



## **Multi-Year Accessibility Plan**

**2019-2022**



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## Introduction

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Disabilities affect people of all ages and background. Some people are born with one or more disabilities. Many others develop disabilities through illness, injury or aging. People with disabilities represent a significant and growing part of our population. Statistics Canada report that approximately 1.8 million Ontarians have disabilities - about 13.5% of the population. Because disability tends to increase with age, it is estimated that 20% of the population will have disabilities by the year 2020. Enhancing the ability of people with disabilities to live independently and contribute to the community will have positive effects on future prosperity in Ontario.

Municipal governments play an important role in the planning and development of communities: in our streets, parks, libraries, meeting places, programs, services, public buildings and elections. The Province of Ontario recognized that accessibility is a shared responsibility and passed the *Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001* (ODA) on December 14, 2001 to require provincial and municipal governments and key broader public sector organizations to review their policies, programs and services.

In June 2005, the Province of Ontario furthered its commitment to accessibility by expanding previous legislation to include the private sector with the goal to achieve accessibility for Ontarians with disabilities by 2025. The purpose of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*, is to achieve accessibility for Ontarians with disabilities in five important areas of their lives within specified time limits:

- customer service
- transportation
- information and communications
- design of public places
- employment

In addition, municipalities with populations of 10,000 and over must have an Accessibility Advisory Committee.

**The multi-year plan sets out strategies to identify and remove barriers to accessibility as required by the AODA. It also positions the Municipality as a leader in accessibility matters in the community.**

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## Multi-Year Strategies

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### 2019 – Focus on Supporting Municipal Projects

Strategy 1: Include accessibility as a component of the new Library Project at 11 Sykes Street.

#### Measures

- Provide support to the Project Steering Committee for the new Meaford Public Library building and associated park development.
- Review best practices and share innovative ideas.
- Coordinate the consultation between the site-review sub-committee and Municipality throughout the design phase.

Strategy 2: Support the provision of Accessible Transit Services.

#### Measures

- Promote Specialized Transit including the new name and dedicated service.
- Ensure legislative compliance with the standard in terms of eligibility, fares, etc.
- Ensure accessibility is considered when investigating other transit options for the Municipality.

Strategy 3: Training for new Council, Local Board and Advisory Committee members and volunteers.

#### Measures

- Review the training requirements for staff and volunteers and update training materials as necessary.
- Provide training to all new Council, local board and advisory committee members.

## **2020 – Focus on Asset Management and Legislative Compliance**

Strategy 1: Ensure accessibility continues to be a part of asset management planning

### Measures

- Ensure appropriate staff have received the Design of Public Spaces Standard training.
- Develop facility accessibility design standard guidelines or best practices.

Strategy 2: Focus on strategic planning for long term municipal projects

### Measures

- Engage asset management, programming, parks & facility, transportation, and planning divisions to develop a long term plan on enhancing programs, services, infrastructure and facilities

## **2021 – Focus on Training, Policy Review and Grants**

Strategy 1: Review training programs.

### Measures

- Review and develop accessibility training for full time, part time and seasonal staff.
- Incorporate accessibility considerations in other corporate and departmental training.

Strategy 2: Review existing accessibility policies.

### Measures

- Review the integrated accessibility standards policy.
- Review guidelines and processes for service disruptions, customer feedback and request for alternative formats.

Strategy 3: Pursue grant opportunities.

### Measures

- Review projects that are eligible for provincial and federal accessibility grant funding using data provided through strategic planning
- Consider opportunities for community partnerships

## **2022 – Focus on Elections and next Multi-Year Plan (2023-2026)**

Strategy 1: Provide advice with regard to accessibility and the 2022 municipal and school board election.

### Measures

- Develop an election specific accessibility plan.
- Review accessibility features of the voting system.
- Provide outreach to the community.

Strategy 2: Encourage community accessibility.

### Measures

- Participate in local events to continue to profile municipal accessibility
- Consider a community accessibility forum to receive feedback on municipal initiatives and promote community leadership.

Strategy 3: Prepare for the next Multi-Year Plan.

### Measures

- Review progress undertaken in 2019-2022
- Develop the 2023-2026 Multi-Year Plan through leadership of the Accessibility Advisory Committee.
- Undertake community consultation prior to adoption of the Plan.

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## **Publication and Availability**

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The Multi-Year Accessibility Plan (2019-2022) will be available on the municipal website. Paper copies of the plan are available at the Municipal Office. This document is available in alternative accessible formats and with communication supports as soon practicable and upon request.

### **Contact / Inquiries**

All inquiries with respect to this plan can be directed to:

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