, to strengthen.

Comments below were expressed during the discussion:

- *"You get the odd one that doesn't treat you like you are an inconvenience to them.... At times you can't find someone when you need them."*
- It is difficult to navigate overcrowded hallways using a wheelchair or walker.
- Crowded hospital rooms makes it hard to safely maneuver and make you feel unwelcome.
- One participant said that they fell out of their chair trying to get over a lip in a doorway.
- When equipment is the wrong size it is unsafe and can lead to accidents.



Van Eijk & Van der Lubbe  
Architects Utrach  
Care Facility



Van Eijk & Van der Lubbe  
Architects Utrach  
Care Facility



Scewo Electrical Wheelchair  
Designed to go Up Stairs

## CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT RESULTS

### 9.1 SUMMARIES

#### Walk & Roll

November 17th, 2020, Miner's Marsh

Parks and Recreation Director, Rachel Bedingfield and Active Living Community Coordinator, Lydia Broderick co-hosted a Walk & Roll through Miners Marsh with us to have a dialogue on Moving Accessibility Forward in the Town of Kentville. There were 27 people in attendance.

Key Points of conversation:

- Inconsistent use of Code or Standards: a message heard throughout many conversations. No two bathrooms are built the same - the accessible bathrooms in Town Hall have door knobs instead of levers, 90 degree grab bars but they are attached to the floor instead of the wall, and the soap and paper towel dispensers are too high. Other bathrooms throughout Town may have lever handles and wall grab bars but improper toilet seats and no back support. Compliance with the building codes and standards is lacking and the community is frustrated with the inconsistency.
- Cultural or Community Awareness: people with disabilities want to feel that they are participating members within their community. By engaging with organizations like the Alexander Society, who foster these relationships we can begin to bridge this gap. The main objectives of the Alexander Society are to foster cognitive, social, physical and emotional development through the arts, and to encourage inclusive community living including recreation for people of all ages and abilities and inclusive villages.
- Housing: accessible, affordable, and community based housing is needed. There are many examples of intergenerational, accessible communities living well through co-housing models throughout the world. An example was given, THREEFOLD, NY.  
<https://threefold.org/our-community/community-directory/>
- Adult Playgrounds and Adult Care Equipment: points of discussion with some families were around the lack of adult accessible equipment in the Town of Kentville. Many are relevant to children, but could not withhold the weight of an adult. This includes playgrounds and change tables. There is no dignity in changing your disabled child on a public bathroom floor.



Walk & Roll, Miners Marsh  
captured by  
Dave Elliott



The Rigg, a fully accessible off  
road vehicle

## CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT RESULTS

### 9.1 SUMMARIES

#### Walk & Roll

- Lack of legal resources for people with disabilities who fall between the legal aid eligibility and being able to afford legal representation.
- Lack of respite supports and funding for these supports is a big issue. We have a high number of adults with cognitive and developmental disabilities here in the valley and supports such as these should be more readily available.
- Covid19 created increased isolation for people with disabilities and there has not been an increase in support - mental health, respite support, financial support. The \$600 one time payment was not enough to help folks recover. Food security is an issue.
- Accessible public washrooms need to be more widespread throughout public areas, parks and downtown. Sensory adjustments should be considered in facilities, for example, hand dryers are difficult for people with sensory issues.
- Mental health support is needed, including for mothers with kids who feel isolated and overwhelmed – especially during the pandemic.
- Where there is low-income housing, more support is needed. Without additional support (food, mental health, transportation, stigma) the cycle of poverty continues to be perpetuated.
- Online resources need to be supported by phone access – if you don't have internet, people need to be able to call and register. Stigma is an important issue.
- More inclusive affordable housing/living opportunities. We need a system that allows developers to rent for an affordable price. Promote Co-housing developments. The development of inclusive living opportunities is limited.
- Community spaces are needed where you don't have to spend money to be included in activities.



Walk & Roll, Miners Marsh  
captured by Dave Elliott

## CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT RESULTS

### 9.1 SUMMARIES

#### Art Submissions

A call for for Art Submissions was issued, as well as a children friendly module with questions based on accessibility for local schools of Aldershot and Kings County Academy. The purpose of the art submissions was to showcase a first person experience or views of the Town of Kentville. The art submissions could be uploaded via social media with the #ShowUsYourKentville or dropped off in-person at Webster Street Printers. Additionally, the Town of Kentville drew a name from submissions for a chance to win a \$100 gift card to a local Kentville business. The contest had over a dozen entries and ranges from photos to short videos.

See pages 121 onwards for submissions.



David Elliott

Lexie Burgess Misner

Riley Neault

Shelley Corkum-Bezanson

Avila Mansfield Brown

David Elliott

David Elliott

### 9.1 SUMMARIES

#### PHONE IN DISCUSSIONS

Q 1: Is there a culture of accessibility in the Town of Kentville? Have you heard, seen or felt messaging from or within the Town of Kentville that everyone is - or isn't - welcome?

