



Digital Government and Service NL

# Buildings Accessibility Advisory Board

Annual Activity Report 2020-21

For More information:

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#### REFERENCE PERIOD

This report covers the period April 1, 2020 through March 31, 2021,  
the fiscal year of the Buildings Accessibility Advisory Board.

## Contents

<b>Chairperson’s Message</b> .....	1
<b>Overview</b> .....	2
<b>Mandate</b> .....	2
<b>Vision</b> .....	2
<b>Highlights and Partnerships</b> .....	2
<b>Revenues and Expenditures</b> .....	2
<b>Report on Performance</b> .....	2
<b>Results Achieved</b> .....	3
<b>Opportunities and Challenges</b> .....	3
<b>Financial Statements</b> .....	3

## Chairperson's Message

As Chair of the Buildings Accessibility Advisory Board, I am pleased to submit the Annual Activity Report for 2020-21. This report is prepared in compliance with the **Transparency and Accountability Act**, which categorizes the Board as a Category Three government entity, and requires the Board to submit an annual report. The Board is accountable for the preparation of this report and for the results reported.

On behalf of the members of the Buildings Accessibility Advisory Board, I would like to re-affirm our commitment to working with all stakeholders in order 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 Buildings Accessibility Advisory 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 (DGSNL) (other than the Director of Engineering and Inspection Services), and those other members whom the Lieutenant Governor in Council may appoint. This public body serves solely in an advisory capacity. Members of the Board in 2020-21 were:

- Dennis Gill, Chairperson
- Emily Fouchard
- Robert Menchenton
- Brittany Mouland
- Randy Sooley
- Rose Wilson

## **Mandate**

The mandate of the Board is to report to and advise the Minister of DGSNL on the application of the Act and its associated regulations, and on other matters related to the Act and regulations that may be assigned to the Board by the Minister.

## **Vision**

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

## **Highlights and Partnerships**

Generally speaking, the Board's client is the Minister of DGSNL, to whom the Board provides advice. The Board's actions and recommendations may benefit the general public, particularly those with disabilities and those representing the interests of persons with disabilities. The Board engages with various groups as deemed pertinent.

## **Revenues and Expenditures**

The Buildings Accessibility Advisory Board has no revenues. The Board is funded through the operating budget of DGSNL. The board is not required to submit audited financial statements.

## **Report on Performance**

Report on 2020-23 Objective

**Objective:** By March 31, 2021, 2022, and 2023, the Buildings Accessibility Advisory Board will have advised the responsible Minister on matters pertaining to

accessibility in buildings, associated entrances, parking spaces, walkways and other facilities, as per its mandate.

**Indicators:**

- Meetings held, as required.
- Advice provided to Minister on the application of the Act and the regulations.
- Other activities undertaken, as assigned by the Minister.

The Board will continue to report on the above objectives and indicators for all three years covered by the Activity Plan.

**Results Achieved**

The Buildings Accessibility Advisory Board met with the Assistant Deputy Minister, Digital Government & Services, DGSNL on September 8, 2020, to formulate a comprehensive review of the **Buildings Accessibility Act** and provide recommendations to the Minister with the goal of improving accessibility in the province. The Board met again on November 19, 2020 and developed a plan to finalize these recommendations to the Minister.

Recommendations on changes to the Act have been drafted, and will soon be presented to the Minister of DGSNL.

Due to the fall-out from the COVID-19 Pandemic, the Board did not meet again during 2020--2021 to continue with recommended changes to the Act.

No other activities were assigned by the Minister.

**Opportunities and Challenges**

- COVID-19 issues have presented a unique challenge for all sectors of the economy affected by buildings accessibility. Improvements to buildings (i.e., accessibility) have been delayed or halted. This is expected to remain a challenge for these sectors for years to come.
- The Board may support the Minister by advising on the interaction of the Buildings Accessibility Act with the new Accessibility legislation that is being drafted through the Department of Children, Seniors and Social Development.
- The Board, through one member who specializes in this subject area, may support the Minister by advising on updates to the National Buildings Code.

**Financial Statements**

The Buildings Accessibility Advisory Board is not required to submit audited financial statements.