

## **Belledune Port Authority Multi-Year Accessibility Plan 2024-27**

### **Executive Summary**

The Belledune Port Authority is a Federally Regulated Authority fulfilling the mandate of providing a links in the supply chain and gateways that bring goods to market, making them an important part of Canada's economy. All aspects of the Canadian transportation supply chain, including shippers, carriers, logistics companies, natural resource firms, and local and regional small and medium-sized businesses are in some way connected to the work that happens at ports every day.

Most of the activities that occur on BPA site are conducted by organizations that lease property from the Port Authority. The BPA's employees who work in the office building on site and oversee the port operations.

The BPA is committed to providing an accessible environment where all individuals have equal access to the organization's services and employment that meets the individual needs of persons with disabilities in a way that maintains their dignity and independence. The BPA believes in integration and will take action, to the extent possible, to prevent and remove barriers to accessibility in a timely manner.

This plan will be updated every 3 years.

This plan and Accessibility Policy are available in alternative formats upon request: Print, large print, braille, audio, and electronic format. Requests for these alternative formats can be made through the contact information available in the Accessibility Policy.

### **1. Commitment Statement**

The Belledune Port Authority (BPA) is committed to providing an accessible environment where all individuals have equal access to BPA's services and employment endeavouring to meet the individual needs of persons with disabilities in a way that maintains their dignity and independence. The BPA believes in the full participation of persons with disabilities and is committed to meeting the objectives and requirements outlined in the *Accessible Canada Act*.

The BPA is also committed to meeting the other accessibility legislation currently in place or being introduced in the where jurisdiction governing the BPA. The BPA Multi-Year Accessibility Plan outlines the policies, achievements and actions that BPA has taken and the work underway to improve opportunities for people with disabilities.

### **2. Feedback:**

Feedback and contact information are provided in the Accessibility Policy which is posted on the Belledune Port Authority website.

### **3. General**

BPA complies with the General Standards of the *Accessible Canada Act* and will continue to comply with the regulation.

BPA achieves this through:

- Reviewing and updating our policies regularly to ensure high-quality, accessible customer service;
- Reviewing and updating our Accessibility Plan every three years;
- Providing training to our staff and volunteers on how to interact appropriately with persons with disabilities; and
- Provide information using accessible formats and communication supports upon request and in a timely manner.

#### 4. Our recent accomplishments:

- Developed our Accessibility Policy in 2024;
- Created our Accessibility Plan in 2024;
- Policy and plan posted to website as per legislative requirements;
- Accessibility review of physical site conducted by Accessibility NB, Jan 2024; and
- Human Resources Policy review is underway.

#### 5. Plans

##### General:

Training is viewed as a priority for 2024 to create awareness for staff of accessibility requirements and resources. With that in mind the following activities are planned for 2024:

- Provide accessibility training to current and new staff by end of Q4 2024
  - Several resources will be used for training for leaders and staff including:
    - <https://aoda.ca/training-resource/>
    - <https://www.accessforward.ca/>
  - The Inclusive Language Guide Provided by Inclusion New Brunswick will also be used as a reference for employees and leaders.
    - [https://www.ici-nb.ca/files/ugd/217034\\_a105feab039c493d8d04dc682f34aacd.pdf](https://www.ici-nb.ca/files/ugd/217034_a105feab039c493d8d04dc682f34aacd.pdf)
  - Employees will be provided with a list of tips for creating accessible documents.

##### Employment

The BPA is committed to fair and accessible employment practices that attract and retain employees with disabilities. This includes providing accessibility across all stages of the employment cycle. BPA achieves this through:

- Regularly review Human Resources policies, practices and procedures to ensure accessibility to persons with disabilities throughout the employment process, including recruitment, retention, career development and return-to-work.
- Notifying job applicants and selected applicants that accommodation for disabilities will be provided to support their participation in the recruitment process upon request.
- Notifying successful applicants of BPA's policies for accommodating employees with disabilities.
- Informing employees of our policies for supporting employees with disabilities, including providing employment-related accommodations for disabilities.

- Consulting with our employees with disabilities to provide them with the accessible formats and communications supports they require to do their jobs effectively and to be informed of information that is generally available to all employees in that workplace.
- Develop written individual accommodation plans for employees with disabilities as required.
- Have in place a documented process for supporting employees who return to work after being away for reasons related to their disabilities.
- Consider the accessibility needs of employees with disabilities during the performance management process.
- When providing career development and advancement opportunity, take into consider the accessibility needs of our employees who have disabilities.
- Redeployment processes will consider the accessibility needs of employees with disabilities when moving to other positions so that employees can continue to have their accommodation needs met.

#### Plans for 2024:

- Create Accommodation Policy.
- Add Accessibility statement and contact information to the website.
- Finalize policy review with an eye to accessibility requirements.
- Develop and introduce practice of providing information to applicants selected for interviews with information regarding accessibility.
- Address accommodation needs identified by current staff.
- Ensure staff who are involved in leading people or hiring processes fully understand requirements regarding accessibility.

