



STAFF REPORT NO.: LS2013-017

PROPERTY FILE NO.: Not Applicable

C of W DATE: Tuesday, November 12, 2013

TO: Mayor and Members of Council

FROM: Robert H. A. Tremblay, Director, Legislative Services/Clerk

SUBJECT: **Integrated Accessibility Standard Policy and Multi-Year Accessibility Plan**

RECOMMENDATION:

That Committee of the Whole adopt the recommendation in Report LS2013-017 – Integrated Accessibility Standard Policy and Multi-Year Accessibility Plan as follows:

Be it resolved that Council of the Municipality of Meaford hereby:

- 1) Receive Report LS2013-017 – Integrated Accessibility Standard Policy and Multi-Year Accessibility Plan;
- 2) Endorse a by-law to adopt an Integrated Accessibility Standard Policy for the Corporation of the Municipality of Meaford; and
- 3) Approve the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan (2013-2017) as presented.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

Not Applicable.

BACKGROUND:

The Integrated Accessibility Standard (Ontario Regulation 191/11) came into effect on July 1, 2011 and includes standards for Information & Communications, Employment and Transportation.

One requirement is to establish a policy for achieving accessibility, including the development of a statement of organizational commitment to meet the accessibility needs of persons with disabilities in a timely manner. Municipalities are also required to establish and document a multi-year accessibility plan outlining strategies to prevent and remove barriers and meet statutory requirements. Such a plan must be made available in accessible formats and posted to the municipal website.

Municipalities in Grey County worked together on the policy and plan. Consultation occurred with the Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee, lead by Grey County, which serves as the advisory committee for Meaford.



RELATIONSHIP TO THE MUNICIPALITY OF MEAFORD VISION 2020/STRATEGIC PLAN:

This report supports the objective of the Municipality of Meaford Vision 2020, particularly with respect to:

Goal: Healthy Community

Objective:

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- Assure community safety, health & wellness
- Provide effective leadership & governance
- Develop/implement community building strategies

Goal: Customer-focused services

CONSULTATION:

Coordinator, Health & Safety
Director of Fire & Emergency Services
Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee
Senior Management Team

COMMUNICATIONS PLAN:

The policy and plan will be posted to the website and made available in accessible formats upon request.

CONCLUSION:

The policy and plan demonstrate the Municipality of Meaford's commitment to accessibility in keeping with current legislative requirements.

APPENDICES:

Appendix 1 – Integrated Accessibility Standard Policy (Draft)

Appendix 2 – Multi-Year Accessibility Plan (Draft)



Respectfully Submitted:

Robert H. A. Tremblay
Director, Legislative Services/Clerk

Reviewed by:
Denyse Morrissey, CAO

CORPORATE POLICY AND PROCEDURE

POLICY	Accessibility – Integrated Accessibility Standard
CATEGORY	Administration
AUTHORITY	<i>Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005</i> Ontario Regulation 191/11
RELATED POLICIES	Accessibility – Customer Service Standard
APPROVED BY	Council
EFFECTIVE DATE	Adoption of Policy
REVISION DATE	As Required

POLICY STATEMENT

Under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*, all public and private sector organizations must meet the requirements of accessibility standards established by regulation. This policy establishes the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation in the areas of Employment, Information and Communication and Transportation for the Municipality of Meaford in accordance with Ontario Regulation 191/11 and the Provincial Government’s intent to “streamline, align and phase-in accessibility requirements and allow for progress on accessibility and reduce the regulatory burden for obligated organizations. This regulation came into force July 1, 2011.

SCOPE AND RESPONSIBILITIES

This policy has been drafted in accordance with the Regulation and addresses how the Municipality achieves accessibility through meeting the Regulation’s requirements. It provides the overall strategic direction that we will follow to provide accessibility supports for Ontarians with disabilities.

The requirements for the regulation include:

- Establishment, implementation, maintenance and documentation of a multi-year accessibility plan, which outlines the organization’s strategy to prevent and remove barriers and meet its requirements under the Regulation;
- Incorporation of accessibility criteria and features when procuring or acquiring goods, services or facilities;
- Training and other specific requirements under the Information and Communication, Employment and Transportation Standards.

