City of Brandon Accessibility Plan

This is a report on the City of Brandon's 2021-2022 Accessibility Plan objectives and the measures the City has taken to identify, prevent and remove barriers. Following this report, the historical plans for 2019-2020 and 2016-2018 are provided.

Accessibility Plan for 2021-2022

Working Group Mandate:

The City of Brandon Working Group is made up of a variety of City employees. They work to provide leadership, awareness and understanding of accessibility issues throughout the organization with a view to having everyone integrate accessibility principles into every activity that the City undertakes.

The working groups that were established have developed and administered four questionnaires designed to identify accessibility issues within the City of Brandon owned and operated properties. Once the information from the questionnaires was reviewed, action plans were developed and members assumed responsibilities within the plan. Since forming, some members of the working group have left the employ of the City of Brandon. In the first quarter of 2021 and 2022, membership in the employee Working Group will be reviewed to ensure all departments are represented. The working group will then develop a project charter to clarify expectations, roles, responsibilities and timelines for the 2021-2022 Accessibility Plan.

The Accessibility Plan must include: [Act 33(3)]

- a report on the measures the City has taken to identify, prevent and remove barriers that disable people;
- the measures the City intends to take in the period covered by the plan to identify, remove and prevent barriers that disable people;
- the measures in place to ensure that the City, to determine their effect on the accessibility for persons disabled by barriers, assesses the following:
  - any proposed policies, programs, practices and services of the City;
  - any proposed enactments or by-laws that will be administered by the City; and all other information prescribed for the purpose of the Accessibility Plan.

Accessibility Standards Upcoming 2021-2022

Information and Communication Accessibility Standard

Accessibility Standards in Effect as of May 2020

Customer Service Accessibility Standard

Employment Accessibility Standard

City-wide Areas with Ongoing Initiatives Subject to an Annual Review

- Accessible Customer Service Training is included with New Hire Orientation for all City of Brandon employees. An online video

presentation of the City's training program is available for employees and volunteers who are unable to attend a session in person

- A procedure is in place to rapidly report and repair accessibility devices that are not functioning
- A procedure is in place to rapidly notify the community of any temporary barriers to facilities or programs
- A procedure is in place to ensure that all public events are announced in an accessible manner
- A procedure is in place to ensure that all public events are hosted in accessible meeting places
- A procedure is in place to ensure advance notice is provided if a support person is required to pay an admission fee
- A procedure is in place for welcoming persons with disabilities by announcing the City's active offer and by specifically including those with disabilities at all events
- Existing employees and new hires provide emergency response information to help employees with disabilities stay safe during emergencies
- Existing employees and new hires who require assistance during an emergency are asked to give their permission to share information with individuals who agree to help
- Ensure all material on the City of Brandon website is presented in an accessible format
- Institute procedures to receive and respond to feedback

City-wide Areas Requiring Action

- Confirm employee membership of the Accessibility Working Group
- Complete a project plan for signage in and around City properties with a view to improving accessibility
- Complete a project plan for parking in and around City properties with a view to improving accessibility
- Complete a project plan for washrooms in and around City properties with a view to improving accessibility. **Accessible washroom upgrades completed June 2019 at Civic Services, AR McDiarmid, City Hall, and Police Station.**
- Increase the use of adaptive technologies throughout the City

2019-2020 Accessibility Plan

Five of the 2017 - 2018 objectives have been completed and will now require annual review to ensure they are kept up-to-date. The Accessibility Working Group will develop the process to complete annual reviews. Two of the 2017 - 2018 objectives have been developed and are ready to be implemented in 2019. Three of the 2017 - 2018 objectives require additional detailed work and will be focused on in 2019. These include the Signage Objective, Parking Objective and Accessible Washroom Objective. The City of Brandon Accessibility Working Group continues to await direction regarding the next regulation to be issued and is prepared to design appropriate objectives to meet its requirements.

Employee Training Objective:

To have all City of Brandon employees trained to a level of awareness about accessibility issues so that they can provide good customer service in all situations.

This objective has been completed and is subject to annual review for effectiveness and opportunities for improvement.

Reviewing Accessibility Issues Objective:

To have an ongoing and sustainable program that will review accessibility issues in existing and proposed City facilities, properties, programs, practices and services.

This objective was implemented January 1, 2019.

Accessible Information Objective:

To have all material on the City of Brandon website in a format that is accessible.

This objective is scheduled to be completed in 2019 as part of the City of Brandon website re-development.

