City of Brandon Accessibility Plan 2025-2026

Acknowledgement:

We acknowledge that the City of Brandon sits on the original unceded territory of the Dakota Sioux, Treaty 2 and the Homelands of the Métis Nation.

The City of Brandon is committed to a renewed relationship and dialogue with First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples based on the principles of mutual trust, respect, and reciprocity. We respect the Treaties that were made on these territories, we acknowledge the harms and mistakes of the past, and we dedicate ourselves to move forward in partnership with Indigenous communities and peoples in a spirit of reconciliation and collaboration.

Contact Information:

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City of Brandon Accessibility Working Group

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City of Brandon Accessibility Advisory Group

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This publication is available in alternative formats upon request.

Message from Mayor Fawcett:

The City of Brandon is committed to having a City where everyone will experience the best possible quality of life. This means that each person who wants it will have full access to all of the services, information and facilities that we provide.

I am honored to serve as a Champion of the improvements that our Accessibility Working Groups are formulating in this Accessibility Plan. This work demonstrates our commitment to ensure that people who are impacted by barriers will be able to receive the same access to service as every resident of Brandon.

Overview of the City of Brandon:

The City of Brandon's population in the 2021 Census was 51,313. Brandon's growth continues to demonstrate the opportunities available for individuals, families, and businesses to grow and succeed. The City of Brandon is a diverse, multicultural city, with a landmass of approximately 79.04 square kilometers and an estimated trading population of 190,000.

The City of Brandon serves people of all ages, abilities, and backgrounds. Our client base consists of citizens, visitors and employees that work within our buildings, facilities and properties. At the City of Brandon, we believe it is everyone's responsibility to make this a great place to work. We strive to create a positive and productive environment, taking measures to avoid acting in ways that are detrimental to other team members.

Everyone is expected to contribute to a positive environment with a sense of humor, support for co-workers, and having fun while working hard – always conducting ourselves in a professional manner. We welcome feedback about ways to improve our methods or systems. Employees are often in a unique position to see things from a different perspective than supervisors or peers. We welcome insight!

> **Our Vision:** The City of Brandon is a welcoming, diverse municipal corporation that empowers, trusts, and supports each other in a healthy environment.
>
> **Our Mission: T**he City of Brandon's mission is to improve safety, health, economic security, and quality of life in our community.
>
> **Our Values:** The City of Brandon values all employees who provide service with PRIDE
>
> **Our Slogan:** Serving & Building Community with PRIDE
>
> **P**rofessionalism   **R**espect   **I**ntegrity   **D**iversity   **E**xcellence

Background on Accessibility:

The Human Rights Code – the Human Rights Code is a law passed by the Manitoba legislature and applies only in Manitoba. It deals only with the right to be free from discrimination. The Human Rights Code applies to any individual, organization, business or government body, if they engage in discrimination or harassment in one of the areas covered by The Code.

The Accessibility for Manitobans Act – on December 5, 2013, the Province of Manitoba enacted The Accessibility for Manitobans Act. This act deals with measures necessary to ensure all City services are accessible to everyone who might want or is required to use them. It also specifically reinforces the obligation to make reasonable accommodations as dictated by The Human Rights Code. This Act and the Human Rights Code work together to ensure accessibility for all Manitobans. Under The Accessibility for Manitobans Act, the Manitoba government has developed mandatory accessibility standard regulations. Removing barriers to accessibility gives all Manitobans the opportunity to participate fully in everyday life and the access and benefit from a system, service, product or environment.

Accessibility Standards – the Accessibility for Manitobans Act requires that accessibility standards to be developed over several years. Each of the standards was adopted as a provincial regulation and applied to common public areas.

The standards are as follows:

- [Customer Service Standard](#) (enacted November 1, 2015)
- [Employment Standard](#) (enacted on May 1, 2019)
- [Information and Communication](#) (enacted on May 1, 2022)
- [Transportation](#) (will come into effect January 1, 2027)
- [Built Environment/Design of Outdoor Public Spaces](#) (date to be determined)

The first standard, the Customer Service Standard, has been adopted and was in place in City of Brandon facilities and properties on November 1, 2017. Accessible customer service is provided when all persons who are reasonably expected to seek to obtain, use or benefit from a good or service have the same opportunity to do so.

The second standard, the Accessible Employment Standard, has been adopted and was in place in the City of Brandon on May 1, 2022. All existing employees and new hires provide emergency response information to help employees with disabilities stay safe during emergencies. Employees who require assistance during an emergency have been asked to give their permission to share information with individuals who agree to help. Training on the employer's Duty to Accommodate is provided to managers on a regular basis, and an

Early and Safe Return to Work policy has been implemented. All City of Brandon employment postings and hiring practices comply with the requirements identified in the Accessible Employment Standard.