COMMITMENT TO CREATING AN ACCESSIBLE COMMUNITY

The Corporation of the Municipality of Meaford (herein after referred to as “the Municipality”) is enriched with a population of varying talents, abilities and experiences. The municipality values

the contributions of all residents and visitors and believes that these contributions have enhanced our community spirit.

The Municipality is committed to building an inclusive society and providing an accessible environment in which all individuals have access to our programs and services in a way that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities.

The Municipality supports the goals of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* and will establish policies, practices, and procedures which are consistent with the accessibility standards established under the AODA, including accessible customer service, information and communication, employment, transportation and the built environment, and that is consistent with the core principles as outlined in the AODA:

Dignity—Service is provided in a way that allows persons with disabilities to maintain self-respect and the respect of others

Independence—all people are allowed to do things on their own without unnecessary help or interference from others

Integration—Services is provided in a way that all persons with disabilities can benefit from the same services, in the same place, and in the same or similar way as other customers unless an alternate measure is necessary to enable persons with disabilities to access goods or services

Equal Opportunity—Service is provided to persons with disabilities in such a way that they have an opportunity to access goods and services equal to that given to others

The Municipality will continue to prevent barriers by designing inclusively and supporting positive approaches that address attitudes which undervalue and restrict the potential of persons with disabilities.

In working toward its goals under this statement, the Municipality is committed to meeting the requirements of existing legislation and to its own policies and goals related to the identification, removal and prevention of barriers to people with disabilities and becoming a barrier-free community.

A copy of this policy is available on the Municipality's website and in hard copy in the Clerk's office. A copy of this policy is available upon request in an accessible format in accordance with the terms of this policy.

DEFINITIONS

"accessible formats" may include, but are not limited to, large print, recorded audio and electronic formats, Braille and other formats usable by persons with disabilities;

"communication supports" may include, but are not limited to, captioning, alternative and augmentative communication supports, plain language, sign language, and other supports that facilitate effective communications;

"designated public sector organization" means every municipality and every person or organization listed in Column 1 or Table 1 of Ontario Regulation 146/10 (Public Bodies and

Commission Public Bodies—Definitions) made under the *Public Service of Ontario Act, 2006* or described in Schedule 1 to this Regulation;

“*Government of Ontario*” includes the executive of the government and operational branches, including every ministry of the Government of Ontario and the Office of Premier;

“*large designated public sector organization*” means a designated public sector organization with 50 or more employees;

“*large organization*” means an obligated organization with 50 or more employees in Ontario, other than the Government of Ontario, the Legislative Assembly or a designated public sector organization;

“*Legislative Assembly*” includes the office of the Assembly, the offices of members of the Assembly, including their constituency office and the offices of persons appointed on the address of the Assembly;

“*obligated organization*” means the Government of Ontario, the Legislative Assembly, a designated public sector organization, a large organization and a small organization to which the standards in this Regulation apply;

“*small designated public sector organization*” means a designated public sector organization with at least one but fewer than 50 employees;

“*small organization*” means an obligated organization with at least one but fewer than 50 employees in Ontario, other than the Government of Ontario, the Legislative Assembly, or a designated sector organization.

GENERAL PROVISIONS

Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

The Municipality of Meaford’s Multi-Year Accessibility Plan outlines a phased-in strategy to prevent and remove barriers and addresses the current and future requirements of the AODA.

The Municipality will establish, implement, maintain and document a multi-year accessibility plan, which outlines the organization’s strategy to prevent and remove barriers and meet its requirements under this Regulation, post the accessibility plan on the Municipality’s website, and provide the plan in an accessible format upon request.

The Municipality will review and update the accessibility plan at least once every five years.

An annual report will be prepared to document progress toward the plan’s activities and objectives.

Training

The Municipality provides training on the requirements of the information and communications standards of the Integrated Accessibility Regulation of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act*.

