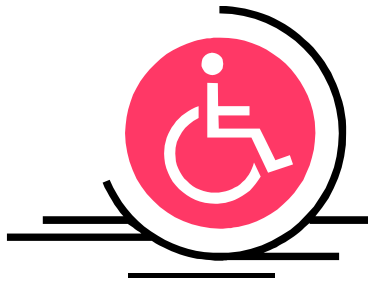# The City of North Bay's Accessibility Plan

2016 Update

Approved by Council – December <>, 2016
(Resolution No. 2016-<>)

The Corporation of the City of North Bay
Accessibility Plan

Under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act*, 2005 (AODA), all municipalities have an obligation to prepare an accessibility plan. The Accessibility Plan is the framework to provide persons with disabilities full participation in the life of the province through the identification, removal and prevention of barriers within facilities and services.

The City monitors the development of standards under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* (AODA). The AODA was enacted in 2005 to further qualify the ODA and serve as a framework relating to accessibility standards in several key areas:

- Customer Service
- Integrated (Information and Communication; Employment; Transportation)
- Built Environment (not yet in force).

The goal of these accessibility standards is to ensure all Ontarians with disabilities have full and equal access to goods, services, facilities, accommodation, employment and building structures by January 1, 2025.

The first regulation to come into force was the *Accessibility Standards for Customer Service*, Ontario Regulation 429/07. It took effect for municipalities on January 1, 2010. The City has complied with this legislation. The City's Accessible Customer Service Policy is available on the City's web-site (www.cityofnorthbay.ca) and in alternative formats upon request.

The second regulation to come into force was the *Integrated Accessibility Standards*, Ontario Regulation 191/11. It took effect for large designated municipalities (that is, those with 50 or more employees) on July 1, 2011, with compliance dates phased through to 2021. This regulation requires municipalities to establish, implement, maintain and document multi-year accessibility plans which outline the municipality's strategy to prevent and remove barriers. The City has complied with all requirements to date.

The purpose of this multi-year Accessibility Plan is to outline the measures that the City will take during this time to identify, remove and prevent barriers to all citizens in accessing City's facilities and services, in accordance with the *Integrated Accessibility Standards*.

Objectives:

The objectives of this multi-year Accessibility Plan are:

- To describe the process by which the City will identify, remove and prevent barriers to people with disabilities.
- To review efforts to remove and prevent barriers to people with disabilities.
- To identify the facilities, policies, programs, practices, and services that the City will review in the coming years to identify barriers to people with disabilities.
- To describe the measures the City will take in the coming year to identify, remove and prevent barriers to people with disabilities.

- To outline the process of how the City will make this Accessibility Plan available to the public.

The Council of the City of North Bay is committed to the continual improvement of access to municipal facilities, programs and services for those with disabilities and to the provision of quality services to all members of the community with disabilities.

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.

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

Name	Department	Contact Information
John Severino	Community Services	705-474-0626, Ext. 2240 john.severino@cityofnorthbay.ca
Remi Renaud	Transit	705-474-0626, Ext. 2165 remi.renaud@cityofnorthbay.ca
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David Schroeder	Parks	705-474-0626, Ext. 2601 david.schroeder@cityofnorthbay.ca
Daren Sullivan	Information Technology	705-474-0626, Ext. 2223 daren.sullivan@cityofnorthbay.ca
Karen Svensson	Human Resources	705-474-0626, Ext. 2235 karen.svensson@cityofnorthbay.ca

Roles & Responsibilities:

The following is a brief description of the roles of individuals and groups involved in this process:

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.

Barrier Identification:

Physical barriers can exist in a structural environmental that interfere with or impede with a person's ability to access a particular location or service. The Accessibility Working Group will use the following approach to identify barriers:

- research previously identified barriers;
- solicit staff contributions in all service areas of known and suspected barriers; and
- review suggestions and comments forwarded by the public to them.

In the Barrier Identification Process, the Accessibility Working Group will focus on the following areas to determine which barriers it will work to remove or prevent each year:

- Physical facilities
- Site planning
- Service and program delivery to staff
- Service and program delivery to the public
- Procurement Policies and Practices
- Interviewing, Hiring, Promotion, and Other Human Resources Policies and Practices
- Technologies
- Information and communication infrastructures
- Customer service for people with disabilities

Examples of Barriers:

Physical - A door knob that cannot be operated by a person with limited upper-body mobility and strength.

Architectural - A hallway or door that is too narrow for a mobility device.

