



## Corporate Accessibility Policy

<b>Department:</b>	Finance and Corporate Services
<b>Division:</b>	Facilities and Property Management
<b>Section/Function:</b>	Section (if applicable)
<b>Approval Level:</b>	Council
<b>Effective Date:</b>	April 30 <sup>th</sup> , 2026
<b>Revision #:</b>	

### 1.0 Purpose

#### 1.1 The purpose of this policy is to:

- a) Provide a framework to inform the assessment and development of City of Peterborough policies, standards, procedures, practices, by-laws and guidelines to ensure alignment with the requirements under the **Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA)**.
- b) Identify, prevent, and remove accessibility barriers to ensure City goods, services, programs, and facilities are accessible.
- c) Foster an accessible workplace culture by ensuring all employees, volunteers, and contractors are aware of their accessibility responsibilities and are trained to support inclusive service delivery.

### 2.0 Application

#### 2.1 This policy applies to:

- a) All employees, volunteers, committee members, contractors, and service providers.
- b) All programs, services, facilities, and public-facing activities of the City of Peterborough.

#### 2.2 Roles and Responsibilities

Accessibility is a shared responsibility, and all individuals who work for or on behalf of the City play a critical role in ensuring an inclusive and accessible environment for residents, visitors, and employees. The following outlines the responsibilities for various groups within the organization.

##### 2.2.1 Employees, Volunteers, and Third Parties

All employees, volunteers, and third parties acting on behalf of the City are expected to:

- a) Understand and follow this Accessibility Policy, the **Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA)**, and the **Ontario Human Rights Code**.
- b) Integrate accessibility in all work. Consider accessibility when developing and delivering goods, services, programs, and facilities, and help identify and remove barriers.
- c) Provide inclusive and respectful Service. Communicate effectively and respectfully with people with disabilities, and ensure access for those using assistive devices, a support person, or service animals.
- d) Support accommodation and feedback. Respond promptly to accommodation requests and ensure feedback processes are accessible and inclusive.
- e) Engage in ongoing learning and collaboration. Complete mandatory accessibility training and seek guidance from Managers or the Program Manager, Accessibility Standards and Integration when needed.

### **2.2.2 Managers, Directors, and the Senior Leadership Team**

In addition to the responsibilities listed in Section 2.2.1, Managers, Directors, and the Senior Leadership Team are responsible for:

- a) Demonstrating leadership:
  - i. Lead by example in creating an inclusive and accessible environment for employees and the public.
  - ii. Ensure policy awareness and compliance. Communicate, promote, and enforce this Accessibility Policy within their areas of responsibility.
  - iii. Prevent and address barriers. Integrate accessibility and equity considerations into all new or revised policies, procedures, and practices, and address any non-compliance issues promptly.
- b) Support accommodation and training. Respond to accommodation requests in a timely manner and ensure all employees, volunteers, and third parties receive required accessibility training.
- c) Collaboration for continuous improvement. Engage with appropriate internal resources and stakeholders to enhance accessibility planning and resolve related challenges.

### **2.2.3 City Council**

In accordance with the **AODA**, Municipalities with populations over 10,000 must maintain an Accessibility Advisory Committee, with a majority of members being persons with disabilities.

## **3.0 Definitions/Acronyms (As Required)**

**Accessibility:** Giving people of all abilities the opportunity to obtain, use, and benefit from the City's goods, services, information, and spaces in a way that is free from barriers.

**Accessible Formats & Communication Supports:** May include but are not limited to large print, braille, audio, electronic formats, captioning, plain language, sign language interpretation, and other methods that enable communication.

**Assistive Device:** Tools such as wheelchairs, canes, hearing devices, or screen readers are used to support a person's mobility, vision, or communication.

**Barrier:** Anything that hinders a person with a disability's full and equal participation, this may be physical, architectural, informational, communicational, technological, attitudinal, or related to policies or practices.

**Kiosk:** An interactive electronic terminal, including a point-of-sale devices, intended for public use that allows users to access one or more services or products or both.

**Service Animal:** As per Section 80.45(4) of the **IASR**:

"An animal is a service animal for a person with a disability if:

- a) the animal can be readily identified as one that is being used by the person for reasons relating to the person's disability, as a result of visual indicators such as the vest or harness worn by the animal; or
- b) the person provides documentation from one of the following regulated health professionals confirming that the person requires the animal for reasons relating to the disability:
  - A member of the College of Audiologists and Speech Language Pathologists of Ontario.
  - A member of the College of Chiropractors of Ontario.
  - A member of the College of Nurses of Ontario.
  - A member of the College of Occupational Therapists of Ontario.
  - A member of the College of Optometrists of Ontario.
  - A member of the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario.
  - A member of the College of Physiotherapists of Ontario.
  - A member of the College of Psychologists of Ontario.
  - A member of the College of Registered Psychotherapists and Registered Mental Health Therapists of Ontario. (O. Reg. 165/16, s. 16)."