Training is provided to all employees and volunteers, all persons who participate in developing the Municipality's policies and all other persons who provide goods and services on behalf of the organization.

Training is ongoing and occurs as soon as possible after a person is hired or when changes are made to the Municipality's accessibility policies.

Accessible Procurement

The Municipality is committed to including accessibility criteria and features, when procuring or acquiring goods, services or facilities. When it is not practicable to do so, an explanation will be provided, upon request.

The Municipality includes accessibility criteria and features when designing, procuring or acquiring self-serve kiosks.

Accessibility Policies Available to the Public

Our accessibility policies to persons with disabilities are available on our website and in hard copy at all of our locations. The Municipality will provide our accessibility policies to persons with disabilities in an accessible format, upon request.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION STANDARD

Our organization will create, provide and receive information and communications in ways that are accessible to people with disabilities.

Accessible emergency procedure, plans or public safety information

The Municipality is committed to providing our emergency procedures, plans and public safety information, that are available to the public, in an accessible format or with communication supports, as soon as practicable, after a request has been made.

Feedback Process

We welcome feedback from the public and from our employees. Feedback is accepted in the following formats: in person, by telephone, by mail or via email. Upon request, we will receive and respond to feedback in an accessible format or with communication supports. Notice regarding the availability of our feedback processes is posted on our website.

Requests for Accessible Formats and Communication Supports

When a person with a disability makes a request for information to be provided in an accessible format or with communication supports, the Municipality will consult with the person making the request to determine a suitable format that takes the person's accessibility needs into account. The Municipality makes the final decision about the accessible format or communication support to be provided or arranged for. Once the decision is made, the information will be provided or arranged for in a timely manner. If there is a fee normally charged for the information, the person making the request for information in an accessible format or with communication supports, will not be charged more than the standard fee for the information.

Accessible Website and Web Content

The Municipality's internet sites and web content will conform with the World Wide Consortium Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG0 2.0) initially at Level A and increasing to Level AA according to the following schedule:

January 1, 2014 – New internet sites and web content must conform with Level A.

January 1, 2021 – All internet websites and web content must conform with Level AA [not Captions (live) and Audio Description (Pre-recorded) 1.2.4 and 1.25]

For more information about the World Wide Consortium Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG 2.0), visit <http://www.w3.org/TR/WCAG20/>

Education, Training and Materials

The Meaford Public Library shall provide access to or arrange for the provision of access to accessible materials where they exist;

The Library shall make information about the availability of accessible materials publicly available and shall provide information in accessible format or with appropriate communication supports, upon request.

The Meaford Public Library Board may provide accessible formats for archival materials, special collections, and rare books.

EMPLOYMENT STANDARD

The Employment Standard builds upon the existing requirements under the Ontario Human Rights Code in relation to how to accommodate individuals with disabilities throughout the job application process and the employment relationship. It applies in respect to employees and does not apply to volunteers and other non-paid individuals.

The requirements of the Employment Standard shall be met by the Municipality of Meaford by January 1, 2014 unless otherwise specified.

The Municipality is committed to providing equal employment opportunities for persons with disabilities and to meeting the accessibility and accommodation needs of employees with a disability in a timely manner.

The Municipality makes the final decision about the accessible format or communication support to be provided or arranged for. Once the decision is made, the information will be provided or arranged for in a timely manner.

Recruitment, Assessment, Selection and Hiring

When the Municipality is recruiting, we provide accommodations for applicants with disabilities. We notify our employees and the public about the provision of accommodations on our website and in our job postings.

When the Municipality selects a job applicant to participate in an assessment or a selection process such as an assessment or an interview, we notify the person that accommodations are available, upon request. If a selected job applicant requests an accommodation, the Municipality consults with the applicant and provides a suitable accommodation that takes the person's accessibility needs into account. The Municipality makes the final decision about the accommodation to be provided.