Informational - Typefaces that are too small to be read by a person with low-vision.

Communicational – Speaking too loudly when addressing a customer with a hearing impairment.

Attitudinal - Ignoring a person with a disability by talking to them "through" their companion or support person.

Technological - A paper tray on a laser printer that requires two strong hands to open.

Policy/Practice - A practice of announcing important messages over an intercom that people with hearing impairments cannot hear clearly.

<u>Where will we look for barriers</u>?

<u>In our Built Environment</u>:

- The exterior of buildings
- The interior of buildings
- Parking areas
- Drop-off zones
- Hallways
- Floors / Carpets
- Lobbies
- Reception areas
- Offices
- Washrooms
- Elevators
- Stairs / stairwells
- Lighting

<u>In our Recreational Facilities</u>:

- Playgrounds
- Change rooms
- Picnic areas
- Outdoor tracks
- Playing fields

<u>In our Physical Environment</u>:

- Furniture
- Work stations
- Chairs
- Doors/door knobs
- Windows
- Locks
- Security systems

<u>In the Information we provide</u>:

- Printed information/brochures
- Web-based resources
- Signage
- Bulletin boards
- Forms/Manuals
- Fax transmissions
- Equipment labels
- Computer screens

<u>In our Policies and Practices</u>:

- Procurement and purchasing
- Job Postings
- By-laws
- Hiring/Interviewing/Testing
- Performance Management
- Career Advancement
- Redeployment
- Regulations/Rules/Protocols
- Meetings
- Safety and evacuation

<u>In the technology we provide</u>:

- Computers/Keyboards
- Operating systems
- Standard software
- Proprietary software
- Web sites
- Fax machine
- Telephones
- Photocopiers
- Printers

<u>In our service delivery</u>:

- In person
- By telephone
- By Mail
- By e-mail
- Via the Web

Annual Review Process:

The Working Group will meet quarterly to review the progress of barrier removal initiatives and to update the Accessibility Plan relative to Departmental operations and annual budget deliberations. The update will be presented to Council annually.

Communication:

Copies of this plan and subsequent annual updates will be available at the Clerk's Office and on the City's Website (www.cityofnorthbay.ca). The plan, and subsequent updates, will be available in accessible format, upon request.

Definitions:

Accessibility **-** is a general term used to describe the degree to which a product, device, service or environment is made available to as many people as possible. Accessibility is often used to focus on people with disabilities or special needs and their right to access to entities, often through use of assistive technology, and universal design of environment and areas.

Barrier **-** Anything that prevents a person with a disability from fully participating in all aspects of society because of his or her disability, including a physical barrier, an architectural barrier, an information or communications barrier, an attitudinal barrier, a technological barrier, a policy or a practice (obstacle).

Barrier Identification Process - Any process or methodology used to determine what barriers exist, where barriers exist and other information. Examples of a barrier identification process may include surveys, audits or customer feedback.

Disability - means,

a)   any degree of physical disability, infirmity, malformation or disfigurement that is caused by bodily injury, birth defect or illness and, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, includes diabetes (mellitus), epilepsy, a brain injury, any degree of paralysis, amputation, lack of physical co-ordination, blindness or visual impediment, deafness or hearing impediment, muteness or speech impediment, or physical reliance on a guide dog or other animal or on a wheelchair or other remedial appliance or device,
b)   a condition of mental impairment or a development disability,
c)   a learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language,
d)   a mental disorder, or
e)   an injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the *Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997*.

APPENDIX "A"

Key Dates for Compliance

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES:		COMPLIANCE STATUS
January 1, 2013	Establishing, implementing and maintaining policies governing the accessibility of employment, transportation, and information and communications.	Completed
	Establishing, implementing, maintaining and documenting at least once every five years, a multi-year accessibility plan which outlines intended strategies to prevent and remove barriers; and report on progress annually.	Completed
	Incorporating "accessibility criteria and features" when procuring or acquiring goods, services or facilities "except where it is not practicable to do so"; in which case, where requested, provide an explanation.	Completed
	Ensuring that accessible formats and communications supports are provided upon request with respect to the processes the municipality uses for receiving and responding to feedback and that the municipality "notifies the public about the availability of accessible formats and communications supports".	Completed
January 1, 2014	Training all employees, volunteers and persons who provide goods, services or facilities on behalf of the municipality and persons who participate in developing the policies of the municipality on the requirements of the Integrated Standard and on the Human Rights Code as it pertains to persons with disabilities.	Completed
INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION		
January 1, 2012	Emergency procedures, plans or public safety information, which are available to the public, are to be provided in an	Completed