- A) I think that the Town does a good job at connecting with community members, but not overly a lot of black people are seen within the Town.
- B) Not necessarily. There seems to be more emphasis on social development rather than economic development. The focus seems to be on bringing in businesses that make money, instead of organizations that provide opportunities for the community itself to develop such as arts and music centres, or programming that is community-based and culturally-safe. There also needs to be more opportunities and harm reduction measures taken for the vulnerable groups such as residents of Open Arms.
- C) Additionally, Kentville is becoming more gentrified, making it less accessible and less affordable to people with disabilities, people with low-incomes, elderly people, and other vulnerable groups. This just adds to the pile of barriers already faced by marginalized groups.
- D) Lack of understanding of working with and for BIPOC communities.
- E) Internalized racism in service providers when showing status cards for tax reduction and or as a form of governmental ID often faced with discrimination.
- F) I feel that the Town makes an effort to be accessible more than many other Towns. I think there could be more accessible parking and entry to stores. As for cultural accessibility there is not a lot of messaging around cultural acceptance or cultural safety within the Town. Organizations such as Community Inc and Open Arms do clearly welcome marginalized groups and have programming representative of this.
- G) I personally haven't noticed any issues or messaging suggesting anyone isn't welcome, that doesn't mean that not everyone is.

Q 2: Are your needs being met by the Town of Kentville, and within the Town of Kentville?

- A) Everything is being met, outside of funding for the homeless, there is not enough income to support people who are homeless or couchsurfing. Income by income assistance is not enough to support a healthy life.
- B) No. Not as an Indigenous woman.
- C) Clients I have worked with have felt it would be nice if the Town had more culturally diverse representation (signage, etc.) but this could be said for many Towns.
- D) More outdoor events that are accessible to all.

## CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT RESULTS

### 9.1 SUMMARIES

#### PHONE IN DISCUSSIONS CONT.

Q 3: What types of barriers make accessing what you need, difficult?

- A) Lack of access to healthcare during Covid-19, affordable housing and resources for homeless and people at risk - lack of supports for people who are supporting people at risk (community services does not provide you with further supports).
- B) People are being taken advantage of by these systems that oppress people - *“If I wouldn't have been black, they would have offered more or provided me with a better hand.”*
- C) Systemic racism, Discrimination, Gender Discrimination.
- D) Some barriers that have been mentioned to me are accessibility to stores, feeling unwelcome in the Town, and stigma around accessing resources like DCS or Open Arms within the Town.
- E) No specific barriers for myself.
- F) Stereotypes around status cards for tax expecting and as a recognized form of Governmental ID.

Q 4: What accessibility improvements need to be made to public spaces in the Town of Kentville?

- A) Lack of representation of Black and Indigenous populations.
- B) Lack of support for Black youth - lack of knowledge of who they are and where to go for help? Expressing, yourself to white people may not be understood or face further barriers to personal experiences. Lack of public information in the Town from Black and Indigenous peoples - like in museums.
- C) There needs to be more safe spaces to create, learn, share and grow, especially culturally. There is a diverse population in the area that could teach each other many things, but have little to no opportunities or spaces to do such in. There is also a need for more programming that is community-based and culturally safe for all.
- D) Maybe more accessible parking and more ramps to enter facilities that have stairs. Also parking is a huge barrier for individuals who cannot walk far.
- E) More safe node ways for bike use and bike routes throughout the Town.

## CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT RESULTS

### 9.1 SUMMARIES

#### PHONE IN DISCUSSIONS CONT.

Q 5: Are there things you believe the Town of Kentville is doing well with? Recommendations you have?

- A) Anti-Racism or Diversity training - [Overcoming History - VANSDA](https://vansda.ca/training/overcoming-history/)  
<https://vansda.ca/training/overcoming-history/>
- B) Connect with Black Leaders to represent Black history within the Town (such as Jaunita Pleasant - Writer and Calendar)
- C) Better relationship with AVFN and Glooscap FN and the off-reserve body.
- D) Removing historically inaccurate information towards Black and Indigenous peoples.
- E) Support Black and Indigenous businesses.
- F) Economic and structural development going well.
- G) The fact the Town of Kentville is reaching out to get this type of information speaks volumes. I also think the wide variety of events and markets etc. that are held within the Town are great. Also, the community events held by the Town are always spoken highly of.
- H) Signage has improved, promoting of local business/services.



Kings County Academy  
entrance after rainbow paint

## CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT RESULTS

### 9.2 SURVEY RESULTS

#### Survey Overview

Employment: making the Town an accessible workplace, and supporting young people with disabilities in finding and maintaining meaningful employment.