Notice to Successful Job Applicants and Employees about Accommodations

We are committed to the provision of accommodations for job applicants and employees with disabilities in a manner that takes into account the job applicant's or employee's accessibility

needs, due to a disability. When the Municipality offers a job applicant employment, we provide the person with information about our accommodation policies for employees with disabilities, as soon as is possible. This information is provided to current employees on the Municipality's website. We also notify employees on the Municipality's website when there are changes or updates regarding job accommodations for persons with disabilities.

Accessible Formats and Communication Supports

In addition and where an employee with a disability requests it, we will consult with the employee to provide or arrange for the provision of accessible formats and communication supports for:

- information that is needed in order to perform the employee's job
- information that is generally available to the employees in the workplace
- consult with the employee making the request in determining the suitability of an accessible format or communication support.

Individual Accommodation Plans

The Municipality has a process for developing and documenting individual accommodation plans for employees with disabilities. Our process includes the following steps:

1. We meet with the employee who requests accommodation for an initial discussion and to determine an optimal method of individualized assessment, if needed. We consult with the employee throughout the process.
2. If required, the Municipality will arrange and pay for an expert evaluation, such as a functional abilities evaluation, to determine if and how accommodation can be achieved.
3. The employee is welcome to have a representative participate in the development of the accommodation plan.
4. Individual accommodation plans will be provided to the employee in an accessible format or with communication supports that take into account the employee's particular accessibility needs, due to his/her disability, upon request. All individual accommodation plans inform the employee that the Municipality provides information in an accessible format or with communication supports, if requested. The plans also identify all accommodations that will be provided. If needed, we include individualized workplace emergency response information, in the accommodation plan.
5. Personal information with respect to the accommodation plan will remain with employee. It will not be released to any other the Municipality's employees without the employee's consent, except in the case of an emergency.
6. The Municipality reviews and updates individual accommodation plans when there is a change with respect to the employee's functional status. The employee is encouraged to provide regular feedback about the efficacy of the accommodation. The review includes a meeting with the employee and consideration of feedback provided by the employee. Any changes that need to be made to the accommodation plan will be discussed with the employee and if necessary, an expert assessment will be arranged for at the Municipality's expense.

7. If a plan is denied, we will meet with the employee and provide the reasons and upon request, the Municipality will provide the reasons in an accessible format or with communication supports.

Return to Work Process

The Municipality has a process for developing and documenting a return to work plan for an employee with a disability who has been away from work because of a disability and requires disability-related accommodations in order to return to work. The return to work process outlines the steps the Municipality will take to facilitate the employee's return to work. The process may eventually lead to an individual accommodation plan (see above).

Performance Management, Career Development and Advancement and Redeployment

The Municipality will take the accessibility needs and individual accommodation plans into consideration for employees with disabilities during a performance management process, or during career development and advancement or when the employee is redeployed.

Accessible Workplace Emergency Response Information

The Municipality provides individualized emergency response information to employees who have a disability, if the disability is such that the individualized information is necessary and the Municipality is aware of the need for accommodation, due to the employee's disability.

If an employee receives individualized workplace emergency response information requires assistance, and if the employee grants permission, the Municipality will provide the workplace emergency response information to the person that the employer designates to provide assistance to the employee. Individualized emergency response information is provided as soon as is possible.

The Municipality reviews individualized workplace emergency response information when the

- employee moves to a different location in the organization,
- employee's overall accommodations needs or plans are reviewed, and
- employer reviews its general emergency response policies.

DESIGN OF PUBLIC SPACES

The Municipality of Meaford will ensure that all newly constructed or redeveloped public spaces will include the following features:

1. Recreational Trails/beach access routes
 - ✓ Clear widths, firm and stable surfaces, clear signage, location of amenities, ramps
2. Outdoor Public Eating Spaces
 - ✓ Portion of spaces accessible, level, firm and stable
3. Outdoor Play Spaces
 - ✓ Firm and stable surfaces, incorporate accessibility features, consult with people with disabilities
4. Outdoor Paths of Travel
 - ✓ Clear widths, ramps, tonal contrast and stairs have tonal contrast and tactile

5. Accessible Parking
 - ✓ Will provide two types of parking
 - Type A – wide parking spot 3400 mm with signage “van accessible”
 - Type B – standard 2400 mm
6. Service Related Elements
 - ✓ Service Counters, fixed queuing guides (width, turn around space, cane detectable) and waiting areas (accessible seating and mobility aid space)
7. Maintenance and Restoration
 - ✓ Maintain and restore public spaces

Transportation Standard

The Transportation Standard will make it easier for people to travel in Ontario, including persons with disabilities, older Ontarians, and families traveling with children in strollers.