	accessible format "as soon as practicable upon request".	
January 1, 2014	Process for receiving and responding to feedback shall ensure that the processes are accessible to persons with disabilities.	Completed
January 1, 2014	Making new websites and web content on those sites conform with WCAG 2.0, Level A.	Completed
January 1, 2015	Providing information and communication supports upon request in an accessible format "in a timely manner that takes into account the person's accessibility needs due to disability," at a cost that is no more than the regular cost charged to other persons. The public is to be notified about the availability of accessible formats and communications supports.	Completed
January 1, 2021	Making websites (except content not updates since January 1st, 2012) and web content conform with WCAG 2.0, Level AA.	Pending
EMPLOYMENT		
January 1, 2012	Providing individualized workplace emergency response information to employees who have a disability.	Completed
January 1, 2014	Notifying employees and the public about the availability of accommodation for applicants with disabilities in its recruitment processes; in assessment or selection processes in recruitment, make accommodation, upon request that "takes into account the applicant's accessibility needs due to disability"; notify the successful applicant of its policies for accommodating employees with disabilities.	Completed
January 1, 2014	Informing employees of its policies to support its employees with disabilities.	Completed
January 1, 2014	Providing, upon request, accessible formats and communication supports to	Completed

	employees as it relates to information needed in order for the employee to perform their job and information generally available to employees,	
January 1, 2014	Developing and having in place documented return to work processes. This does not override any other return to work process created by or under any other statute.	Completed
January 1, 2014	Developing documented individual accommodation plans upon request. Where performance management systems are in place, career development and advancement is provided and redeployment is used, the employer "shall take into account the accessibility needs of employees with disabilities, as well as individual accommodation plans".	Completed
TRANSPORTATION		
January 1, 2012	Provide to the public current information on accessibility equipment and features of their vehicles, routes and services. This includes consideration for the "closest available safe location" for transit stops, storage of mobility devices, deploying lifting devices, ensuring adequate time for boarding and de-boarding, assistance with storage of mobility devices, and clearly marked courtesy seating.	Completed
January 1, 2012	Establish, implement, maintain and document emergency preparedness and response policies that provide for the safety of persons with disabilities.	Completed
January 1, 2012	Establish, implement and maintain a policy that allows companions to travel on specialized transit with persons with disabilities, if space is available.	Completed
January 1, 2013	Accessibility Plans for Transportation Services (Conventional and Specialized) – shall identify the process for managing, evaluating and taking action on customer feedback.	Completed

	The municipality shall annually hold at least one public meeting involving persons with disabilities to ensure that they have an opportunity to provide feedback and participate in the review process.	
January 1, 2013	Developing, in consultation with the Municipal Accessibility Advisory Committee, the public, and persons with disabilities, a determination of the proportion of on-demand accessible taxicabs required and ensure that owners and operators are prohibited from charging a higher fare or additional fee for persons with disabilities and from charging a fee for the storage of mobility aids or devices.	Completed (North Bay Police Services)
January 1, 2013	Establish, implement and maintain a policy whereby no specialized transportation services fare shall be more than the highest fare charged for conventional transportation services in the same jurisdiction.	Completed
January 1, 2013	Establish, implement and maintain a policy ensuring that specialized transportation services have, at a minimum, the same hours and days of services as the conventional transportation service.	Completed
January 1, 2013	Establish, implement and maintain a policy making specialized transportation services available to eligible visitors.	Completed
January 1, 2013	Establish, implement and maintain a policy for providing service delay information to affected passengers of specialized transportation services.	Completed
January 1, 2014	Establish, implement and maintain a policy for specialized transportation services' reservations.	Completed

January 1, 2014	Establish, implement and maintain a policy whereby no fares are to be charged to appropriately designated support persons.	Completed
January 1, 2014	Establish, implement and maintain a policy for eligibility applications for specialized transportation services.	Completed
January 1, 2014	Establish, implement and maintain a policy for the provision of specialized transportation services on emergency or compassionate grounds.	Completed
January 1, 2017	Electronic pre-boarding announcements of route, direction, destination or next major stop.	Completed
January 1, 2017	On-board announcements of all destination points or available route stops are to be: • announced through electronic means and • legibly and visually displayed through electronic means.	Completed