The third standard, the Information and Communication Standard, has been adopted and was in place in the City of Brandon as of May 1, 2023. All City websites are compliant and any updated information is audited to ensure compliance. The city provides training on accessibility requirements to all employees, agents, volunteers and any person who develops or maintains our web content, purchases or procures information technology or communication tools, develops or implements our accessible information and communication policies and practices, or provides information to the public or to other organizations in Manitoba, on an as-needed basis. In addition, the Information, Technology, and Communications department regularly audits this content to ensure those creating it understand and implement the accessibility requirements.

The Accessible Transportation Standard has been developed and is in place to help conventional and paratransit service providers, schools, vehicles-for-hire and municipalities create a system of transportation that is more inclusive for all Manitobans, regardless of abilities. The City of Brandon is working to implement measures, policies and practices on accessible transportation to meet the implementation deadline of January 1, 2027, with the exception of existing transit buses.

Accessibility Barriers:

The City of Brandon has identified and removed barriers for people across a full range of disabilities including (but not limited to) physical, vision, hearing, mental health, brain injuries, medical, psychiatric, speech and language, developmental and learning disabilities. Some barriers to customer service include:

- **Attitudinal:** This barrier limits opportunities available to people with disabilities by stereotypes or incorrect assumptions. It includes treating people with disabilities differently. For example, assuming a person with a disability will not be able to understand, so the service provider speaks to the support person. Another example is thinking that a person with an intellectual or mental health disability cannot make decisions.
- **Physical:** Certain features of buildings or spaces create barriers that cause problems or prevent access for people with disabilities. Examples include doorknobs that can not be turned, narrow aisleways or stairs as the only means of access.
- **Communication:** Some barriers make it difficult to receive or understand information available. This can include inadequate or incomprehensible signage, small text on forms and inaccessible web sites.

- **Systemic:** These are barriers where rules, regulations and protocols restrict public participation or discriminate against those with disabilities. For example, a hiring process that is not open to people with disabilities.
- **Technological:** Software and hardware components that have inadequate assistive technologies create barriers. For example, documents on websites that cannot be accessed by people using screen-reading software.

Statement of Commitment:

The City of Brandon is committed to ensuring equal access and participation for all people, regardless of their backgrounds, abilities, identities and experiences. We are committed to treating all people in a way that allows them to maintain dignity and independence. We believe in inclusion and are committed to meeting the needs of people who face accessibility barriers by identifying, removing and preventing these barriers and meeting the requirements of The Accessibility for Manitobans Act.

Purpose of this Plan:

This plan communicates the City's commitment to ensuring inclusive access and participation within the City's facilities, programs and services and realm of influence for all people who live, work or visit our City. It provides an overview of the policies, procedures and efforts intended to deliver on this commitment and defines a plan of action to continue to address barriers that may restrict people in policies, procedures and practices.

While this plan addresses a legislated requirement, the City also recognizes the opportunity to openly communicate the scope of the City's commitment and ongoing efforts towards universal access within the community, and to support ongoing discussion and collaboration with stakeholders towards ongoing improvements.

The City of Brandon Accessibility Plan will report on measures the City has taken to identify, prevent and remove barriers related to the City's ability to provide customer service. The plan includes processes that ensure that proposed policies, programs, practices, enactments or by-laws do not create new barriers that disable people.

Background on the City of Brandon's Accessibility Plan:

Early in 2016, the City of Brandon designated an Accessibility Coordinator, formed an Accessibility Working Group made up of City employees, formed an Accessibility Advisory Group made up of clients, customers and residents, announced the Mayor and City Manager as Champions of our program, and set about to develop the City of Brandon's Accessibility Plan.

Roles and Responsibilities:

Accessibility Coordinator – the City of Brandon appointed an Accessibility Coordinator who, with the Accessibility Working Group, is responsible for ensuring the City complies with The Accessibility for Manitobans Act.

Accessibility Working Group – the Accessibility Working Group was created by a variety City of Brandon employees from all departments and locations who have a shared interest in accessibility and whose work aligns with Accessibility Standards. They are responsible to:

- Develop and update the City's Accessibility Plan
- Participate in reviewing accessibility issues for existing and proposed City facilities, properties, policies, programs, practices and services
- Provide leadership, awareness and understanding of accessibility issues throughout the organization
- Participate in developing and conducting accessibility audits
- Participate in developing, coordinating and providing training and information sessions
- Positively represent the committee, its work and accessibility issues
- Post meeting agendas and notes from Accessibility Working Group meetings and other information at www.brandon.ca

Accessibility Advisory Group – the Accessibility Advisory Group is made up of representatives from the disability community within Brandon who are subject-matter experts. Their role is to identify accessibility issues and provide awareness and consultation to the Accessibility Working Group. The Advisory Group is chaired by an Accessibility Champion.