The Municipality of Meaford will consult with the Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee, the public, and persons with disabilities to determine the proportion of accessible taxis required in the community, including steps to meet the need in its accessibility plan.

As per schedule A-1 of By-Law Number 053-2012, the Municipality of Meaford will:

- Ensure taxicabs do not charge a higher fee or an additional fee to persons with disabilities
- Ensure taxicabs do not charge a higher fee for storage of assistive devices
- Ensure taxicabs have appropriate information displayed both on the rear bumper and available in accessible format to passengers

The Municipality of Meaford's Accessibility Plan will include progress made by the municipality to meet the accessible taxi needs of the community.

REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS

An Administrative Monetary Penalties scheme is being established under the AODA. The scheme will allow a director or a designate to issue an order against a person, organization or corporation to pay a penalty amount as a result of non-compliance with the AODA or the accessibility standards. The largest penalty amount that can be issued to an individual or an organization that is not a corporation is \$50,000.

Use of administrative monetary penalties will be considered an avenue of last resort when all other compliance assistance and improvement options have been exhausted.

The License Appeal Tribunal (LAT) was designated to hear appeals of Directors Orders under the AODA. The LAT will hear appeals from organizations of director's orders, but not individual complaints. Individuals who feel their human rights have not been met would continue to complain to the Ontario Human Rights Commission.

Multi-Year Accessibility Plan



Meaford

the *other* big apple

Statement of Commitment to creating an accessible community

The Municipality of Meaford is enriched with a population of varying talents, abilities and experiences. The municipality values the contributions of all residents and visitors and believes that these contributions have enhanced our community spirit.

The Municipality of Meaford is committed to building an inclusive society and providing an accessible environment in which all individuals have access to our programs and services in a way that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities.

The Municipality of Meaford supports the goals of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act and will establish policies, practices, and procedures with are consistent with the accessibility standards established under the AODA, including accessible customer service, information and communication, employment, transportation and the built environment, and that is consistent with the core principles as outlined in the AODA:

Dignity—Service is provided in a way that allows persons with disabilities to maintain self-respect and the respect of others

Independence—all people are allowed to do things on their own without unnecessary help or interference from others

Integration—Services is provided in a way that all persons with disabilities can benefit from the same services, in the same place, and in the same or similar way as other customers unless an alternate measure is necessary to enable persons with disabilities to access goods or services

Equal Opportunity—Service is provided to persons with disabilities in such a way that they have an opportunity to access goods and services equal to that given to others

The Municipality of Meaford will continue to prevent barriers by designing inclusively and supporting positive approaches that address attitudes which undervalue and restrict the potential of persons with disabilities.

In working toward its goals under this statement, the Municipality of Meaford is committed to meeting the requirements of existing legislation and to its own policies and goals related to the identification, removal and prevention of barriers to people with disabilities and becoming a barrier-free community.

The Ontario Human Rights Code

Section 10 (1) of the Ontario Human Rights Code defines “disability” to mean that the person has or has had, or is believed to have or have had,

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 developmental 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*

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act

The *Accessibility of Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (AODA) is a law passed by the Ontario legislature that allows the government to develop specific standards of accessibility and to enforce them. The standards are made into laws called regulations, and they provide the details to help meet the goal of the AODA. The AODA is the foundation on which the standards are built. The purpose of developing and implementing accessibility standards is to identify, remove and prevent barriers for people with disabilities in key areas of daily living. The five standards are:

- Customer Service
- Information and Communications
- Employment
- Transportation
- The Built Environment

Under the AODA, the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service is the first standard developed to become law (Regulation 429/07) on January 1, 2008. Public sector organizations were required to comply by January 1, 2010, while other providers of goods or services are required to comply by January 1, 2012. The next three standards,— Information and Communications, Employment and Transportation— have been combined into the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR), which is now law. Requirements will be phased in over a period of several years. The Built Environment Standard is still being developed.

