



Accessibility Procedure

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Department:	Human Resources
Section:	Branch Name
Sub-Section:	Accessibility and Accommodation
Subject:	Accessibility
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PURPOSE STATEMENT

All City policies, procedures, bylaws, standards, and guidelines must comply with the AODA, and provide for dignity, independence, integration, and equal opportunity for people with disabilities.

City goods, services and facilities are to be available to people with disabilities in a manner that:
Is free from discrimination; and

Takes individual needs into account where a uniform response is inappropriate, to ensure that there are no barriers to access or participation, and that individuals with disabilities are treated equitably.

The City of Barrie takes pride in being one of Ontario's leading communities in accessibility and is committed to accessibility and the tenets of the AODA.

SCOPE

- a. This procedure applies to all potential and existing employees of the City, elected officials, students, and volunteers.
- b. Employees covered by a Collective Agreement are subject to the terms and conditions in their respective Collective Agreements.
- c. Any individual third-party organization that provides goods, services, and facilities on behalf of the City is also required to demonstrate compliance with the AODA.



PROCEDURE

ACCESSIBILITY PLANNING

1. The City will establish, implement, maintain, and document a multi-year accessibility plan in accordance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005.
2. The multi-year accessibility plan will outline the ways the City will prevent and remove barriers and meet the requirements of the standards developed under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005.
3. The City will establish, review, and update the multi-year accessibility plan in consultation with persons with disabilities and the municipal accessibility advisory committee.
4. The City will review and update the plan at least once every five years.
5. City employees will prepare an annual status update to report on the progress of measures taken to implement the multi-year accessibility plan and will post the plan and status update in an accessible format on the City's website.
6. City employees will provide alternate accessible formats of the plan and status report upon request.

PROCUREMENT

Whenever possible, City employees will incorporate accessibility criteria and features when procuring or acquiring goods, services, and facilities.

When it is not practicable to incorporate accessibility criteria and features when procuring or acquiring goods, services or facilities, City employees will provide, upon request, an explanation for this action.
The City will incorporate accessibility features when designing, procuring, or acquiring self-service kiosks.

ACCESSIBLE CUSTOMER SERVICE

The City will make reasonable efforts to ensure the following:

- That goods and services are provided in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of people with disabilities.
- That the provision of goods and services to people with disabilities, and to others, are integrated unless an alternate measure is necessary, whether temporarily or on a permanent basis, to enable a person with a disability to obtain, use or benefit from the goods and services.
- That people with disabilities are given an opportunity equal to that given to others, to obtain, use and benefit from the goods and services.



SERVICE DISRUPTIONS

If, in order to obtain, use or benefit from the City's goods, services, programs or facilities, persons with disabilities usually use particular facilities or services of the City, and if there is a temporary Facility or Service Disruption to those facilities or services, in whole or in part, the City will give notice of the Facility or Service Disruption to the public.

The City employees responsible for posting such notices include facility and service managers or their designates. Notice of the Facility or Service Disruption will include:

- a) information about the reason for the disruption
- b) its anticipated duration and a description of alternative facilities or services, if any, that are available.

The City will give notice of the Facility or Service Disruption by posting the information in a conspicuous place on the relevant City premises and, whenever possible, by posting it on the City website and in the media as appropriate.

If the City should expect a planned temporary Facility or Service Disruption, the City will provide on its website, if possible, advance notice, in keeping with the conditions of this section of this procedure.

FEEDBACK PROCESS

The City has established a process for receiving and responding to feedback on the way the City provides goods and services to persons with disabilities. Information about this process is available to any person. Individuals can provide feedback to the City in different formats; however, if someone needs alternate accessible formats than what is currently indicated, we will work with them to make the feedback process more accessible to them.

Should members of the public wish to provide feedback they can do so by:

- In person to a City Manager, Supervisor, Executive Director, or the Disability Management & Accessibility Specialist
- By telephone, via the City's General Inquires telephone line: 705-726-4242
- By calling the Bell Relay System - 1 800 855-0511 (Voice to TTY), 711 (TTY to Voice) to access Bell Relay and TTY Operator assistance when contacting the City of Barrie
- In writing to: City Hall, 70 Collier Street, P.O. Box 400, Barrie ON, L4M 4T5 By using the form included on the Contact Us (barrie.ca) online feedback form
- In an electronic format or by email: ServiceBarrie@barrie.ca

Customer feedback and complaints are taken very seriously. Once feedback has been received, the City will implement the following process:

1. The Service Barrie Representative will forward the feedback form or communication to the relevant Service Area or employee.
2. The relevant employee will take appropriate action in a timely manner with the assistance of the Disability Management & Accessibility Specialist and members of other departments if needed.
3. Whether the feedback is intended to be a helpful suggestion or a complaint, the employee along with the Disability Management and Accessibility Specialist will assess current policies, practices, and procedures to determine if any changes are required.
4. Employees will follow-up with the person who submitted the feedback if more clarification is needed, or if the person has requested that follow-up take place. Information regarding the feedback provided will be made available to the person submitting the feedback in an accessible format if required.



5. Employees will keep records of all steps taken, including any discussions with the person submitting the feedback and any actions taken.
6. All feedback will be provided to relevant City employees who will follow up as appropriate.

ALTERNATE FORMATS

The City will provide information that it produces or controls, in formats that consider the disabilities of members of the public requesting the information.

The City will provide these alternate formats in consultation with the community member requesting the alternate format, in a timely manner and at a cost no more than the cost of the original format of the information.

The timeframe attached to the process to obtain an alternate format may vary depending on the media, the size, complexity, quality, and number of the source documents to be converted. When it is not practicable to provide an alternate format, the City will provide an explanation and a summary of the document in an accessible format.

