



**CAPE BRETON**  
REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY  
**AND YOU**

**MOVING  
ACCESSIBILITY  
FORWARD**



# REPORT DRAFT PRESENTATION



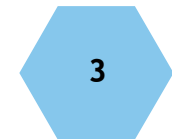
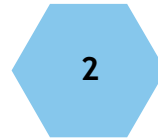
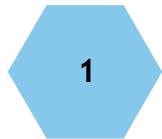


## Social Media & Website

We reached over 14,000 individuals (saw the awareness campaign on their social media platforms); 76 shares (people shared the content on their social media platforms), and 551 people visited the project landing page.



# Timeline



February

Surveying Started  
In-Person and  
Virtual  
Engagements  
Environment Scans

March

Stakeholder  
Engagements  
Building and  
Submitting Draft

May/June

Draft Report  
Presentation to RAC  
Draft  
Recommendation  
Engagement

# Engagement Feedback: What we heard

## 7 Standards:

- Built Environment
- Transportation
- Employment
- Information and Communication
- Awareness
- Goods and Services
- Education



# Engagement Feedback: How we heard

- Survey
- Engagements: In-Person and Virtual
- Mapping: In-Person and #CBRMaccess



# Engagement Feedback: What we heard

## Successes

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### Goods and Services:

- Some libraries have had some features. There is a provincial plan coming!
- There are a variety of free and paid programs and services, including accessible activities like sledge hockey and an accessible sailing regatta. Some funding opportunities as well!
- Transit Cape Breton and Handi-Trans!



# Engagement Feedback: What we heard Successes

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## Transportation:

- Handi-Trans and Transit Cape Breton!
- There are various taxi services throughout the region.
- There have been some sidewalk and crosswalk improvements in specific areas. For example, George Street and Charlotte Street in Sydney.



# Engagement Feedback: What we heard

## Successes

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### Built Environment:

- A number of community parks and playgrounds have undergone significant accessibility upgrades.
- New or renovated buildings such as the Sydney Fire Station and Glace Bay Miners Forum are well equipped and considered accessibility in design.



# Engagement Feedback: What we heard

## Successes

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### Built Environment:

- There are a number of trails and walking pathways that are assets to the community and well groomed during the warmer months.
- CBRM Libraries are considering accessibility and inclusion upgrades.



# Engagement Feedback: What we heard

## Successes

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### Information and Communication

- CBRM Twitter is effective when it comes to disruptive timely information regarding bus/transit routes.
- CBRM social media platforms are usually kept up to date and provide ample information on events and news.



# Engagement Feedback: What we heard

## Successes

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### Awareness and Capacity Building:

- The community is beginning to see that accessibility is a priority is noticing that accessibility awareness is being included in some public events.
- There has been a lot of good press!
- Council meetings are available online which increases the accessibility.



# Engagement Feedback: What we heard

## Successes

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### Employment:

- The Municipality has a Diversity Committee which can address inequities in the workplace.
- Roughly 1 in 3 survey respondents said they are aware of inclusive and accessible workplaces in the area. We heard about individuals from Crossroads work seasonally at the Port of Sydney.



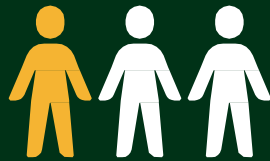
# Engagement Feedback: What we heard Successes

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## Employment:

- There are a number of employment support organizations in the area for example: Nova Scotia Works, Breton Abilities, the YMCA, Crossroads, etc.



## Engagement Analysis: Barriers

### Goods and Services

- The parks, playgrounds and outdoor spaces don't provide options for all ages or for year-round use.
- Not enough inclusive programming, events and services offered by CBRM.
- Most community engagement activities involve going for a walk.



## Engagement Analysis: Barriers

### Goods and Services

- Access to all essential items are not available in all areas.
- Hours of services make it difficult for access.
- The attitudes received by people with disabilities in most retail and small business establishments is that of being an inconvenience.



## Engagement Analysis: Barriers

### Transportation:

- Handi-Trans: Services only really available for folks with physical accessibility needs, and not in some areas, “Handi-Trans” name needs to change.
- Calming measures, lower speed limits, and the removal of some street side parking is needed on traffic heavy streets as it is unsafe.



## Engagement Analysis: Barriers

### Transportation:

- There is no consistency of sidewalk placement in the downtown areas, residential areas, or connecting downtown areas to outlying communities and vice versa.
- There are not enough proper designated accessible parking spots.
- Inconsistent and unreliable snow removal on roads, sidewalks and crosswalks.





## Built Environment:

- Accessible parking is limited and difficult to access overall.
- Most restaurants don't have accessible entryways and/or washroom facilities.
- Parks and playgrounds aren't accessible for everyone or provide opportunities for all age groups to participate in play.
- Most of the recreation facilities need accessibility upgrading for washrooms, ramps, doors.