The standards set requirements in a number of key areas and will be reviewed at least every five (5) years. New requirements may be added. The goal of the Act is to make the Province of Ontario completely accessible by 2025.

The Municipality of Meaford Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

The Multi-Year Accessibility Plan has been written in consultation with staff, Senior Management, and the Grey County Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee, and lays out how the Municipality will make the community more accessible for both residents and visitors. This plan will be updated every five years, with progress reports being created annually.

This plan will be posted to the Municipality of Meaford's website, and will be available in alternative formats, as requested.

An estimated 15.5% or 1.85 million Ontarians have some sort of disability. In the Municipality of Meaford, the numbers are higher, with 19%, or 2090 residents having a disability.¹

¹Based on data from Statistics Canada



General Provisions

The AODA has identified many areas in which there are barriers to be removed.

The Municipality has written policies and procedures in place regarding the standards set out by the AODA. The Customer Service Standard Policy was written in 2009, and all staff have since received training on this policy. The policies and procedures on the Integrated Accessibility Standard—Information and Communication, Employment, and Transportation—have been written and reviewed by the Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee. They are posted on the Municipality website and are available in accessible formats upon request.

Procurement

When procuring goods, services, self-service kiosks or facilities, the Municipality will incorporate accessibility criteria and features, unless it is not feasible (practicable). If not practicable, the Municipality will provide an explanation, upon request.

Training

All Municipality employees, volunteers and third parties providing goods and services on the Municipality's behalf are required to undergo training on the requirements of the AODA accessibility standards and on the Human Rights Code as it pertains to persons with disabilities. The training provided shall be appropriate to the duties of the employee, volunteer or third party. Training shall take place as soon as is practicable and upon completion, the Municipality will keep a record of the training provided including the dates on which accessibility training took place.

Feedback

Feedback on how services were delivered to people with disabilities shall be invited, forwarded to the appropriate personnel, responded to, documented and tracked. Feedback is invited via diskette, email, telephone or in person.

Customer Service

The Municipality of Meaford provides services to 11,000 residents and thousands of visitors each year. Accessible customer service is essential to meeting the needs of the community.

Our Vision

The Municipality of Meaford is committed to providing goods and services to all residents of our community. We strive to offer the same opportunity for members of the public to access municipal goods using all reasonable efforts, regardless of disability, in similar or alternative formats.

Municipal goods will be provided in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities.

Municipal staff will take into account all goods or services their department provides to the public and integrate/accommodate, whether temporarily or on a permanent basis, to enable a person with a disability to obtain, use, or benefit from the good or service.

The Municipality of Meaford shall ensure that all residents, including persons with disabilities, are given equal opportunity to obtain, use and benefit from the good or service.

Our Commitment

The Municipality of Meaford is committed to ensuring that every person who deals with members of the public or other third parties on behalf of the Municipality of Meaford, whether the person does so as an employee, agent, volunteer or otherwise, work in an accommodating environment and provide accessible goods and services in a courteous and timely manner.

Our Accomplishments

The Municipality of Meaford created its Accessible Customer Service Policy in 2009 and has since trained all staff, volunteers, co-op students and board members in Accessible Customer Service. The Customer Service Policy is located on the Municipal website, and is available in alternative formats upon request.

Accessibility Training

The Municipality of Meaford will provide training to employees, volunteers and other staff members on Ontario's accessibility laws and on the Human Rights Code as it relates to people with disabilities. Training will be provided in a way that best suites the duties of employees, volunteers and other staff members.

The Municipality of Meaford will take the following steps to ensure employees are provided with the training needed to meet Ontario's accessible laws by January 1, 2015.

