



City of  
**Peterborough**

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**To: Members of the Accessibility Advisory Committee**

**From: Mark Buffone, Accessibility Compliance Specialist**

**Meeting Date: April 3, 2024**

**Report: 2024 to 2028 Accessibility Plan, Report AAC24-009**

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## **Subject**

A report to present key sections and priorities of the draft 2024 to 2028 Accessibility Plan and seek feedback from the Accessibility Advisory Committee on the draft plan.

## **Recommendations**

That the Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC) approve the recommendations outlined in Report AAC24-009, dated April 3, 2024 of the Accessibility Compliance Specialist as follows:

- a) That a presentation related to the draft 2024 to 2028 Accessibility Plan be received for information.
- b) That the AAC provide feedback on the presentation related to the draft 2024 to 2028 Accessibility Plan.

## **Executive Summary**

- Accessibility law in Ontario requires the City to establish, implement and maintain a multi-year accessibility plan. The City shall review and update the plan at least once every five years and post the plan on the City website.
- Disability statistics are showing the disability rate in Canada is quickly increasing across all age groups. 27% of the Canadian population aged 15 and older has at least one disability. The rate was 22% in 2017 and 14% in 2022. Women, newcomers to Canada and Indigenous people are more likely to have disabilities.

- Strong leadership plays a key role to implement and address the 5 priority areas of the Accessibility Plan: sidewalks, transit, streets/intersections, parks and employment for people with disabilities.
- Accessibility work is transitioning from compliance to inclusion. The City recognizes that accessibility laws do not prescribe every detail on how to prevent barriers. In some instances, a basic level of accessibility sometimes means going beyond AODA compliance to prevent new barriers and meet human rights obligations.
- The City understands that while implementing the accessibility plan will help take care of the most vulnerable people, it has the welcome effect of benefiting everyone, and a larger effect of building a stronger economy and community.

## **Strategic Plan**

### **Growth and Economic Development**

- “Establish area-specific plans for the redevelopment of key sites in the City to promote strong, compatible, connected neighbourhoods that enhance the quality of life and encourage greater infill.”

The Accessibility Plan recognizes how the Planning Act requires people involved in land use planning decisions need to have regard for accessibility.

### **Infrastructure**

- “Develop and implement robust long-term capital planning forecasts and budget planning to ensure municipal infrastructure (horizontal, vertical, and underground assets) remain in a state of good repair.”
- “Invest in infrastructure to ensure it meets the future needs of our growing City.”

The accessibility plan requires an investment to address infrastructure priorities related to sidewalks, streets and intersections.

### **Community and Well-being**

- “Work proactively with local community partners to find an amicable workable solution towards reducing homelessness, mental health, and addiction issues within our community.”
- “Encourage our neighbourhoods to be safe, diverse, accessible, and affordable across all ages, incomes, and abilities.”
- “Support opportunities for multi-modal transportation including walking, cycling and Transit services.”

The Accessibility Plan references data that shows a concerning increase in mental health related disabilities among youth and working-age adults, and implementing the plan improves access to health care.

The Accessibility Plan includes priorities that focus on sidewalks, streets/intersections, transit and parks. The plan outlines the importance of multi-modal transportation planning to people with disabilities and includes priorities related to road safety.

### **Governance and Fiscal Sustainability**

- “Support review / update of City’s By-laws to make them effective and efficient, meeting the needs of our growing City.”

The Accessibility Plan outlines the need to update the taxi by-law to meet the transportation needs of people with disabilities for taxicabs and transportation network companies.

### **Engagement and Consultation**

Public engagement for the accessibility plan was launched during National AccessAbility Week in May 2022 and ran until August 31, 2022. Most engagement tools were available through the City’s online public engagement platform, Connect Peterborough. The City offered alternative methods of providing feedback, including hard copies of the survey and an option to communicate by phone or email. The engagement tools included a long form survey, short form survey, interactive map to identify barriers and an accessible housing ideas forum. The engagement platform included a frequently asked questions section, guestbook, project timeline and project contact information. Comments received from people who engaged with the project were reviewed in detail by Accessibility staff.

Priorities and ongoing work listed in the 2024 to 2028 Accessibility Plan reflect what we heard during public engagement around barriers that exist for people with disabilities. Participants highlighted categories in most need of attention are sidewalks, transit, streets/intersections, parks and employment opportunities for people with disabilities.

### **Budget and Financial Implications**

There are no budgetary or financial implications associated with the recommendation.

Submitted by,

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