



Digital Government and Service NL

# Buildings Accessibility Advisory Board

Annual Activity Report  
2023-2024

For more information:

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#### **REFERENCE PERIOD**

This report covers the period of April 1, 2023 through to March 31, 2024, the fiscal year of the Buildings Accessibility Advisory Board.

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## Chairperson's Message

As Chairperson of the Buildings Accessibility Advisory Board (the Board), I am pleased to submit the Annual Activity Report for 2023-2024. This Report is prepared in compliance with the **Transparency and Accountability Act**, which requires the Board to prepare a yearly report as a Category 3 Government entity. The Board is accountable for the preparation of this Report and for the reported results.

On behalf of the members of the Board, I want to reaffirm our commitment to working with all stakeholders to provide strategic advice to the Minister of Digital Government and Service NL on the application of the **Buildings Accessibility Act** and its associated regulations.

Yours truly,



**Dennis Gill**

Chair

## Overview

The Board is appointed by the Lieutenant-Governor in Council under the authority of Section 18 of the **Buildings Accessibility Act** (the Act). The Board consists of a Chairperson, representatives of persons with disabilities, one representative of the Department of Digital Government and Service NL (other than the Director of Engineering and Inspection Services), and those other members whom the Lieutenant-Governor in Council may appoint. This public body, which is funded by the Department of Digital Government and Service NL, serves solely in an advisory capacity.

Members of the Board in 2023-2024 were:

- Dennis Gill, Chairperson
- Brittany Moulard, Vice-Chairperson
- Emily Fouchard
- Robert Menchenton
- Randy Sooley
- Rose Wilson
- K. Gail Boland, Assistant Deputy Minister, Digital Government and Service NL

The current membership is appointed from August 1, 2023, to August 1, 2025.

## Vision

The Board seeks to ensure the fair and equitable application of its mandate as outlined in legislation.

## Mandate

The mandate of the Board is to report to and advise the Minister of Digital Government and Service NL on the application of the Act and regulations, and on other matters related to the Act and regulations that may be assigned to the Board by the Minister.

## Highlights and Partnerships

The Board engages with various groups as deemed pertinent. Actions and recommendations of the Board benefit the general public, particularly those with disabilities and those representing the interests of persons with disabilities. During the 2023-2024 year, the Board engaged with the Salvation Army and the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts and Recreation. The Board engaged with these groups in order to conduct site visits of the Salvation Army Ches Penney Centre for Hope and the Colonial Building to view their accessibility features.

## Report on Performance

This Report outlines the Board's activities from April 1, 2023 to March 31, 2024, including the objectives achieved as outlined in the 2023-2026 Activity Plan.

### **Objective:**

By March 31, 2024, 2025 and 2026, the Board will have advised the responsible Minister on matters pertaining to accessibility in buildings, associated entrances, parking spaces, grounds, walkways and other facilities, as per its mandate.

### **Indicators:**

- Meetings held, as required.
  - Result: during the 2023-2024 fiscal year, the Board met on three occasions to continue its work on the Act and Regulations. This included a June 16, 2023 meeting to understand the **Accessibility Act** and its interaction with the **Buildings Accessibility Act and Regulations**; an October 2-3, 2023 meeting to review the **Buildings Accessibility Regulations** and develop recommendations of amendments for ministerial consideration; and a December 12, 2023 meeting to review **An Act to Amend the Buildings Accessibility Act**.

- Advice provided to the Minister on the application of the Act and regulations.
  - Result: on October 2-3, 2023, the Board met in person in St. John's to review the **Buildings Accessibility Regulations** and finalize their recommendations for amending the Regulations.
  - Result: on December 12, 2023, the Board met virtually to discuss **An Act to Amend the Buildings Accessibility Act**, which received Royal Assent in the House of Assembly on November 16, 2023. Further, the Board reviewed the recommended changes to the Regulations made at the October 3rd meeting.
- Other activities undertaken, as assigned by the Minister.
  - Result: no other activities were assigned by the Minister.

## **Opportunities and Challenges**

Rising construction costs have resulted in an increase in pricing for materials like lumber, steel, concrete and oriented strand boards, beginning during the pandemic and continuing to this day, though this is now somewhat offset by stabilized interest rates. The Board will therefore be challenged to advise the Minister accordingly, to support enhanced accessibility throughout the province.

With the proclamation of **An Act to Amend the Buildings Accessibility Act**, the Board has the opportunity to further enhance accessibility outcomes in the built environment.

### **Gender-Based Analysis+ (GBA+)**

The Board will strive to consider GBA+ factors in carrying out its duties. The Board recognizes that GBA+ includes many identity factors and how they interact with one another. These factors include but are not limited to sex, gender, language, race, ethnicity, culture and disability.

## **Financial Statements**

The Board is not required to submit audited financial statements.



**Digital Government and Service NL**