- Complete a review of material on the City website with a view to improving accessibility
- Assess the current state of accessible material on the City's website
- Identify historical documents that are not saved appropriately
- Where possible and practical, update material to an accessible format
- Where not possible and practical, add an accessible statement that informs the user that this document is available in alternate format upon request
- Provide a report to the Accessibility Coordinator on a quarterly basis (March, June, September, December)
- Improve the accessibility of the website in conjunction with developments in technology

Documentation Objective:

To have all City of Brandon Accessibility Plan activities documented on the City website.

This objective has been completed and is subject to annual review for effectiveness and opportunities for improvement.

Accessibility Feedback Objective:

Institute procedures to receive and respond to feedback.

This objective has been completed and is subject to annual review for effectiveness and opportunities for improvement.

Accessibility Devices Objective:

To have all City owned accessibility devices functional.

This objective has been completed and is subject to annual review for effectiveness and opportunities for improvement.

Public Events Objective:

To have all City of Brandon events held in accessible spaces.

This objective has been completed and is subject to annual review for effectiveness and opportunities for improvement.

The following objective is ongoing:

Signage Objective:

To have accessible signage at all City of Brandon owned properties where the public is expected to attend.

- Complete a review of signage in and around City properties with a view to improving accessibility
- Develop a list of all City buildings and park facilities where signage should be located

- Using CSA Standard B651-12, *Accessible Design for the built environment,* assess the current state of signage at City buildings and park facilities (by March 2017)
- Develop a strategic plan to upgrade signage
- Prioritize the order in which City owned properties should have updated signage
- Develop a schedule of updating signage
- Provision of a report to the Accessibility Coordinator on a quarterly basis (March, June, September, December) on signage completed

The following objective is ongoing:

Parking Objective:

To have accessible parking at all City of Brandon owned properties where the public is expected to attend

- Complete a review of parking at City properties with a view to improving accessibility
- Develop a list of all City buildings and park facilities where public parking is available
- Using CSA Standard B651-12, *Accessible Design for the built environment,* assess the current state of designated parking spots at (by March 2017)
- Develop a strategic plan to upgrade public parking to include designated parking spots
- Determine what alterations are feasible in 2019 and 2020
- Where required note longer time frame for specific locations
- Develop a schedule of alterations

- Provision of a report to the Accessibility Coordinator on a quarterly basis (March, June, September, December) on completed alterations

The following objective is ongoing:

Accessible Washrooms Objective:

To have all City of Brandon public washrooms accessible

- Complete a review of City owned public washrooms with a view to making accessibility improvements wherever possible
- Using CSA Standard B651-12, *Accessible Design for the built environment,* assess the current state of public washrooms in City buildings and park facilities
- Develop a strategic plan to upgrade public washrooms short term – work will be completed by December 2019
- Determine what alterations are feasible in 2019 and 2020 (by April 2019)
- Develop a schedule of alterations
- Provision of a report to the Accessibility Coordinator on a quarterly basis (March, June, September, December) on completed alterations
- Develop a strategic plan to upgrade public washrooms long term – work will be completed after December 2018
- Write a policy statement that will ensure that any future building alterations, improvements or renovations consider the provision of at least one universal washroom according to CSA Standard B651-12, *Accessible Design for the built environment*

Summary

1. Working group membership confirmation

2. Develop working group roles, responsibilities and mandate for 2019 - 2020

3. Develop goals and objectives related to the legislated AMA Standards as released

4. Monitor organizational performance in the accessible customer service objectives

5. Develop strategic plans related to long-term goals (i.e. upgrade public washrooms, public parking, and signage)

2016-2018 Accessibility Plan

1. Employee Training Objective

Working Group Members leading this objective

Sandra Wallace, Dean Hammond

Employee Training Objective:

To have all City of Brandon employees trained to a level of awareness about accessibility issues so that they can provide good customer service in all cases. The City of Brandon Employee Accessibility Training program will be required for all personnel (by March 30, 2017).

Members of the Accessibility Working Group developed a three (3) hour Accessible Customer Service Training Program for City of Brandon employees. The program was presented to members of the Accessibility Sub-committee for feedback and recommendations. Members of the City's Accessibility Working Group then delivered the program. In 2017, 52 of these sessions were held, providing training for 592 employees. While the number of active employees fluctuates, on average, 94% of active City employees have received the Accessible Customer Service Training (currently 98% of permanent employees and 68% of temporary). Effective January 2018, the new employee orientation program includes a condensed version of the Accessible Customer Service Training. Finally, a 35-minute video of the City's training program was recorded and made available through SafetyHub, an online training delivery platform, for employees who were not able to schedule an in-person session.