**Support Person:** As per Section 80.4(3) of the **IASR**:

“A support person means, in relation to a person with a disability, another person who accompanies them in order to help with communication, mobility, personal care or medical needs or with access to goods or services.”

## 4.0 Policy Statement(s)

**4.1** The Corporation of the City of Peterborough is committed to serving its community with fairness, respect, and inclusivity regardless of disabilities. The City upholds the principle of equal opportunity for all individuals and is dedicated to ensuring that its goods, services, facilities, programs, and employment practices are accessible.

Council and staff are dedicated to fostering a community and workplace that upholds dignity, independence, integration, and equal opportunity. We will work proactively to identify, remove, and prevent barriers to accessibility, ensuring that residents, employees, and visitors can fully participate in all aspects of City life.

The City embraces the principles of diversity and inclusion in our policies, procedures, and workplace culture. We support a diverse workforce and are committed to equitable practices throughout recruitment, hiring, training, performance management, and career development. The City will train employees in providing accessible goods, services, programs, and facilities. We will continue to promote a work environment, and community free from discrimination, where all individuals are valued and supported.

This policy aligns with the **Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA)**, the **Ontario Human Rights Code**, and all other applicable legislation, ensuring that accessibility remains a shared responsibility and an integral part of our municipal services and community life.

## 5.0 General Requirements

### 5.1 Accessibility Policies

In accordance with the **Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA)**, the City is required to establish and maintain policies that outline how it will meet the requirements of the **Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR)**. These policies must be made available to the public and provided in accessible formats upon request. This Policy has been developed and adopted to meet these legislative requirements and to demonstrate the City's ongoing commitment to accessibility and inclusion.

### 5.2 Procurement of Goods, Services, and Facilities

In accordance with the **Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA)**, the City will incorporate accessibility criteria and features when procuring or acquiring goods, services, and facilities. Accessibility considerations will be integrated as early as possible in the procurement process to ensure equitable access for all. Where it is not practicable to

include accessibility criteria, the City will, upon request, provide an explanation in accordance with the City's Accessible Procurement Guidelines. Responsibility for incorporating accessibility into procurement activities rests with the divisions managing those activities and contracts. All third parties providing goods, services, or facilities on behalf of the City must ensure their employees receive appropriate accessibility training as required under the **Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR)**.

### 5.3 Self-Serve Kiosks

The AODA requires the City to incorporate accessibility features when designing, procuring, or acquiring self-serve electronic kiosks (interactive electronic terminals) as such the City will do so.

### 5.4 Training

In accordance with the **Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)**, all employees, volunteers, and individuals involved in developing City policies or providing goods, services, or facilities on behalf of the City are required to receive accessibility training. This training covers the **AODA**, the **Ontario Human Rights Code**, and Accessible Customer Service. Training must be provided as soon as reasonably possible after the individual begins their role and must be relevant to their specific duties.

The City will maintain records of all accessibility training, including the dates the training was completed and the names of participants.

#### 5.4.1 Training Requirements

All accessibility training will include:

- a) An overview of the general requirements of the **AODA**, **IASR** and related City policies.
- b) Relevant requirements of the **AODA** Standards under the **Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR)**, tailored to the individual's duties.
- c) **The Ontario Human Rights Code**, as it relates to persons with disabilities.
- d) Accessible Customer Service principles and practices.

#### 5.4.2 Role-Specific Training

In addition to 5.4.1, employees will receive training in specific accessibility standards relevant to their responsibilities:

- a) Information and Communications Standards – for employees who communicate with, provide information to, or receive information from others, particularly with the public.
- b) Employment Standards – mandatory for all employees particularly those involved in any aspect of the employment cycle, including recruitment, hiring, retention, and separation.

- c) Transportation Standards – for employees providing conventional or specialized transportation services, as well as those licensing taxicabs or operating ferries.
- d) Design of Public Spaces Standards – for employees involved in constructing or modifying public spaces.

Training may also include instruction on the proper use and maintenance of assistive devices available at specific locations such as hearing loop systems installed at service counters.

The City is committed to providing ongoing training to ensure all employees remain informed of updates or changes to this Policy and accessibility requirements.