Exceptions apply to the following as outlined in the I.A.S.R.:

1. product and product labels
2. unconvertible information or communications
3. information that the City does not control directly or indirectly through a contractual relationship.
4. If the City determines that information or communications is unconvertible, the City shall provide the person requesting the information or communications with an explanation as to why the information or communications are unconvertible and provide a summary of the unconvertible information or communications in an accessible format or method of communicating.

ACCESSIBLE WEBSITES AND WEB CONTENT

Internet websites and web content controlled directly by the City of Barrie or through a contractual relationship that allows for modification of the product shall conform to the World Wide Web Consortium Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0, at Level A and AA in accordance with the schedule set out in the AODA Integrated Accessibility Standards.

COMMUNICATION SUPPORTS

The City will provide communication supports to members of the public, upon request.

The City will provide the support in a timely manner, and in consultation with the person requesting the support to determine suitability of the communication support so that it takes his or her disability into account.

The City will not charge a cost that is more than the regular cost charged to other persons. And, if City employees are unable to obtain the requested communication support, they will work with the requestor to determine a practicable and appropriate method for communication.



SUPPORT PERSONS

The City will allow a person with a disability to be accompanied by a Support Person in all City owned and operated public facilities.

The City reserves the right to request that a person with a disability be accompanied by a Support Person if the City considers such accompaniment as necessary to protect the health and safety of the person with the disability or others on the premises.

The City will provide notification of any applicable admission fees or fares that apply to Support Persons by posting such admission fees or fares where all other fees or fares are posted.

SERVICE ANIMALS

- The City welcomes Service Animals into all City-owned or operated facilities where the public is allowed.
- The person requiring the Service Animal may keep their service animal with them unless it is otherwise excluded by law.
- If a Service Animal is excluded from premises by law, which could include, but is not limited to: City policy, bylaw, Federal or Provincial Public Health law, or government policy or guideline, the City will, upon request, use reasonable efforts to ensure that other measures are available to enable the person with the disability to obtain, use or benefit from the City program, service, or facility.
- Appropriate “other measures” will be addressed on a case-by-case basis.
- A Person with a disability with a Service Animal is responsible for the control of their service animal at all times.
- As well they must comply with all applicable legislation, which includes, but is not limited to, City by-laws (such as the Animal Control By-law.
- If the Service Animal is not kept under control, City employees may use their discretion to request that the Service Animal, accompanied by a person, leave the premises until the Service Animal is under control.

USE OF ASSISTIVE DEVICES

1. City employees, volunteers and third-party contractors shall accommodate the use of personal assistive devices including, but not limited to, wheelchairs, canes, walkers, scooters, and Braille display boards.

2. Where and when available, assistive devices may be made available to members of the public while accessing City of Barrie services, including: manual wheelchair while visiting City Hall, and assistive listening devices such as FM Loop systems. This equipment shall be kept in good working order and the public shall be informed of their availability.

3. The City will allow people with disabilities to use their own personal assistive devices to obtain, use or benefit from the services offered by the City.

4. Should a person with a disability be unable to access the City’s services with their own personal assistive device, the City may assess alternate service delivery options to meet the needs of the individual.



ACCESSIBLE WORKPLACE

The City will establish policies, practices, and procedures that ensure that the City remains an inclusive workplace for people with disabilities. These policies, practices, and procedures will:

- Ensure that the recruitment process is inclusive to people with disabilities.
- Inform employees of supports available for employees with disabilities.

- Appropriately accommodate employees with disabilities in the areas of:
 - Workplace emergency response information,
 - Information and communications needed to perform jobs or that are available to employees in the workplace, and
 - Any other accommodations required.
- Consider employee accommodations in:
 - Performance management,
 - Career development and advancement, and
 - Redeployment.
- Develop and implement a return-to-work process for employees who have been absent from work due to disability and require disability-related accommodations to return to work.

The above noted information must be provided to new employees as soon as practicable after they begin their employment with the City, and to all employees whenever there are changes to the existing policies or procedures.

EMPLOYEE DEVELOPMENT TRAINING

1. City employees and volunteers, those who participate in developing the City's policies and procedures, and all other persons who provide goods, services, or facilities on behalf of the City will be trained in accordance with Accessibility Standards for Customer Service and the Integrated Accessibility Standards, as well as other regulations under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005.
2. The City will provide training to employees on any changes and or updates regarding the AODA, its standards, and City policies and procedures pertaining to the AODA and standards as soon as practicable.
3. The City will keep records of training, including the dates and number of individuals to whom the training was provided.



TRANSPORTATION

In addition to adhering to the policies within this Policy, Barrie Transit will develop and maintain policies and procedures unique to its service, and that are required in the regulations under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005.

Barrie Transit will make the policies required in the regulations under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 available **to the public upon request**.

Accessible Public Spaces

The City will ensure accessibility at all its facilities and public spaces by designing with accessibility in mind. In addition, the City shall comply with the *AODA Design of Public Spaces Standards (DOPS)* (including consultation requirements when undertaking new construction and redevelopment of public spaces) in the following areas:

- Recreational trails and beach access routes.
- Outdoor public use eating areas.
- Outdoor play spaces.
- • Exterior paths of travel.
- • Accessible parking.
- • Obtaining services; and,
- • Maintenance of accessible elements.

REFERENCES AND RELATED DOCUMENTS

- a. *Ontarians with Disabilities Act (ODA)*
- b. *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)*
- c. *Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR), O. Reg, 191/11*
- d. *Ontario Human Rights Act*
- e. City of Barrie Accessible Customer Service Policy
- f. Hiring at the City