

**Lunenburg County Accessibility Advisory Committee**

**Terms of Reference**

**1.0 PURPOSE**

The Lunenburg County Accessibility Advisory Committee’s (AAC) role is to assist the five municipal units (the Districts of Chester and Lunenburg and the Towns of Bridgewater, Lunenburg and Mahone Bay) and the village commissions in Lunenburg County develop an Accessibility Plan in accordance with “An Act Respecting Accessibility in Nova Scotia, 2017 (The Act). The AAC provides advice to the municipal councils and village commissions on identifying, preventing and eliminating barriers to people with disabilities in municipal programs, services, initiatives and facilities. The Committee plays a pivotal role in the creation of barrier-free communities and ensuring the obligations under the Act are met.

**2.0 SCOPE**

These Terms of Reference are applicable to all members appointed to the Lunenburg County Accessibility Advisory Committee (ACC).

**3.0 REFERENCES**

- 3.1 Bill No. 59 – Accessibility Act, Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2017

**4.0 DEFINITIONS**

- 4.1 **Barrier** means anything that hinders or challenges the full and effective participation in society of persons with disabilities including a physical barrier, an architectural barrier, an information or communication barrier, an attitudinal barrier, a technological barrier, a policy or a practice.
- 4.2 **Commission(s)** means the commissions for the Villages of Chester and Hebbville.
- 4.3 **Council(s)** means the Councils for the Districts of Chester and Lunenburg and the Towns of Bridgewater, Lunenburg and Mahone Bay.
- 4.4 **Disability** includes a physical, mental, intellectual, learning or sensory impairment, including an episodic disability (long-term conditions that are characterized by periods of good health interrupted by periods of illness or disability); that, in interaction with a barrier, hinders an individual’s full and effective participation in society.

**5.0 POLICY**

**5.1 Membership**

- 5.1.1 The Committee shall consist of ten (10) voting members who serve without pay, except for associated expenses. Five (5) community members and five (5) Council members. Each Council will appoint their own Council member representative. The five (5) community representatives are to be appointed by all five (5) municipal units.
- 5.1.2 Commissions may join the Committee or be represented by the Council of the municipal unit in which it is located. When a Commission joins the Committee one (1) commission member and one (1) community member will be added to the Committee. Community members pursuant to this clause will be appointed by the nominating committee.

- 5.1.3 Applications for the community members will be sent to the Lunenburg County Accessibility Nominating Committee. This Committee will be comprised of the Mayors/Wardens of the five municipal units **or their designate**. The Nominating Committee will send a recommendation to all five councils concerning the appointment of the community members.
- 5.1.4 Councils shall appoint each of the five (5) community representatives' members as follows: Two (2) members to a three (3) year term; two (2) members to a two (2) year term; and one-member (1) to a one (1) year term. Once a member has completed their term all new terms will be for three (3) years. The term for additional community representatives pursuant to section 5.1.2. will be determined by the nominating committee.
- 5.1.5 Council/ Commission appointments shall be for two (2) year terms.
- 5.1.6 At least one half of the members (community and council/commission representatives) of the AAC must be persons with disabilities or representatives from organizations representing persons with disabilities.
- 5.1.7 If a community member vacates the Committee for any reason at any time before that member's term would normally expire, the Councils shall appoint promptly a new member to the Committee to hold office for the unexpired term.
- 5.1.8 If a Council/Commission member vacates the Committee for any reason at any time before that Council/Commission member's term would normally expire, the Council/Commission that the member represents shall appoint promptly a new Council/Commission member to the Committee to hold office for the unexpired term.
- 5.1.9 Applications for the appointment of community representatives to the Committee shall be invited by public advertisement.
- 5.1.10 The Chair and Vice-Chair will be appointed annually by the Committee.

**5.2 Qualifications**

- 5.2.1 Any member of the Committee is eligible for reappointment.
- 5.2.2 Any member of the Committee, who is absent from three (3) consecutive meetings of the Committee, forfeits office, unless the absence is caused by illness or authorized by resolution of the Committee and noted in the Committee minutes. Any member who forfeits office is eligible for reappointments following the remainder of the unexpired term.

**5.3 Mandate of Responsibilities**

**The Committee has the following responsibilities:**

- 5.3.1 Advise the five Councils/Commissions in the preparation, implementation and effectiveness of an Accessibility Plan. In accordance with the Act, the Plan must include:
  - a. A report on measures the five (5) municipal units and the Commissions have taken and intend to take to identify, remove and prevent barriers;

- b. Information on procedures the five (5) municipal units and the Commissions have in place to assess the following for their effect on accessibility for persons with disabilities:
    - i. Any of its existing and proposed policies, programs, practices and services, and
    - ii. Any existing and proposed enactments or bylaws it will be administering; and
  - c. Any other prescribed information.
- 5.3.2 Advise all five (5) Councils and the Commissions on opportunities to promote the full participation of persons with disabilities, in accordance with the Act;
  - 5.3.3 Identify and advise on the accessibility of existing and proposed municipal services and facilities;
  - 5.3.4 Advise and make recommendations about strategies designed to achieve the objectives of the five (5) municipal units and the Commissions Accessibility Plans;
  - 5.3.5 Receive and review information directed to it by all five (5) municipal Councils and the Commissions and their committees, and to make recommendations as requested;
  - 5.3.6 Monitor federal and provincial government directives and regulations; and
  - 5.3.7 Host public consultations related to accessibility
  - 5.3.8 Provide input and advice to all five (5) councils and the Commissions with respect to updating the Accessibility Plan every three years.
  - 5.3.9 Provide an annual budget for the five (5) Councils and the Commissions consideration in order for the Committee to carry out their mandate.

**5.4 Rules of Engagement:**

- 5.4.1 Committee meetings will be called by the Chair as required to fulfill the duties outlined. Meetings of the ACC shall be open to the public and advertised no less than one week in advance.
- 5.4.2 A majority of the appointed voting members of the Committee constitutes a quorum.
- 5.4.3 Subject to the principles set out in the **Municipal Conflict of Interest Act**, all committee members present including the person presiding shall vote on a question.
- 5.4.4 Subject to section 22 of the **Municipal Government Act**, meetings of the committee are open to the public
- 5.4.5 The Committee may receive presentations from the public upon the approval of the Chair.
- 5.4.6 The Committee may establish Working Groups to explore specific issues related to the Accessibility Plan and/or other responsibilities. Members of the Working Group may consist of additional members of the community. A member of the AAC shall chair the Working Group.

**5.5 STAFF RESOURCES**

- 5.5.1 The Committee will be supported by municipal staff and consulting resources as required.
- 5.5.2 Staff appointed by the five (5) municipal units and the Commissions will attend meetings as a resource to the Committee.
- 5.5.3 The Municipalities will provide administrative support services to the Committee to aid in agenda preparation, minute taking, and other administrative duties as required.

**6.0 POLICY REVIEW**

- 6.1 These Terms of Reference will be reviewed by each of the five (5) Councils and the Commissions at least every four years from the effective/amended date.