## **6.0 Accessibility Commitments**

### **6.1 Customer Service**

The City will make reasonable efforts to ensure the following:

- a) Services will be provided in a way that respects the dignity, independence, and equality of all residents, including people with disabilities.
- b) All goods and services shall be provided to people with disabilities, and others, in an integrated manner, unless alternate measures are required. Either on a temporary or permanent basis, to ensure that a person with a disability can access, use, or benefit from those goods and services.
- c) People with disabilities are given an opportunity equal to that given to others, to obtain, use and benefit from the goods and services. (Equal opportunity may require individual accommodation in addition to this policy.)
- d) Customer service representatives will be trained on how to use the equipment or assistive devices available on City premises of which they work that may help with the provision of the goods or services to people with disabilities.
- e) Customer service representatives will offer available assistive devices, services, or alternate service methods if, It is readily apparent that a person would benefit from the device or service; or the service is needed as an alternative to a person's assistive device.
- f) Temporary interruptions of services or facilities will be communicated in advance where possible, including:
  - i. Reason for disruption
  - ii. Expected duration.
  - iii. Alternative accessible options

### **6.2 Support Persons**

- a) A person with a disability and their support person is permitted to enter any area where City goods or services are offered. Customer service representatives will permit the support person to remain with the person with a disability throughout the entire duration of obtaining, using, or benefiting from City goods or services.
- b) Individuals with disabilities may be accompanied by a support person who provides communication, personal care, mobility, emotional, or medical assistance. When a support person is present, staff will take their lead from the individual to understand roles and may ask respectfully if clarification is needed. The individual with the disability is always regarded as the customer, and staff must speak directly to the customer, not the support person.
- c) Support persons are required to adhere to the same rules and demonstrate appropriate behaviour, as are all other persons receiving City goods or services.
- d) The City will provide notice in advance about what admission fee will be charged for support persons, if applicable.
- e) When a customer service representative must discuss confidential information with a person who is accompanied by a support person, the customer service representative will ask the person with a disability whether the support person may remain present.
- f) The City may require that a person with a disability be accompanied by a support person when such accompaniment is necessary to ensure the health or safety of the individual or the health or safety of others. This requirement will only be imposed when no other reasonable measures are sufficient to address the identified risks.

### **6.3 Service Animals**

- a) Service animals are permitted in all City owned or operated facilities, where the public is allowed. The person requiring the Service Animal may keep it with them unless it is otherwise excluded by law.
- b) Service animals are readily identifiable working animals and are not considered pets; therefore, they must not be treated as such. When a person accompanied by a service animal seeks City goods or services, staff must refrain from touching, making eye contact with, speaking to, feeding, or otherwise giving any form of attention to the animal, ensuring the animal can perform its essential duties without distraction.
- c) A Person with a disability with a Service Animal is responsible for the control of that animal at all times. As well they must comply with all applicable legislation.
- d) 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.
- e) Handlers assume all liabilities, including costs related to damage, legal proceedings, and animal care due to non-compliance with the policy.
- f) If conflict surrounding a Service Animal arises on City owned or operated grounds, employees will attempt to balance the needs of all persons involved by

following conflict resolution strategies. These strategies will include collecting appropriate information from all persons involved and observing the rights of all individuals according to the Human Rights Code and the Canadian Human Rights Act.

Emotional Support Animals do not have the same automatic access rights as Service Animals under Ontario accessibility legislation. Individuals bringing an Emotional Support Animal onto City property may be required to provide documentation from a regulated health professional confirming the disability-related need for the animal. Requests will be considered in accordance with the City's duty to accommodate under the Ontario Human Rights Code. The City may restrict access where appropriate documentation is not provided or where the presence of the animal would pose undue hardship such as health, safety, or operational concerns.

#### **6.4. Information and Communication**

- a) Public documents, reports, and communications will be made available in accessible formats upon request. 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.
- b) The City will not charge a cost that is more than the regular cost charged to other persons for information, if applicable.
- c) People with disabilities are welcome to use assistive devices while accessing services and facilities.
- d) If an assistive device presents a safety concern, the City will work with the individual with a disability to identify and provide appropriate alternative accommodation.

#### **6.5 Employment & Accommodation**

As an Employer, the City will make every reasonable effort to accommodate both employees and position applicants with disabilities in a way which respects their dignity, is equitable and which enhances their ability to compete for positions, perform their work and fully participate in employment at the City, unless doing so would cause undue hardship on the employer. As such, the City will:

- a) Notify applicants at all stages of recruitment and selection that accommodation is available upon request and the City will consult with applicants to meet individual accessibility needs.
- b) Provide reasonable accommodation for applicants and employees with disabilities upon request or when becoming aware of the need. This includes informing applicants and employees of available support at all stages of employment.
- c) Inform all new employees of available accommodation support as soon as practical after starting employment.
- d) Develop and maintain a formal, documented process for individual accommodation plans for employees with disabilities. These plans will outline required

accommodations, accessible formats, communication supports, and individualized workplace emergency response information, and will be reviewed and updated as needed.