All new and returning employees and volunteers will receive accessibility training upon orientation. All participants shall complete documentation indicating that they have received such training, and hard copies of these shall be kept on file. The records shall also be documented in a password-protected database.

Information and Communication

Communicating and providing information using methods that work for all residents and visitors is another cornerstone of building an accessible organization.

Our Vision

The Municipality of Meaford is committed to meeting the communication needs of people with disabilities. We will consult people with disabilities to determine information and communication needs.

Our Commitment

The Municipality of Meaford will take the following steps to ensure all new websites and content on those sites conform with WCAG 2.0, Level A by January 1, 2014.

- Providing information pertaining to WCAG 2.0 to the Municipality's website designer, and all staff that post information to the website
- Training staff that post information on the website in methods to make the documents more readable for those accessing the documents

- Obtaining a software program to test the accessibility of documents that are posted on the website

The Municipality of Meaford will take the following steps to make all websites and content conform with WCAG 2.0 Level AA by January 1, 2021.

- Train staff in the requirements of WCAG 2.0 Level AA
- Ensure that all new information posted on the website conforms with WCAG 2.0 Level AA
- Confirm with the website developer the requirements of WCAG 2.0 AA and ensure that our goals must be met.

The Municipality of Meaford will take the following steps to ensure existing feedback processes are accessible to people with disabilities upon request by January 2014.

- Posting a feedback form on the Municipal website
- Informing residents and visitors that feedback is welcomed and appreciated either by phone or email, in person, or in writing by including a clause on the municipal website as part of our customer service policy

The Municipality of Meaford will take the following steps to ensure all publicly available information is made accessible upon request by January 1, 2016.

- Post a clause on the Municipal website stating that all information is available in an accessible format upon request
- Post a notice in high-traffic areas such as the Meaford Hall box office and the Municipal administration office stating that all information is available in an accessible format upon request.

Employment

The process of finding, getting and keeping a job must be inclusive and accessible in order to build an effective staff team in the Municipality of Meaford.

Our Vision

The Municipality of Meaford is committed to fair and accessible employment practices.

Our Commitment

We will take the following steps to notify the public and staff that, when requested, the Municipality of Meaford will accommodate people with disabilities during the recruitment and assessment processes when people are hired.

Including the following statement in all job postings: *“The Municipality of Meaford is an equal opportunity employer. Accommodations are available for all parts of the recruitment process. Applicants need to make their needs known in advance.”*



The Municipality of Meaford will take the following steps to develop and put in place a process for developing individual accommodation plans and return to work policies for employees that have been absent due to a disability by January 1, 2014.

- Establish a written process for the development of individual accommodation plans for employees with disabilities that includes:
- the manner in which an employee requesting accommodation can participate in the development of the individual accommodation plan
- the means by which the employee is assessed on an individual basis
- the manner in which the employer can request an evaluation by an outside medical or other expert, at the employer's expense, to determine if and how accommodation can be achieved
- the manner in which the employee can request the participation of a representative from their bargaining agent, where the employee is represented by a bargaining agent, or other representative from the workplace, where the employee is not represented by a bargaining agent, in the development of the accommodation plan
- the steps taken to protect the privacy of the employee's personal information
- the frequency with which the individual accommodation plan will be reviewed and updated and the manner in which it will be done
- if an individual accommodation plan is denied, the manner in which the reasons for the denial will be provided to the employee
- the means of providing the individual accommodation plan in a format that takes into account the employee's accessibility needs due to disability
- Ensure that the current written return-to-work process for employees that have been absent due to a disability and require disability-related accommodations is reviewed, updated and maintained. The process will include the steps taken to facilitate the return to work of the employees and the use of individual documented accommodation plans.

We will take the following steps to ensure the accessibility needs of employees with disabilities are taken into account if the Municipality of Meaford is using performance management, career development and redeployment processes. By January 1, 2014

- Review employee's accommodation plans to determine if adjustments are needed to help the employee succeed, learn new skills or take on more responsibilities in their current job.
- Make performance management documents available in accessible formats.
- Provide feedback to employees in a way that is accessible to them.