As of November 1st, 2018, an additional 136 employees have received the City of Brandon's Accessible Customer Service Training. The City's 2017 average monthly employee count was 555 persons with an average monthly turnover rate of .6%. The training sessions include:

- Review of the City of Brandon Accessibility Plan
- Awareness of accessibility issues; the facilitated sessions included practical exercises to experience a mobility (arm/hand), hearing and visual disability
- Review of Manitoba Human Rights Code
- Removing barriers
- Not establishing new barriers
- Welcoming service animals
- Welcoming support persons
- List of resources/contacts
- Reinforcing the philosophy of problem solving when encountering unexpected barriers and making it work
- Preparing material to be posted to the City website
- Working with non-English speakers
- Rights of Provincial inspectors as outlined in legislation
- Entry to all areas
- Assistance provided to the inspector
- Information made available
- Allowing the inspector to make copies of records
- Providing written answers when requested
- Reviewing employee action required upon receiving a written order
- Receiving and responding to feedback

- Holding accessible public events/programs

In addition, an Employee Guide to Ensuring Accessible Customer Service was printed and provided for the training sessions. Each employee also receives a laminated tip card for reference. These and other resources are available to all employees electronically on the City of Brandon's website, Intranet, and Employee Self-Service Portal.

2. Reviewing Accessibility Issues Objective

Working Group Members leading this objective
Sandra Wallace, Tracey Averill

<u>Reviewing Accessibility Issues Objective:</u>
To have an ongoing and sustainable program that will review accessibility issues in existing and proposed City facilities, properties, programs, practices and services.

The City of Brandon utilizes the software program CityWorks for communicating and tracking operational issues and concerns. Andrew Wilson, system administrator, has programmed the software to include Accessibility as a category. The software is widely used by the Operational Services Division and City Enquiry service, and has been available to designated employees as contact persons in the remaining City facilities. Software training has been provided to these employees and the system is scheduled to be live effective January 1, 2019. The CityWorks Accessibility procedures will:

- Identify existing barriers

- Record the type of barrier

- Record the location of barrier

- Record any actions completed to remove the barrier

- Remove existing barriers when possible

- Record procedures to provide the service when removing barriers is not possible

3. Accessible Information Objective

Working Group Members leading this objective
Jeff Green

<u>Accessible Information Objective:</u>
To have all material on the City of Brandon website in a format that is accessible.

The review of material on the City website with a view to improving accessibility is ongoing, with a complete redevelopment of the website planned for 2019. Web designers are completing a full audit as part of the redevelopment process.

- Access to website information is included in the Employee Accessible Customer Service training program; the procedure is available on the City of Brandon website, Intranet, and Employee Self-service Portal

- All material added to the website in the past two years is accessible or has an active offer for alternate format availability

- The 2019 website redevelopment includes identifying historical documents that are not saved appropriately
- Where possible and practical, updating material to an accessible format is ongoing
- Where not possible and practical, an accessibility statement that informs the user that this document is available in alternate format upon request will be added
- The process to ensure all new material added to the web-site is accessible is included with the Accessible Customer Service training and the procedure is available on the City of Brandon website, Intranet, and Employee Self-service Portal
- The process to ensure that, when requested, non-accessible material will be provided in an alternate format that is accessible to the person requesting it is included with the CityWorks Accessibility application and will be in operation effective January 1, 2019
- Improvements to the accessibility of the website are included in the 2019 redevelopment project. A report from the BrowseAloud software has been requested to analyse the functions currently being used to access the website

4. Documentation Objective

Working Group Members leading this objective
Kelly Main

Documentation Objective:

To have all City of Brandon Accessibility Plan activities documented on the City website.

A procedure to document accessibility activities undertaken by the City of Brandon was developed. This procedure is included in the Employee Accessible Customer Service training program and is available on the City of Brandon website, Intranet, and Employee Self-service Portal. These are available on the City of Brandon website under Accessibility/Accessibility Resources and include:

- Employee Guide to Ensuring Accessible Customer Service
- Procedure – Accessibility Devices
- Procedure – Documents
- Procedure – Feedback
- Procedure – Identifying Barriers
- Procedure – List of Manitoba Accommodation Service Providers
- Procedure – Public Events
- Procedure – Terminology Guide
- Saving a Power-Point presentation as an Accessible PDF
- Saving a Publisher File as an Accessible PDF
- Saving a Word Document as an Accessible PDF
- Saving an Excel Workbook as an Accessible PDF
- Serving Customers with Mental Health Disabilities
- Minutes of Accessibility Working Groups: Both agendas and minutes are available on the City of Brandon website under Accessibility/Accessibility Working Group

- A summary of employee accessibility training: Available on the City of Brandon website under Accessibility/Employee Education, this includes an Accessible Customer Service Training Report, Accessible Customer Service Training Curriculum, and Employee Training Presentation.
- Accessibility Policy: Available on the City of Brandon website under Accessibility

5. Accessibility Feedback Objective

Working Group Members leading this objective

Debbie Nelson

<u>Accessibility Feedback Objective:</u>

Institute procedures to receive and respond to feedback.