## Built Environment:

- Amenities like post office boxes, resting areas, ATMs, and garbage receptacles are not logically placed, easily accessible and/or not prevalent enough throughout the community.
- Well maintained, public, accessible washrooms are not adequately available throughout. They need to be at every park, trail, playground and heavily travelled areas. Covid and the opiate crisis in the area have exacerbated this issue in the region with public washrooms usually locked.



Built Environment:

- Most of the trails and parks do not have designated parking lots.
- Sidewalks do not provide connectivity between town amenities, schools, parks etc and a perception that there is no consistency in installation, maintenance and snow removal among sidewalks, crosswalks, streets or pathways in any area.
- There is insufficient accessible, affordable housing.
- Signage is insufficient and inconsistent.

## Engagement Analysis: Barriers

### Information and Communication

- The Transit website is very confusing.
- No mapping or information on accessible spaces in each region.
- ASL is not provided at public events or in council meetings.
- Inconsistent signage and wayfinding everywhere.
- Advertising of important events is not being found in a timely manner.
- The CBRM website is hard to navigate.



## Engagement Analysis: Barriers

### Awareness and Capacity Building

- The community doesn't see enough representation!
- Awareness has felt limited to physical accessibility only and knowledge of accessibility varies throughout the community.
- The social determinants of health are not met by, or accessible within, the CBRM.
- Not everyone is aware that council meetings are able to be watched, or rewatched, despite their availability online and on tv.



## Engagement Analysis: Barriers



### Employment

- Lack of transportation limits the ability to find and maintain employment.
- The built environments of the municipally owned, and privately owned buildings are not fully accessible. This inaccessibility creates barriers to employment for many. This is especially true for many areas within the City Hall Building and the various locations of the CBRM Libraries.



## Engagement Analysis: Barriers



### Employment

- Employers do not understand what it means to be accessible or to provide accommodations so most feel screened out if they disclose, they require an accommodation (this can be changed with opportunities to become more disability confident).



Engagement Analysis: What we heard

## Opportunities

### Goods and Services:

- Create a standard for accessible service delivery that holds accountable all providers who work within the Cape Breton Regional Municipality until the Province develops a government-wide accessible customer service policy as identified in Nova Scotia's Accessibility Plan (2018-2021).
- Become a wealth of knowledge for your communities by seeking out resources available through support organizations in the region.
- Partner with organizations within the community to bring mobile services to communities with limited resources and access.

## Engagement Analysis: What we heard

# Opportunities

### Transportation:

- Create a campaign to increase awareness and acceptance about Accessible Parking.
- Communicate clearly and openly about snow removal.



## Engagement Analysis: What we heard

# Opportunities



### Built Environment:

- Engage organizations and community members in the planning and design of new built environments or renovations.
- Promote an event whereby elected officials and/or administrative staff tour the community with people with disabilities to gain new perspectives and raise awareness.

## Engagement Analysis: What we heard

# Opportunities



### Built Environment:

- Consider sensory barriers in public spaces and at public events. Low sensory times, rooms, silent parade portions, lower lighting etc.
- Inform citizens of new accessible spaces and improvements (i.e. work being done on trails)

Engagement Analysis:

## Opportunities



### Information and Communication:

- Involve the Cape Breton Regional Municipality Accessibility Advisory Committee in guiding these policies. The committee consists of staff as well as knowledgeable community members who have the capacity to lead these conversations.
- Offer staff training to learn how to create accessible documents.
- Provide information about provincial and federal resources for financial support for assistive technology so the community can have improved access to communication.

## Engagement Analysis: Opportunities



### Awareness and Capacity:

- Partner with agencies that support people with disabilities and promote the partnerships!
- Encourage more employees and the AAC to get involved in the various working groups within the Province of Nova Scotia to help build the standards!
- Consult with agencies and organizations supporting people with disabilities.
- Increase awareness about mental health and intersectional barriers like food and financial insecurity, affordable housing, and support for single parents.

## Engagement Analysis: What we heard

# Opportunities



### Employment:

- Partner with organizations to create online or in-person modules for continued learning around Equity, Diversity & Inclusion for Cape Breton Regional Municipality employees.
- Partner with agencies that represent people with disabilities and marginalized communities when hiring

## Engagement Analysis: What we heard

# Opportunities



### Employment:

- Provide resources to employers/businesses in the area on how to be inclusive.
- Partner with agencies in activities other than hiring (show interest in diverse ways)

## **CBRM Buildings, Parks and Facilities**

CBRM can easily and affordably make a difference in the municipally owned facilities that already offer some existing accessibility features.



# Successes

Accessible playground equipment (Cantley Village Park)

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Support for Accessible events (National Sailing hosted by Northern Yacht Club)

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Accessible Parks & Trails (Coxheath/Sydney River/Howie Centre)



# Successes

Street and sidewalk improvements on George and Charlotte Street in Sydney

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Accessible activities (Glace Bay accessible fishing area)



## Opportunities:

Communication between the regions about what you are doing well and how you did it is an easy way to start tackling some of these barriers. So many more!



# Recommendations:

## Overview – something to consider



- Every survey mentioned that sidewalks, crosswalks, and pedestrian pathways are the biggest barrier to accessibility. (Built Environment)
- The maintenance of parks and trails needs to be considered to improve accessibility. (Built Environment)
- Acceptance of disability communities is not seen as a priority.