Transportation

Getting from place to place safely affordably in the Municipality of Meaford means that residents and visitors can enjoy all that the community has to offer.

Our Vision

To ensure that all residents and visitors of the Municipality are able to traverse the community safely and affordably. This includes persons with disabilities, older Ontarians, and families travelling with children in strollers.

Our Commitment

The Municipality of Meaford will:

Consult with the Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee, the public, and persons with disabilities to determine the proportion of accessible taxis required in the community, including steps to meet the need in its accessibility plan.

The Municipality of Meaford will:

- Ensure taxicabs do not charge a higher fee or an additional fee to persons with disabilities
- Ensure taxicabs do not charge a higher fee for storage of assistive devices
- Ensure taxicabs have appropriate information displayed both on the rear bumper and available in accessible format to passengers

The Municipality of Meaford's Accessibility Plan Annual Status Report will include progress made by the municipality to meet the accessible taxi needs of the community.

The Built Environment

The Municipality of Meaford is home to beautiful beaches, parks and trails. All residents and visitors are invited to enjoy the amenities of our area.

Our Vision

Residents and visitors of all ages will be able to take advantage of the accessible features of our public spaces, and enjoy all of the indoor and outdoor features of our Municipality.

Our Commitment

The Municipality of Meaford is committed to enhanced accessibility of our public spaces.

Many buildings have already been updated and renovated to include accessible features, such as automatic door openers, accessible washrooms and elevators. Renovations of other facilities are in progress to ensure that all residents and visitors are able to enjoy all that the Municipality of Meaford has to offer.

As public spaces are constructed or redeveloped, we will include the following features:

1. Recreational Trails/beach access routes

Clear widths, firm and stable surfaces, clear signage, location of amenities, ramps

2. Outdoor Public Eating Spaces

Portion of spaces accessible, level, firm and stable

3. Outdoor Play Spaces

Firm and stable surfaces, incorporate accessibility features, consult with people with disabilities

4. Outdoor Paths of Travel

Clear widths, ramps, tonal contrast and stairs have tonal contrast and tactile

5. Accessible Parking

Will provide two types of parking

- ✓ **Type A** – wide parking spot 3400 mm with signage “van accessible”
- ✓ **Type B** – standard 2400 mm



6. Service Related Elements

Service Counters, fixed queuing guides (width, turn around space, cane detectable) and waiting areas (accessible seating and mobility aid space)

7. Maintenance and Restoration

Maintain and restore public spaces.

The Built Environment

The Municipality of Meaford offers many facilities for all to enjoy. Many buildings have already been updated and renovated to accommodate the accessibility needs of residents and visitors.

Our Vision

Staff and visitors will be able to move freely in all Municipal spaces, both indoors and outdoors.

Our Commitment

It is expected that the Built Environment Standard of the AODA will require accessibility features to be incorporated into newly constructed buildings and those that require significant renovations.

The Municipality of Meaford is committed to enhanced accessibility into, out of and around our facilities.

Many buildings have already been updated and renovated to include accessible features, such as automatic door openers, accessible washrooms and elevators. Renovations of other facilities are in progress to ensure that all residents and visitors are able to enjoy all that the Municipality of Meaford has to offer.



The demographic of Municipality of Meaford is changing, and it is important that policies, procedures and practices change along with it.

Our Vision

We will take the following steps to prevent and remove other accessibility barriers identified.

- Obtain and review accessibility related information provided through incident reports, Joint Health & Safety inspection reports, and client feedback.
- Prepare an annual accessibility plan and/or report.
- Meet with the local Accessibility Coordinators Network to share ideas and information regarding accessibility standards and initiatives.
- Process all accessibility related items through the Joint Accessibility Planning Committee.

We want to hear from you!

Do you have any ideas or feedback on what the Municipality has accomplished thus far? How about ideas on how our plans and projects can be improved? Is there additional information that you require? Please contact us with your ideas and questions. We would like to hear from you.

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