The procedure regarding receiving and responding to feedback is included in the Employee Accessible Customer Service training program and is available on the City of Brandon website, Intranet, and Employee Self-service Portal. This objective is designed to:

- Encourage feedback from the public
- Advertise the City of Brandon feedback process
- Advertise that information is available in other formats, on request
- Outline how to respond to complaints

6. Accessibility Devices Objective

Working Group Members leading this objective

Tracey Averill

<u>Accessibility Devices Objective:</u>

To have all City owned accessibility devices functional.

This objective is designed to ensure all City owned accessibility devices are functional, and if not, that the public is informed. This includes:

- Rapid report and repair of accessibility devices that are not functioning
- Rapid notification to the community of any temporary barriers to facilities or programs
- Ensuring alternate accommodations are available when accessibility devices are not functioning

The guideline regarding accessibility devices is included in the Employee Accessible Customer Service training program and is available on the City of Brandon website, Intranet, and Employee Self-service Portal. The process for reporting and monitoring the City's response to such issues is included in the CityWorks System described earlier in Objective 2: Reviewing Accessibility Issues Objective.

7. Public Events Objective

Working Group Members leading this objective

Jeff Elliott, Jennifer Houlihan (volunteered to assist)

<u>Public Events Objective:</u>

To have all City of Brandon events held in accessible spaces.

The procedure guideline regarding public events is included in the Employee Accessible Customer Service training program and is available on the City of Brandon website, Intranet, and Employee Self-service Portal. It is a process to ensure all events are held in accessible spaces, and to ensure:

- All public events are announced in an accessible manner
- The welcoming of persons with disabilities by announcing the City's provision of special accommodations and by specifically including those with disabilities at all events
- Advance notice is provided if a support person is to pay an admission fee
- All public events are hosted in accessible meeting places
- A guide or checklist is developed that people can use to assess the meeting space
- Pre-inspection of meeting places to identify and correct accessibility issues

8. Signage Objective

Working Group Members leading this objective
Brian Ursel, Andrew Mok, Tyson Fisher, Mike Messel

Signage Objective:
To have accessible signage at all City of Brandon owned properties where the public is expected to attend.

In consultation with Accessibility Sub-Committee members, a review of signage in and around City properties was completed with a view to improving accessibility. This included:

- Accessibility signage requirements for entrances, washrooms, emergency doors or exits, identification of floors on handrails, elevators and floor directors for City Hall, the Airport, the Sportsplex, A.R. McDiarmid, Civic Services, Brandon Police Service, Fire Hall #1, the Parks complex, and the Cemetery. A total of 76 signs have been identified and are scheduled to be installed in 2019

- A Public Works team, in consultation with community advisor from CNIB, has identified signage needs for A.R. McDiarmid Civic Complex; production options have been reviewed; project completion is scheduled for 2019, pending funding

- Parks Operations has replaced 40 signs at outdoor recreational facilities; more are built and waiting installation

- See 2019 - 2020 Accessibility Plan

9. Parking Objective

Working Group Members leading this objective

Brian Ursel, Andrew Mok, Tyson Fisher, Mike Messel

<u>Parking Objective:</u>

To have accessible parking at all City of Brandon owned properties where the public is expected to attend.

Using CSA Standard B651-12, Accessible Design for the built environment, the City's Accessibility Working Group conducted audits to assess the current state of designated parking spots. This included all City buildings and park facilities where public parking is available and was completed with the 2016 Audit:

- City Hall (December 9, 2016), Brandon Police Service (March 3, 2017), and Fire Hall #1 (March 24, 2017)
- Alterations have been completed at the Brandon Municipal Airport (July 2017)
- See 2019 - 2020 Accessibility Plan

10. Accessible Washrooms Objective

Working Group Members leading this objective

Brian Ursel, Andrew Mok, Tyson Fisher, Mike Messel

Accessible Washrooms Objective:

To have all City of Brandon public washrooms accessible.

Using CSA Standard B651-12, Accessible Design for the built environment, the City's Accessibility Working Group conducted audits to assess the current state of public washrooms. This was completed for:

- City Hall (December 9, 2016), Brandon Police Service (March 3, 2017), and Fire Hall #1 (March 24, 2017)
- As part of the Enabling Accessibility in Workplaces and Communities grant, the City reviewed City owned public washrooms with a view to making accessibility improvements and is currently updating seven public

washrooms and six employee washrooms. Included is the installation of 23 automatic door openers to provide access to buildings and washrooms
- The Brandon Municipal Airport expansion and renovations completed July 2017 included accessible design for the public washrooms
- See 2019 - 2020 Accessibility Plan