

# The City of North Bay's Accessibility Plan

2023 Update (DRAFT)

Approved by Council – <date>  
(Resolution No. 2023-\_\_\_\_)



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## Section 0: Requirements

[Regulation 191/11: Integrated Accessibility Standards](#) under the [Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005](#) requires organizations to create multi-year accessibility plans, update them at least once every five years and post them on their websites if they have one. An accessibility plan outlines what steps an organization will take to prevent and remove barriers to accessibility and when it will do so.

The law is flexible, so plans can be developed in a way that works best for each organization. There is no right or wrong way. The reports must comply with section 4 of the [Regulation](#).

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## Section 1: Introduction

### Message from our CAO:

The City of North Bay identifies accessibility as a high priority. It is a fundamental value that guides our actions and decision-making. We recognize that accessibility is not just about ramps and doorways; it's about creating an inclusive and welcoming community for everyone. We believe that every individual deserves equal opportunities and the ability to fully participate in all aspects of life.

By working together, we can break down barriers and make a positive impact on the lives of our fellow community members. It is our shared responsibility to create an environment without barriers.

We are committed to listening to our community, collaborating with stakeholders, and implementing practical solutions that improve accessibility across our city.

Thank you for your continued support as we strive to build a more inclusive North Bay.

Sincerely,

John Severino, P.Eng. FEC. MBA.  
Chief Administrative Officer

### Introduction:

The City of North Bay is dedicated to meeting the needs of our employees and customers with disabilities, demonstrating our strong commitment to removing and preventing barriers to accessibility. We prioritize fulfilling our obligations under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, and have developed this multi-year accessibility plan to outline the strategic steps we are taking to meet these requirements and enhance opportunities for individuals with disabilities. Our plan exemplifies our role in contributing to the realization of an accessible province for all Ontarians. We conduct regular reviews and updates of this plan, ensuring its effectiveness in driving progress. We prioritize comprehensive training for our staff, providing them with the necessary knowledge to uphold our policies and adapt to any policy changes promptly. As part of our commitment to transparency and accountability, we maintain records of the training provided, including dates and participant statistics. Through these measures, we reaffirm our dedication to fostering a professional and inclusive environment that supports the diverse needs of our community.

## Section 2: Internal Accessibility Working Group

On an annual basis, the Accessibility Working Group reviews the multi-year Accessibility Plan and advises Council. The recommended initiatives identified in the annual review of the Accessibility Plan will be considered, evaluated, and approved within the context of City's Capital and Operating Budget Process.

### Members of Working Group:

The Accessibility Working Group has representation from all Business Units and is comprised of the following:

Name	Department	Contact Information
John Severino	CAO	705-474-0626, Ext. 2240 <a href="mailto:john.severino@northbay.ca">john.severino@northbay.ca</a>
Drew Poeta	Transit	705-474-0626, Ext. 2165 <a href="mailto:drew.poeta@northbay.ca">drew.poeta@northbay.ca</a>
David Jackowski	Facilities	705-474-0626, Ext. 2327 <a href="mailto:david.jackowski@northbay.ca">david.jackowski@northbay.ca</a>
Adam Lacombe	City Capital Works	705-474-0626, Ext. 2370 <a href="mailto:adam.lacombe@northbay.ca">adam.lacombe@northbay.ca</a>
Mark Thomas	Parks	705-474-0626, Ext. 2601 <a href="mailto:mark.thomas@northbay.ca">mark.thomas@northbay.ca</a>
Stephan Graveline	Information Technology	705-474-0626, Ext. 2226 <a href="mailto:stephan.graveline@cityofnorthbay.ca">stephan.graveline@cityofnorthbay.ca</a>

### Roles & Responsibilities:

#### Accessibility Working Group Members:

- contribute to the development and consolidation of the City's Accessibility Plan through consultation with department staff on recent department initiatives to remove and prevent barriers to person with disabilities and to identify barriers to be addressed;
- list policies, services, programs and practices to be reviewed by the City in the forthcoming year;
- determine a department strategy for barrier removal on an annual basis; and
- ensure that department measures for the removal of barriers are identified in the City's annual budget process.

#### Business Units:

- ensure that commitments outlined are implemented; and
- review their departments on an annual basis and continue to identify and address the removal of barriers as they are identified.

#### Municipal Accessibility Advisory Committee:

- provide feedback to Council regarding the Annual Accessibility Plan including the implementation and effectiveness of the Plan to ensure that its objectives are met;
- advise Council on the accessibility of buildings that the City owns or operates; and
- advise Council on issues of concern to persons with disabilities and provide recommendations.

## Council:

- select and appoint members to the Municipal Accessibility Advisory Committee;
- provide direction to the Municipal Accessibility Advisory Committee and City staff on the implementation and review of the Annual Accessibility Plan; and
- as part of the City's Capital and Operating Budget process, annually review the recommendations presented by the Accessibility Working Group.

## Section 3: Past Achievements to Remove and Prevent Barriers

The City of North Bay has undertaken various accessibility initiatives to improve accessibility for people with disabilities and meet the requirements of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act. Our corporate approach prioritizes inclusivity and actively addresses barriers to create a more accessible community. Here are our past achievements:

### Customer Service

- Implemented comprehensive training programs for staff members to ensure they understand and provide accessible customer service.
- Developed accessible communication channels to receive customer feedback, including online forms, email, and dedicated phone lines.
- Established a feedback mechanism to address and resolve concerns raised by customers with disabilities.
- Conducted accessibility audits of customer service areas to identify and address potential barriers.

