

The Corporation of the City of North Bay

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES	APPROVED: DECEMBER 10, 2012 COUNCIL RESOLUTION 2012-680
	SUBJECT: ACCESSIBILITY POLICY – INTEGRATED ACCESSIBILITY STANDARD

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to recognize the City of North Bay's obligation to facilitate the implementation of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act 2005* (AODA), and Ontario Regulation 191/11 (the Integrated Accessibility Standard) and to provide the framework to guide the review and development of other By-laws, policies, procedures and guidelines to comply with the AODA. The City of North Bay is a designated public sector organization under the AODA and is committed to meeting the accessibility needs of people with disabilities.

POLICY STATEMENT

The City of North Bay is committed to providing equal treatment to people with disabilities with respect to the use and benefit of City services, programs, goods and facilities in a manner that respects their dignity and that is equitable in relation to the broader public.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES AND IMPLEMENTATION:

On June 3, 2011 the Province of Ontario passed the Integrated Accessibility Standards, Ontario Regulation 191/11. The Regulation came into force on July 1, 2011, with compliance dates phased in through to 2021.

The Integrated Accessibility Standards will remove barriers in three areas:

- **Information and Communications** — giving people with disabilities access to more of the information we all depend on;
- **Employment** — expanding Ontario's labour pool and welcoming people with disabilities into more workplaces, and
- **Transportation** — making it easier for people with disabilities to get to where they need to go.

The Regulation sets out the requirements for each of the three standards, as well as general requirements that apply to all, such as:

- developing accessibility policies and plans;
- training employees and volunteers; and
- considering accessibility when purchasing goods or services.

The Regulation applies to public, private, and not-for-profit businesses and organizations that:

- provide goods, services or facilities either directly to the public or to other businesses or organizations, and
- have at least one employee in Ontario.

This Policy applies to all City employees, volunteers, and to any individual or organization that provides goods, services or facilities to the public on behalf of the City, in accordance with the legislation.

DEFINITIONS

“Accessibility Standard” means an accessibility standard made by regulation under section 6 of the AODA.

“Accommodation” means the special arrangement made or assistance provided so that persons with disabilities can participate in the experiences available to persons without disabilities. Accommodation will vary depending on the person’s unique needs.

“Barrier” means 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.

“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 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*; (“handicap”).

“Support Person” means, in relation to a person with a disability, another person who accompanies him or her in order to help with communication, mobility, personal care or medical needs or with access to goods or services.”

“Unconvertible” - information or communications are unconvertible if it is not technically feasible to convert the information or communications or the technology to convert the information or communications is not readily available.

Accessibility Plan

The City will develop, maintain and document a multi-year Accessibility Plan outlining the municipality’s strategies to identify, prevent and remove barriers.

The Accessibility Plan will be reviewed and updated in consultation with the Municipal Accessibility Advisory Committee and with persons with disabilities at least once every five years, and will be posted on the City’s website. Upon request, the municipality will provide a copy of the Accessibility Plan in an accessible format.

In addition, and as required by the Regulation, the Accessibility Plan will be reviewed on an annual basis. Status Reports on the progress of measures taken to implement the Plan will also be posted on the City’s website. Upon request, the municipality will provide a copy of the Status Reports in an accessible format.

Municipal Accessibility Advisory Committee

The City has established a Municipal Accessibility Advisory Committee. The committee shall advise Council about the requirements and implementation of AODA accessibility standards, preparation of accessibility reports, including access for persons with disabilities to a building or premises, and other matters for which Council may seek advice.

Procuring or Acquiring Goods, Services or Facilities

The City 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.

Training

In accordance with the dates set in Appendix “A”, the municipality will ensure that all employees, volunteers and third parties providing 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 Accessibility Regulation of the AODA and on the Human Rights Code as it pertains to persons with disabilities are trained.

The amount and format of training given will be tailored to suit each person's interactions with the public and his/her involvement in the development of policies, procedures and practices pertaining to the provision of goods and services. Training will be ongoing and will occur within six months of beginning their duties or when changes are made to the City's accessibility policies.

Contractors and agents providing services on behalf of the City to the public will be required to ensure that their staff has received the appropriate training.

The City will keep records of the training provided, including dates training is provided and the number of persons trained.

Feedback Process

The City welcomes feedback from the public. Feedback is accepted in the following formats:

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|---------------------------|--|
| (a) by mail addressed to: | City Clerk
P.O. Box 360,
City of North Bay, ON P1B 8H8 |
| (b) by telephone: | (705) 474-0400 |
| (c) in person at: | City Clerk's Office, 5 th Floor City Hall |
| (d) or by email to: | cathy.conrad@cityofnorthbay.ca |

Feedback will not be acted upon unless the person providing same includes his or her name, mailing address and daytime telephone number. Email addresses are not sufficient.

