

Appendix E.

Suggested consultation activities

The Accessibility Act states that public sector bodies, when they are preparing their accessibility plans, must seek input from people with disabilities and representatives of organizations representing people with disabilities.

Remember to design all consultation activities to be accessible. For example, ensure that people with a variety of disabilities are able to access the information and are able to give their input. Refer to Appendix F for a *Guide to Planning Accessible Meetings and Events*.

Here are some ways to kick-start your consultation:

- ▶ Create an Accessibility Advisory Committee working group focused on consultation.
- ▶ Gather information from stakeholders, either in person (for example, at pop-up events) or online.
- ▶ Ask for suggestions to improve the accessibility of your municipality.
- ▶ Ask for help in identifying accessibility priorities and possible examples, such as a hiring practice or a registration process.

Following are some sample exercises.

Brainstorming and ideation

Here are some questions that could spark discussion at a stakeholder meeting:

- ▶ What's your current experience of accessibility in [name of municipality]? (what's working; what's not)
- ▶ How can [name of municipality] contribute to an accessible Nova Scotia by 2030?
- ▶ What does an accessible [name of municipality] mean to you?
- ▶ What are some ways to remove accessibility barriers in [name of municipality] that could be done right away and that wouldn't cost a lot?
- ▶ What accessibility improvements would you make to [name of municipality] in the long term that would have the biggest impact?
- ▶ What local partnerships can you identify that could help implement some of your proposed improvements? Please be as specific as possible

Ask participants to identify accessibility priorities—such as employment, information and communication, and delivery of goods and services—and invite them to write their ideas under each category. *Wolfville: Access By Design* contains policies and actions in several categories that could be a useful starting point for a brainstorming session.

Mapping

One way to identify priorities in the built environment is to provide maps of key corridors in the community, or floor plans of buildings, and ask participants to mark the following hotspots, using coloured pencils or markers:

- ▶ **Red:** circle any accessibility barriers that represent a public safety hazard for people with disabilities within the municipal public domain (in public spaces for which the municipality has some responsibility or authority)
- ▶ **Orange:** circle any accessibility barriers that represent an access/equity issue for people with disabilities within the municipal public domain.
- ▶ **Green:** circle any areas in which the municipality has excelled at removing accessibility barriers.

For the first planning cycle, you may consider focusing on the streets and public spaces that have the most pedestrian traffic—for example, the commercial district and adjacent streets.

This exercise should be modified for participants with visual impairments—for example, by inviting oral feedback.

Here is a sample map from a community meeting in Wolfville.