### Information and Communications

- Ensured our website and digital content comply with accessibility standards, including providing alternative text for images and captions for videos.
- Developed accessible formats for important public information, such as braille, large print, and accessible electronic documents.
- Provided accessibility training to content creators and web developers to ensure ongoing compliance.

### Employment

- Implemented policies and practices that promote fair and accessible employment, including recruitment strategies to attract individuals with disabilities.
- Conducted accessibility training for managers and supervisors to foster an inclusive work environment and accommodate employees' specific needs.
- Implemented reasonable accommodations to support employees with disabilities in performing their duties effectively.

### Procurement

- Reviewed procurement processes to consider accessibility factors when selecting suppliers and contractors, promoting fair opportunities for all.

## Training

- Offered training sessions on accessibility laws, including the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act and the Ontario Human Rights Code, to educate staff members about their responsibilities.
- Provided specialized training for specific departments, such as customer service, to enhance their understanding of accessible practices.

## Design of Public Spaces

- Ensured that all new construction projects and major renovations comply with accessibility standards, including accessible entrances, pathways, and amenities.
- Conducted accessibility assessments of existing public spaces and implemented improvements to remove barriers.

## Transportation

- Collaborated with transportation service providers to improve the accessibility of public transportation options, including accessible buses and stations.
- Advocated for the needs of people with disabilities in transportation planning and policy development.

## Other

- Engaged in partnerships with local disability organizations and community groups to identify accessibility needs and implement initiatives to address them.
- Conducted accessibility awareness campaigns to promote a culture of inclusivity and raise public awareness.

These past achievements demonstrate our ongoing commitment to accessibility and the continuous improvement of our services, programs, and facilities. We recognize the importance of removing barriers and creating a fully inclusive community for all residents and visitors of North Bay.

## Section 4: Strategies and Actions

To ensure compliance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act and remove barriers for people with disabilities, our organization has identified the following projects and programs:

### Customer Service

The City of North Bay is committed to providing accessible customer service to people with disabilities. This means that we will provide goods, services, and facilities to people with disabilities with the same high quality and timeliness as others. Initiatives planned to comply with the Customer Service Standard include:

- Conducting ongoing training sessions for new staff members to raise awareness of accessible customer service practices. (Timeframe: Every quarter)
- Implementing feedback mechanisms to gather input from customers with disabilities and continuously improve our customer service practices. (Timeframe: Ongoing)

## Information and Communications

The City of North Bay is committed to making our information and communications accessible to people with disabilities. Planned initiatives in this area include:

- Ensuring all new digital content, including the website and online documents, adhere to accessibility standards and guidelines. (Timeframe: Within the next six months)
- Conducting a review of existing printed materials to identify any barriers and taking necessary steps to make them accessible. (Timeframe: Within the next year)

## Employment

The City of North Bay is committed to fair and accessible employment practices. Our planned initiatives to support this commitment include:

- Developing and implementing policies and procedures that promote the recruitment, retention, and advancement of individuals with disabilities. (Timeframe: Within the next year)
- Providing training to staff on disability inclusion, reasonable accommodations, and fostering an inclusive work environment. (Timeframe: Ongoing)

## Procurement

The City of North Bay is committed to fair and accessible procurement practices. While no specific initiatives are planned at this time, we will review our procurement processes to ensure they align with accessibility requirements and promote fair opportunities for all suppliers. (Timeframe: Ongoing)

## Training

The City of North Bay is committed to providing training in the requirements of Ontario's accessibility laws and the Ontario Human Rights Code as it applies to people with disabilities. Planned initiatives include:

- Conducting regular training sessions for staff members to ensure their understanding of accessibility laws and their responsibilities. (Timeframe: Every six months)
- Offering specialized training for managers and supervisors to promote disability inclusion and accommodation in the workplace. (Timeframe: Within the next year)

## Design of Public Spaces

The City of North Bay will meet accessibility laws when building or making major changes to public spaces. While no specific initiatives are planned at this time, we will ensure compliance with accessibility standards and guidelines for any new or majorly renovated public spaces. Additionally, we will establish procedures to prevent service disruptions in accessible parts of public spaces. (Timeframe: Ongoing)

## Transportation

The City of North Bay is committed to accessible transportation services. Planned initiatives in this area include:

- Collaborating with transportation providers to advocate for improved accessibility in public transportation options. (Timeframe: Ongoing)
- Exploring the feasibility of implementing accessible transportation services within our organization for staff and visitors. (Timeframe: Within the next two years)

## Other

- Conducting accessibility audits of our facility exteriors and addressing any identified barriers. (Timeframe: Within the next year)
- Engaging in partnerships with local accessibility organizations and community groups to identify and address accessibility needs in our community. (Timeframe: Ongoing)
- Developing and implementing a comprehensive accessibility plan that outlines long-term goals and strategies for improving accessibility across all areas of our organization. (Timeframe: Ongoing)