#### Future Plans:

- Review career planning and performance management to ensure employees facing barriers are treated fairly and are accommodated throughout the process.
- Reach out to the following resources to assist as required in overcoming barriers:  
**Recruiting Resources**, the BPA has Identified the following organizations who may provide assistance with recruiting and assist with required accommodations:
  - Inclusion New Brunswick
    - <https://www.inclusionnb.ca/our-organization/>
  - CNIB Clearing Our Path
    - <https://www.cnib.ca/en/sight-loss-info/clearing-our-path?region=nb>
  - Vision Loss Rehabilitation Canada
    - <https://visionlossrehab.ca/en/locations>
  - NB Deaf and Hard of Hearing
    - <https://nbdhhs.com:451/>
  - Inclusion NB
    - <https://www.inclusionnb.ca/>

## Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)

The BPA is committed to making company information and communications accessible to persons with disabilities.

BPA achieves this through:

- Inviting and welcoming feedback from individuals on how effectively we are accommodating people with disabilities in providing our goods and services.
- Ensuring that emergency information, procedures, plans and public safety information that is available to the public are available in alternate formats upon request.
- Notifying the public about the availability of accessible formats and communication supports.
- Working towards meeting Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) Level 2.0 AA.
- Working towards ensuring web content published on BPA's websites is in an accessible format whenever possible.
- Considering accessibility when using social media to share information.

Plans for 2024

- **Website** - The BPA is currently re-creating their site to be compliant with WCAG 2.0 using the Wix platform. We will be using the following plugin to help us manage and remain compliant.
- **Social media** - We are currently reviewing ways we can make our social media posts as accessible as possible moving forward, especially when it comes to posts that include essential information for our public, including:
  - Ensuring proper contrast on background and foreground colours;
  - When possible, reducing the amount of text in an image post;
  - Images have a text alternative when possible;
  - Media has a text alternative available in the post caption; and
  - Media does not rely on video or audio to present essential information.

Responsibility: BPA contracts services for website and social media. Internally the responsibility for oversight lies with the Administration Department.

## Communication Not Related to ICT

BPA will provide resources to staff to assist with ensuring their communications meet accessibility guidelines.

Plans for 2024

- Investigate the use of software resources such as <https://www.grackledocs.com/en/> and identify appropriate resources for the organization.
- Provide a list of tips to employees for use in creating documents that will make more consistent with accessible standards.
- Employee training which will provide information and guidance for other forms of communication and awareness of tools that may be available to reduce barriers.

- Review any resources currently in place that have accessibility tools already available and ensure staff are aware of how to use them and provide training if required.

Responsibility: The Chief Administrative Officer has overall responsibility for the communications function and may delegate some of all of the responsibility to their team.

### **Built Environment**

BPA will ensure the built environment public spaces are assessed and where required plans are in place to ensure accessibility or accommodation are available to meet the needs of employees, clients and business.

#### Plans for 2024

- In January an assessment of the physical environment was completed with the help of Ability New Brunswick. This led to a list of items which have been prioritized by the leadership team at BPA. The full list is maintained by senior level operational staff at the BPA.
- Barriers which were related to safety issue and those which were considered most likely to become an issue in the near future are slated to be addressed in 2024 with others slated for 2025/26.
- In some cases where barriers require large structural investment alternatives to removing the barrier may be considered such as relocating a staff member or conducting a meeting off site with a supplier

Responsibility: The Chief Engineer and Operations Officer and the Harbourmaster have overall responsibility for the facilities and may delegate some of all of the responsibility to their team.

### **Procurement of Goods Services and Facilities**

BPA will ensure that accessibility is considered in all procurement activities.

#### Plans for 2024

- Ensure all Request for Proposals are prepared to meet accessible guidelines and standards.
- Ensure Request for Proposals advise potential vendors that alternative forms are available as required and who to contact to receive them.
- Ensure that the procurement of goods or services consider any accessibility requirements of BPA. To facilitate this a check list will be put in place in 2024 to assist in the preparation of all requests for proposal, expressions of interest, etc.

Responsibility: All team members have overall responsibility for ensuring procurement activities meet the requirements for accessibility as per the plan and policy.

### **Design and Delivery of Services**

The BPA will ensure that it's design and delivery of services will meet accessibility requirements.

#### Plans for 2024

- The BPA will ensure that clients are aware of the availability of accessible documentation and other communications and that the removal of physical barriers is a priority.

- The BPA shall ensure that clients know how to communicate barriers that may exist for them and to provide feedback if required.

Responsibility: All team members have overall responsibility for ensuring design and delivery of services meet the requirements for accessibility as per the plan and policy.

### **Transportation**

The BPA uses vehicles owned by BPA to occasionally provide tours of the facility and to transport staff from the main gates to sites within the facility. Currently, there are no accessible vehicles owned by BPA.

Over time the BPA will look for opportunities to provide accessible transportation opportunities on site. The difficulty is the infrequency in which they are used and cost of having an accessible vehicle available.

#### Plans for 2024

- Staff will consider options for providing access to the site for those who have physical barriers that will not allow them to travel in the current vehicles used on site.
- Consideration will be given to allowing vehicles that are not owned by the BPA to come on site, but only if security and safety requirements can be met.
- Communications will be developed for use with tour organizers to ensure there is a process for them to share accessibility requirements.

Responsibility: Senior Operations leaders.