

## Access Fund Guidelines

### Updated July 10, 2013

In 1989, upon a recommendation of the Buildings Committee (a sub-committee of the Council for Persons with Disabilities), Peterborough City Council adopted a policy on Barrier-Free Access to City of Peterborough (City) owned buildings. At that time several recommendations were approved including an annual contribution of \$50,000 to a reserve fund for barrier free improvements to existing City of Peterborough buildings.

Since the commencement of the Access Fund in 1989 the sum of money placed in reserve to remove barriers at City facilities has increased from \$50,000 to \$90,000 annually. Over the years the Access Fund has been utilized to upgrade a number of City owned buildings contributing to the accessibility of our City.

In 2005, the Ontario Government passed the **Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)** to make Ontario accessible by 2025.

Accessibility standards have been created as part of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act. These standards are rules that businesses and organizations in Ontario need to follow to identify, remove and prevent barriers so that people with disabilities have more opportunities to participate in everyday life.

The Accessibility Standard for Customer Service was the first standard to become law. The next three standards – Information and Communications, Employment, and Transportation – have been combined under one regulation, the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation. This regulation is now law and the requirements currently in regulation are being phased in between 2011 and 2021. In late 2012 the Ontario Government added the Design of Public Spaces to the Integrated Standard; this Standard becomes law on January 1, 2016.

An accessibility standard for the built environment (buildings and outdoor spaces) is in development and is not yet law.

The City is dedicated to improving accessibility based on the AODA standards and therefore the following Access Fund Guidelines have been reviewed and updated to reflect the Province of Ontario's new legislation.

The Access Fund is to be utilized by the City of Peterborough to assist with:

- The cost related to **retrofits to existing City facilities** to ensure accessibility, including buildings, parks and infrastructure as required in the Ontario Building Code, the Draft Built Environment (2010), and the Design of Public Spaces as found in the Integrated Accessibility Standard

- The cost of **assistive devices to enhance communication** as per the AODA Customer Service, Employment and Information and Communication Standard
- All requests for funds must be sent to the Accessibility Coordinator and each request must be accompanied with the Access Fund Request Form
- Each request has to be reviewed by the AAC or such sub-committee as the Built Environment Committee in a timely manner
- It is the responsibility of the Accessibility Coordinator to communicate with each applicant regarding the request for funds
- At each Built Environment Committee meeting an update on the Access Fund is to be presented