The City will strive to provide responses to feedback within ten (10) business days from its receipt. Information about the feedback process will be posted on the City's website (www.cityofnorthbay.ca) and/or in other appropriate locations.

Information and Communication Standard

The City of North Bay is committed to providing materials in an accessible format or with communication supports to persons with disabilities, upon request.

- Accessible formats may include, but are not limited to, large print, recorded audio and electronic formats and Braille; and

- Communication supports may include but are not limited to captioning, alternative and augmentative communication supports, plain language and sign language.

If the City is unable to convert the requested information or communications, the City will provide an explanation about why the materials are not convertible and we will provide a summary of the requested information or communications.

Notice to the public about the City's commitment to provide materials in an accessible format or with communications supports, upon request is posted on the City's website – <http://www.cityofnorthbay.ca/ACCESSIBILITY.asp>.

Requests for Accessible Formats and Communication Supports

Except as otherwise provided by the AODA, the City shall, upon request, and in consultation with the person making the request, provide or make arrangements to provide accessible formats and communication supports for persons with disabilities. When a person with a disability makes a request for information to be provided in an accessible format or with communication supports, staff will consult with the person making the request to determine a suitable format that takes the person's accessibility needs into account. The City will make 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 taking into account the person's accessibility needs. 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.

Accessibility Policies Available to the Public

The City's accessibility policies pertaining to persons with disabilities are available on our website and in hard copy upon request. The City will provide its accessibility policies to persons with disabilities in an accessible format, upon request.

Emergency Procedures, Plans and Public Safety Information

The City shall provide all existing public emergency procedures, plans and public safety information, that are available to the public, in an accessible format or with communication supports, as soon as possible after a request has been made.

Accessible Websites and Web Content

The City is committed to providing accessible websites and web content to persons with disabilities.

The City'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 in accordance with the dates set out in Appendix "A".

Employment Standard

The City of North Bay 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.

Accessible Workplace Emergency Response Information

Individualized emergency response information and aid will be made available to employees who have a disability, if the disability is such that the individualized information is necessary and the City is aware of the need for accommodation. If an employee requires assistance and grants permission, the City will work with the employee and an identified person that the employer designates to provide assistance to the employee. Individualized emergency response information will be provided as soon as practicable after becoming aware of the need for accommodation.

The City shall review individualized workplace emergency response information when:

- the employee moves to a different location or department within the organization;
- the employee's overall accommodations needs or plans are reviewed; and
- the City reviews its general emergency response policies.

Employee Supports

The City will inform staff of the policies used to support employees with disabilities. The City will provide this information to new employees as soon as practicable after they begin their employment and provide updated information to all staff members when there is a change to existing policies on the provision of job accommodations that take into account an employee's accessibility needs due to disability.

Accessible Formats and Communication Supports for Job Applicants and Employees with Disabilities

In accordance with the dates set in Appendix "A", when an employee or a job applicant with a disability makes a request for information to be provided in an accessible format or with communication supports, the City will consult with the person making the request to determine a suitable format that takes the employee's or job applicant's accessibility needs into account. The City will make the final decision about the accessible format or communication support to be provided or arranged.

Recruitment, Assessment, Selection and Hiring

In accordance with the dates set in Appendix "A", the City will post information about the availability of accommodations for applicants with disabilities in its recruitment process on its website and in job postings. Applicants who are individually selected for an interview and/or testing shall be notified that accommodations are available upon request. The City shall consult with the applicant who requests an accommodation in a manner that takes into account the applicant's disability. Successful applicants shall be notified about the City's policies for accommodating employees with disabilities as part of their offer of employment.

If a selected job applicant requests an accommodation, the City will consult with the applicant and provide a suitable accommodation that takes the person's accessibility needs into account. The City will make the final decision about the accommodation to be provided.

Notice to Successful Job Applicants and Employees about Accommodations

The City is committed to the provision of accommodations for job applicants and employees with disabilities in a manner that takes into account the individual's accessibility needs. When the City offers an applicant employment, the City will provide the person with information about our accommodation policies for employees with disabilities as soon as practicable.

When there are changes or updates regarding job accommodations for persons with disabilities the City will provide this information on its internet and intranet websites.

Documented Individual Accommodation Plans

In accordance with the dates set in Appendix "A", the City of North Bay shall maintain a written process for individual accommodation plans for employees who have disabilities. If requested, the plans shall include

information regarding accessible formats and communication supports in addition to individualized workplace emergency response information.

Return to Work Process

The City of North Bay shall maintain a documented return to work process for employees returning to work due to disability and requiring disability-related accommodations.

Performance Management and Career Development and Redeployment

The City shall take into account the accessibility needs of employees with disabilities as well as any individual accommodation plans when providing career development, performance management and when considering redeployment.

Transportation Standard

The City of North Bay is committed to providing public transportation for persons with disabilities in a timely manner.