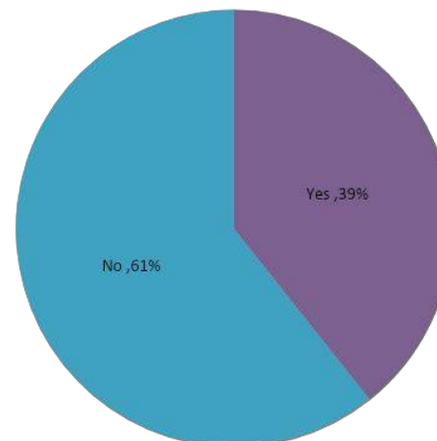
- 68% agree that people with disabilities are accepted in the workplace.
- 35% are aware of inclusive employers.
  - **For consideration:** How can we support employers to be more inclusive for all people, both during and after the hiring process?

Built environment: making buildings, streets, sidewalks, and shared spaces accessible to all.

- The top 3 most accessed public spaces are: trails, crosswalks and parking lots/spaces.
- Town Hall was identified as inaccessible and ramp conditions and locations were identified as a primary reason for inaccessibility.
- The library was also identified as a public building with accessibility issues.
- 61% of those surveyed believe that commercial buildings are inaccessible.
- 90% say that private dwellings are inaccessible.
- - **For consideration:** How can we incentivise landlords/property owners to invest in making accessibility upgrades?

\*Pie chart refers to: I think the commercial buildings (banks, shops, restaurants, business offices, accommodations, factories, warehouses, showrooms) in the Town of Kentville are accessible to all.\*

No = 61%  
Yes = 39%



## CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT RESULTS

### 9.2 SURVEY RESULTS

Awareness: promoting awareness throughout the Town of Kentville about the importance of accessibility

- 78% of those surveyed want to share their opinions but 49% of those surveyed would not participate in Town Council.

**For consideration:** How do we make community members feel empowered to get involved in planning and policy making?

Human-centred design: implicit bias/decolonization.

- Half of those surveyed said they strongly disagree that people with disabilities are positively represented in the media. Comments included: “social media is homogeneous; little diversity; mental health disability not represented.”

**For consideration:** How can we ensure when hiring consultants for branding campaigns that we are using and obtaining images that are inclusive of everyone?

Good and Services: ensuring equitable access to goods and services.

- Restaurants and hair salons/barbershops were the top two services accessed in the last three months. However, they were also the top two most in-accessible services in the Town of Kentville.

**For consideration:** How can we encourage private businesses to become leaders in accessibility?

Information and Communication: ensuring all people can receive, understand and share information provided by the Town.

- Social media (88%) and the Town of Kentville website (62%) were the top two most accessed means of communication for those surveyed.

**For consideration:** How can we improve upon communications to the community that does not require internet access as not everyone in the Town of Kentville can access this way.

Transportation: making it easier for everyone to get where they need to go.

- Personal vehicle use (89%) and walking (87%) were the top two modes of transportation for those surveyed. (65% of those surveyed report a monthly personal income of \$2000 which is not a realistic look at all. demographics living in Kentville. More variety in feedback was found through in person engagements
- Barriers to using a personal vehicle were parking and routing.
- Barriers to public transportation were: scheduling (buses) and cost (taxi's).
- Community members feel very unsafe walking - narrow streets, uneven sidewalks, lots of traffic, walkways and pedestrian thoroughfare not clearly marked.

## CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT RESULTS

### 9.4 #ShowUsYourKentville CITIZEN PHOTOGRAPHY SUBMISSIONS



*Photography By Riley James Neult*

## CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT RESULTS

### 9.4 #ShowUsYourKentville CITIZEN PHOTOGRAPHY SUBMISSIONS



*Photography By Lexie Burgess Misner*



*Photography By Lexie Burgess Misner*

## CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT RESULTS

### 9.4 #ShowUsYourKentville CITIZEN PHOTOGRAPHY SUBMISSIONS



*Photography By Shelly Bezanson Corkum*

## CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT RESULTS

### 9.4 #ShowUsYourKentville CITIZEN PHOTOGRAPHY SUBMISSIONS



*Photography By David Elliott*



*Photography By David Elliott*

## CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT RESULTS

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*Photography By David Elliott*



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## CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT RESULTS

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*Photography By David Elliott*



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*Photography By David Elliott*

## CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT RESULTS

### 9.4 #ShowUsYourKentville CITIZEN PHOTOGRAPHY SUBMISSIONS



*Photography By David Elliott*



*Photography By David Elliott*



*Photography By David Elliott*

CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT RESULTS

9.4 #ShowUsYourKentville CITIZEN PHOTOGRAPHY SUBMISSIONS



Photography By David Elliott



Photography By David Elliott



Photography By David Elliott

## CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT RESULTS

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Photography By David Elliott



Photography By David Elliott



Photography By David Elliott

## CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT RESULTS

### 9.4 #ShowUsYourKentville CITIZEN PHOTOGRAPHY SUBMISSIONS



*Photography By David Elliott*



*Photography By David Elliott*

#### Video Links of Submissions:

[https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=-tpeD8S\\_LP4&feature=share](https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=-tpeD8S_LP4&feature=share)

<https://youtu.be/UuQjGIPgeN0>



*Photography By David Elliott*