Terms of Reference for the City of Brandon Accessibility Working Group and Accessibility Advisory Group:

Purpose – the Accessibility Working Group will provide leadership, awareness and understanding of accessibility issues throughout the organization with a view of having everyone integrate accessibility principles into every activity that the City undertakes.

Authority – the City Manager will authorize, encourage and expect the working group to take a leadership role in accessibility issues for the City.

Membership – each City department will appoint at least one employee who:

- Has a good working knowledge of the department
- Has an interest in being a part of the group

- May have some life experience with a disability
- Is available to participate as part of the Accessibility Working Group

Officers – an Accessibility Coordinator and two Co-chairs will be selected by the Accessibility Working Group. In addition to membership responsibilities, Officers will have the following responsibilities:

- The Accessibility Coordinator will ensure that the city Complies with The Accessibility for Manitobans Act
- Co-Chairs will guide the Accessibility Working Group in reviewing and updating the Accessibility Plan and provide learning opportunities within the City

It is preferred that Officers and Working Group members serve a term of two years.

Advisory Group – an Accessibility Advisory Group will provide consultation to the Accessibility Working Group by:

- Reviewing and providing comment on the plan, properties, policies, programs, practices and services
- Identifying accessibility priorities
- Identifying current issues and events
- Positively representing the committee and its work

Meeting Frequency – the Accessibility Working Group will meet quarterly. The Accessibility Advisory Group will determine their meeting frequency based on their needs.

Minutes Distribution – minutes will be distributed within seven days of meeting to interested people and to the City's website.

Review – the Terms of Reference will be reviewed and approved by the membership annually.

Accessibility Working Group – September, 2024		
Employee Name	**Department**	**Title**
Lola Oyeladun	Human Resources	Director/Accessibility Coordinator
Jennifer Anderson	Human Resources	Safety & Health Coordinator/Accessibility Co-chair
Azeem Siddiqui	Human Resources	Corporate HR Officer/Accessibility Co-chair
Marc Chapin	Engineering	Manager of Land Development
Robert Stewart	Public-Safety Communications	Director
Deb Day	Economic Development	Admin
Pam Richardson	Public Works	Director
Matthew Stie	Finance	Accounting Manager
Cory Parrott	Brandon Fire & Emergency Services	Training Officer
Colin Craig	Innovation, Technology & Communications	Manager of IT - Project Management & Application Support
Shelby Cook	Innovation, Technology & Communications	Web & Multimedia Designer
Merrilea Metcalf	Innovation, Technology & Communications	Corporate Communications Officer
Emmanuel Owusu Ansah	Planning & Buildings	Community Planner
Katey Rogowsky	Recreation	Recreation Hub Programmer North
Peter Roberts	Transit	Transit Trainer
Jojo Fermin	Finance	Grant Writer
Tiffany Stokes	Legislative Services	Manager of Legal Services

Advisory Group – November, 2024	
Name	**Title**
Jeff Fawcett	Mayor, City of Brandon/Champion
Terry Parlow	Acting City Manager and Chief of Emergency Services/Champion
Diane Kokorudz	Manager Health Services – Home Care – Central, Prairie Mountain Health
Theresa Gibbons	Community Champion (resident)
Michelle Magnusson	Student Accessibility Services Coordinator – Brandon University
Bev Leckie	Community Champion (resident)
Terri Silvius Antoniw	Community Champion (resident)
Vivi Dabee	CNIB

Achievements and Continuing Efforts:

This section provides an update on the steps taken and measures put in place to assess and adjust our policies, facilities, programs, services, and practices. It also identifies areas where ongoing effort and new actions will continue to prevent, remove and avoid barriers.

A. CUSTOMER SERVICE STANDARD

The Accessibility Working Group created a poll to determine the baseline level of accessible customer service offered by the City of Brandon. 383 surveys were completed in the year 2017. Training of City personnel around raising their understanding of accessibility difficulties and developing ways to ensure the best possible customer service was the most frequent topic.

The implementation of accessible customer service is supported by procedures that identify accessibility issues, record actions taken to improve accessibility, solicit customer feedback, ensure City-owned accessibility devices are operational, make sure public events are accessible, and guarantee that all public information is presented in an accessible manner. Additionally, the City is considering elements of built environments on new and existing projects to further enhance customer service.

1. **Employee Training Objective** – to have all City of Brandon employees trained to a consistent level of awareness about accessibility issues so they can provide excellent customer service in all areas.