- e) Provide job-related information, policies, and workplace documentation in accessible formats upon request.
- f) Where individualized emergency response information is required and the need is known, the City will provide this information to the employee and, with their consent, to designated assistants. Emergency response plans will be reviewed whenever the employee relocates within the workplace or when their accommodation needs or plans change.
- g) Accessibility needs will be incorporated into hiring, onboarding, performance management, and redeployment processes, ensuring that all employment-related practices are barrier-free and responsive to accommodation requirements.
- h) Establish and maintain a documented return-to-work process for employees returning from disability-related leaves. This process will outline the steps the City will take to support a safe and timely return, including identifying and implementing required accommodations in consultation with the employee.
- i) Ensure that accessibility needs and individual accommodation plans are considered in all career development, performance management, redeployment and relocation processes to support equitable opportunities for employees with disabilities.

## **6.6 Design of Public Spaces**

The City will endeavour to provide barrier-free access across the community and within all City facilities. All new or extensively renovated public spaces will include accessibility features that meet or exceed legislative requirements to ensure equitable access with integration as the goal.

## **6.7 Accessibility Plan**

The City of Peterborough has established a Multi-Year Accessibility Plan to support the identification, prevention, and removal of barriers. The Plan provides a long-term roadmap that directs accessibility initiatives from year to year. The Multi-Year Accessibility Plan will be updated every five years and shared publicly on the City's website. Annual progress updates will also be posted to ensure the City is advancing its stated goals. The accessibility plan can be found on the [City's Accessibility webpage](#).

## **6.8 Notice of Service Disruption**

In the event there is a temporary service disruption in the availability of facilities, services or goods used by persons with disabilities. The City shall give notice to the public of the reason for the disruption, its anticipated duration, and a description of alternative facilities or services, if any, are available. Such notices are provided by a variety of methods, depending on the

circumstances. They may include postings in conspicuous places at the affected premises, in other City facilities, and on the City's website.

## 6.9 Transportation Standards

Transit information related to accessibility of equipment, vehicles, routes, and services will be made available to the public via the City of Peterborough website and on request in accessible formats. All requirements of the Transportation Standard outlined in the **Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR)** will be adhered to.

## 7.0 Feedback and Contact Information

7.1 Requests for accessible formats can be submitted via:

**Email:** [cityptbo@peterborough.ca](mailto:cityptbo@peterborough.ca)

**Phone:** 705-742-7777

**Mail/In Person:** 500 George St. N, Peterborough ON. K9H 3R9

Accessibility concerns or feedback can be submitted to the website at the following link: [Report an Accessibility Concern](#) Or by any means listed above.

For more information about this policy, or questions regarding accessibility in the City of Peterborough, please contact:

Program Manager, Accessibility Standards, and Integration

500 George St, N. Peterborough ON. K9H 3R9

**Phone:** 705-742-7777 ext. 1630

**Email:** [accessibility@peterborough.ca](mailto:accessibility@peterborough.ca)

## 8.0 Appendix, Related Documents & Links

Note: All references refer to the current version, as may be amended from time to time.

### 8.1 Pertinent Resources:

- [City of Peterborough's Accessibility Page](#)
- [Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005](#)
- [Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001](#)
- [Accessibility Standards for Customer Service \(Ontario Regulation 429/07\)](#)
- [City of Peterborough's Multi Year Accessibility Plan](#)

### 8.2 Related Policies:



**Corporate Accessibility Policy**

- N/A

**8.3 Related Procedures:**

- Accessibility Training Procedure
- Assistive Devices and Services Procedure
- Communicating with People with Disabilities Procedure
- Customer Service Feedback Procedure
- Notice and Provision of Documents in Accessible Formats Procedure
- Service Animals Procedure
- Support Persons Procedure
- Temporary Disruptions Procedure
- Integrated Accessibility Standards Information and Communication Procedure
- Integrated Accessibility Standards Employment Procedure
- Integrated Accessibility Standards Transportation Procedure
- Incorporating Accessibility when Purchasing Goods, Services and/or Facilities Procedure

**8.4 Related Forms:**

- Accessibility Report Template

**9.0 Amendments/Reviews**

Date (yyyy-mm-dd)	Section # Amended	Comments

<b>Next Review Date:</b>	<b>April 30<sup>th</sup>, 2027</b>
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