Accessibility Equipment

The City shall provide to the public current information on accessibility equipment and features of the vehicles, routes and services. This includes consideration for the "closest available safe location" for transit stops, storage or mobility devices, deploying lifting devices, ensuring adequate time for boarding and deboarding, assistance with storage of mobility devices, and clearly marked courtesy seating.

Emergency Preparedness

The City shall establish, implement, maintain and document emergency preparedness and response policies that provide for the safety of persons with disabilities.

Companions

The City shall establish, implement and maintain a policy that allows companions to travel on specialized transit with persons with disabilities, if space is available.

Accessibility Plans for Transportation Services

The City shall develop, maintain and document Accessibility Plans for Transportation Services (conventional and specialized) outlining the municipality's strategies to identify, the process for managing, evaluating and taking action on customer feedback.

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.

Specialized Transportation Services

The City shall establish, implement and maintain a fare schedule whereby no specialized transportation services fares shall be more than the highest fare charged for conventional transportation services.

The City shall establish, implement and maintain service hours and days of service for specialized transportation services that are, at a minimum, the same as the conventional transportation services.

The City shall establish, implement and maintain a program for providing specialized transportation services available to eligible visitors.

The City shall establish, implement and maintain the provision of service delay information affecting passengers of specialized transportation services.

In accordance with the dates set in Appendix "A", the City shall establish, implement and maintain a system for specialized transportation reservations.

In accordance with the dates set in Appendix "A", the City shall establish, implement and maintain a policy whereby no fares are to be charged to appropriately designated support persons.

In accordance with the dates set in Appendix "A", the City shall establish, implement and maintain a policy for eligibility applications for specialized transportation services.

In accordance with the dates set in Appendix "A", the City shall establish, implement and maintain a policy for the provision of specialized transportation services on emergency or compassionate grounds.

In accordance with the dates set in Appendix "A", the City shall implement and maintain electronic pre-boarding announcements of routes, directions, destinations or next major stop.

In accordance with the dates set in Appendix "A", the City shall implement and maintain on-board announcements of all destination points or available routes are to be announced through electronic means and legibly and visually displayed electronic means.

Taxicabs

Ontario Regulation 191/11 requires that owners and operators of taxicabs licensed by municipalities are prohibited from charging additional fares or fees to persons with disabilities than for persons without disabilities and for the storage of mobility aids or mobility assistive devices. Taxicabs shall make available vehicle registration and identification information in an accessible format.

The responsibility for licensing taxicabs rests with the North Bay Police Services Board.

EFFECTIVE DATE

This policy comes into effect on January 1, 2013.

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KEY DATES FOR COMPLIANCE

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES:	
January 1, 2013	Establishing, implementing and maintaining policies governing the accessibility of employment, transportation, and information and communications.
	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. The development of the Accessibility Plan will require consultation with the Municipal Accessibility Advisory Committee and with persons with disabilities.
	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.
	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 "notify the public about the availability of accessible formats and communications supports".
	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.
INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION	
January 1, 2012	Emergency procedures, plans or public safety information, which are available to the public, are to be provided in an 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.

January 1, 2014	Making new websites and web content on those sites conform with WCAG 2.0, Level A.
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.
January 1, 2021	Making websites (except content not updates since January 1 st , 2012) and web content conform with WCAG 2.0, Level AA).
EMPLOYMENT	
January 1, 2012	Providing individualized workplace emergency response information to employees who have a disability.
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.
January 1, 2014	Informing employees of its policies to support its employees with disabilities.
January 1, 2014	Providing, upon request, accessible formats and communication supports to 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.
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”.
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.
January 1, 2012	Establish, implement, maintain and document emergency preparedness and response policies that provide for the safety of persons with disabilities.
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.
January 1, 2013	<p>Accessibility Plans for Transportation Services (Conventional and Specialized) – shall identify the process for managing, evaluating and taking action on customer feedback.</p> <p>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.</p>
January 1, 2013	<p>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.</p> <p>The progress made toward meeting the need for accessible taxicabs shall be addressed in the Accessibility Plan.</p>
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.

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.
January 1, 2013	Establish, implement and maintain a policy making specialized transportation services available to eligible visitors.
January 1, 2013	Establish, implement and maintain a policy for providing service delay information to affected passengers of specialized transportation services.
January 1, 2014	Establish, implement and maintain a policy for specialized transportation services' reservations.
January 1, 2014	Establish, implement and maintain a policy whereby no fares are to be charged to appropriately designated support persons.
January 1, 2014	Establish, implement and maintain a policy for eligibility applications for specialized transportation services.
January 1, 2014	Establish, implement and maintain a policy for the provision of specialized transportation services on emergency or compassionate grounds.
January 1, 2017	Electronic pre-boarding announcements of route, direction, destination or next major stop.
January 1, 2017	On-board announcements of all destination points or available route stops are to be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • announced through electronic means and • legibly and visually displayed through electronic means.