# Recommendations:

## Considerations as you go



- 1) **Developing the Standards:** using recommended benchmarks, develop standards as to how implementation within the Cape Breton Regional Municipality structure will occur.
- 2) **Build Capacity and Awareness:** All Cape Breton Regional Municipality staff build capacity through training. Cape Breton Regional Municipality promotes inclusive priorities with an awareness campaign.
- 3) **Collaborate and Support:** in collaboration with marginalized 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 Cape Breton Regional Municipality 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.

# Recommendations:

## Immediate – Period of next two years



- Determine core Diversity, Equity and Inclusion competencies for each level of staff and create an implementation plan for training. Train current employees and include this essential learning as part of your onboarding process for all new staff.
- Revisit and revise hiring and workplace accommodation policies and ensure they are inclusive.
- Consider appointing a Director of Compliance or designate the role to an existing position (this could be a part of the Accessibility Coordinator and Committee role) to focus on accessibility compliance.
- Revisit by-laws and include the requirement for designated accessible parking spaces for all new developments

# Recommendations:

## Immediate – Period of next two years



- As the Taxi Authority in the region, consider update the by-laws to require a minimum percentage of fleet to be accessible vehicles to renew licenses.
- Review brand guidelines and update ensuring accessible font, size of font, and contrast are included.
- Create an Accessible Signage Standard.
- Create an accessibility awareness campaign and ensure that accessibility is seen as a priority.
- Re-evaluate the various systems and platforms that are being used for services and communication and ensure they work efficiently with assistive technology

# Recommendations:

## Immediate – Period of next two years



- Create an Accessible Communication Standard. Ensure all communication is delivered in accessible formats and can support the use of assistive technology.
- Create a standard and implementation plan for crosswalks and sidewalk installation and maintenance ensuring accessible, safe, connectivity between amenities and areas of the community. The standard should define minimal requirements for varying levels of usage for example: downtown core, connective routes from downtown outward, and residential areas significantly outside of the downtown core.
- Review hours for public service sand consider extending where appropriate and possible.

# Recommendations:

## Immediate – Period of next two years



- Creating opportunities for community building that do not require physical activity. Use the community's ample access to parks and green space to host community events in place.
- Create an Accessible Playground Standard or update an existing standard for playgrounds that ensures all new playgrounds are built to accessibility standards and create a plan for updating or decommissioning existing playgrounds.
- Create a plan to ensure all municipal buildings will adhere to the built environment standard before 2030 by prioritizing spaces according to impact.
- Update by-laws to ensure all new builds (government and private) have to adhere to accessibility standards.

# Recommendations:

## Immediate – Period of next two years



- Consider adopting a recreation policy that commits to ensuring equitable access to recreational programs for everyone.
- Adjust the height of everything that needs to be used regularly or in an emergency to an accessible height of 1100mm (ie fire extinguishers, paper towel, soap, etc).
- Ensure there are visual and auditory fire alarms and that emergency plans with muster stations for people in wheelchairs are clearly visible and on each floor.

# Recommendations:

## Short Term – with 2-6 years



- Implement the plan for crosswalks and sidewalk installation and maintenance ensuring accessible, safe, connectivity between amenities and areas of the community.
- Ensure all communication is delivered according to the new accessible communication standard and can exceed the current WCAG standards.
- Ensure all regionally owned built environments have accessible wayfinding, signage, maps, floor plans etc. as outlined in the Accessible Signage Standard.

# Recommendations:

## Short Term – with 2-6 years



- Build, replace, update or decommission playgrounds according to the Accessible Playground Standard and implementation plan.
- Connect the main amenities of stores, recreational facilities and outdoor spaces with well lit and clearly marked pathways to encourage the use of the spaces and promote active transportation, aligning with the Active Transportation Plan.

# Recommendations:

## Short Term – with 2-6 years



- Start implementing the plan for the built environments in the region to adhere to the built environment standard.
- Promote acceptance by implementing an accessibility policy for all new business/builds or renovations. Provide incentives (tax cuts for certain time periods) for businesses who abide by the policy instead of fining for non-compliance.

# Recommendations:

## Opportunity Based



- Make available information listing non-profit agencies offering free or affordable assistive devices.
- Promote and support organizations within your community that support and represent all marginalized communities
- Partner with disability support organizations and leverage provincial and federal funding streams to ensure adequate staffing for roles that provide support ie.adequate staffing for day camp and recreation programs in order to accommodate children with disabilities.



## Next Steps for Cape Breton Regional Municipality:

Approve draft plan and begin implementation.

Consideration should be given to hiring an Accessibility Coordinator for the municipality.

Communication and Engagement needs to be a major focus for the future of the area.





## Next Steps for Cape Breton Regional Municipality:

Accessibility "awareness" isn't active. Your community wants to see you prioritizing accessibility with your actions.

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Plan to build a disability confident community through education and osmosis.





Thank you for your interest and attention.