In the year 2017, the City of Brandon developed three hours of accessible customer service training for employees. 52 training sessions were conducted for 592 employees. In 2018, the City's employee orientation program incorporated a condensed version of the training. A 35-minute video of the City's training program was developed and made available through SafetyHub, an online training delivery platform, for employees who were not able to schedule an in-person session.

The training session includes:

- Review of the City of Brandon Accessibility Plan
- 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
- Allow the inspector to make copies of records
- Provide written answers when requested
- Employee action required upon receiving a written order
- Receiving and responding to feedback
- Holding accessible public events and programs

In addition, an employee guide to ensuring accessible customer service was printed and provided for the training session. Based on the request, an employee receives a laminated tip card for reference. These and other resources are available to all employees electronically on the City of Brandon's website and Intranet.

Planning ahead:

Within our 2025-2026 Accessibility Plan, we will assess the training's content to ensure that it is current with Manitoba accessibility standards and meets all legal requirements. We are going to review the training's framework and plan to divide the video contents into smaller streams with more meaningful information that is accessible to everyone. Our goal is to create an automatic statistical tracker that will give us precise information for analysis and efficiency.

2. **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.

The City of Brandon utilizes the software program CityWorks for communication and tracking operational issues and concerns. Our system administrator has programmed the software to include Accessibility as a category for maintenance or repairs. The software is widely used by the Operational Services Division and City Enquiry Service, and is available to designated employees as contact persons in City facilities. Software training has been provided to those employees.

The CityWorks Accessibility service requests include the following:

- Identify the existing barriers
- Record the type of barrier
- Location of barrier
- What has been done to remove the barrier
- Where possible, remove existing barriers
- Where not possible, have a procedure to provide the service

Planning ahead:

Reviewing accessibility concerns in current and planned City properties, programs, practices, and services is part of our ongoing sustainability initiative. We will keep identifying obstacles and document their type, location, and method of removal through proactive planning.

3. **Documentation Objective -** to have all City of Brandon accessibility plan activities documented on the city website.

The City of Brandon created a process to record its accessibility initiatives. This process is accessible via the City of Brandon's website and Intranet, and is part of the Employee Accessible Customer Service training program. These can be found under Accessibility/Accessibility Resources on the City of Brandon website.

The current documents available consist of:

- 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 PowerPoint presentation as an accessible PDF
- Saving a Publisher File as an Accessible PDF
- Saving Word Document as an Accessible PDF
- Saving an Excel Workbook as an Accessible PDF
- Serving Customers with Mental Health Disabilities

Additionally, the following information is available on the City of Brandon website:

- Minutes and agendas of the Accessibility Working Group
- A summary of employee accessibility training
- Accessibility Policy #3012

Planning ahead:

We will continue to improve by reviewing procedures and document. We will add transcriptions for audio recordings and handwritten records to improve accessibility.

Funding:

The addition of transcriptions for audio recordings and handwritten records to improve accessibility are subject to funding.

4. **Accessibility Feedback Objective** – to encourage feedback from the public, promote the City of Brandon's feedback process, communicate to residents that information is available in other formats on request, and outline how to respond to complaints.

The current procedure for receiving and responding to feedback is included in the Employee Accessible Customer Service training program and is available on the City of Brandon website and Intranet.

Planning ahead:

Continue to promote the City of Brandon's feedback process and develop an online form with adequate response mechanism.

5. **Accessibility Devices Objective** – to have all City-owned accessibility devices function properly, and inform the public when accessibility devices are out of order by:

- Reporting and repairing accessibility devices that are not functioning
- Notifying the community of any temporary barriers to facilities or programs
- Ensuring that alternate accommodations are available when accessibility devices are not functioning

The guideline for accessibility devices is included in the Employee Accessible Customer Service training program and is available on the City of Brandon website and Intranet. The process for reporting and monitoring the City's response to such issues is currently incorporated in the CityWorks system.

Planning ahead:

Review and improve the existing procedure. The procedure has not been updated since 2017. It includes outdated terminology that is no longer current with accessibility legislation or City of Brandon policies. The responsibilities are outlined, but the procedure does not provide as much specific information as it could.

Review the current mechanism to notify community members if and when there are temporary barriers to facilities or programs, and update if required (consultation with the Advisory Group).

Consult with Building Maintenance. If devices are found to be unusable or missing, determine the cost(s) of implementation and apply for funding through provincial or federal programs with the intention of collaborating with departments for planned projects or upgrades. Building Maintenance is willing to establish a preventative maintenance schedule for accessible devices.

6. **Public Events Objective** – to host public events in accessible places and welcome persons with disabilities at all events.

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 and Intranet.

The process ensures that all City of Brandon public events are:

- Held in accessible spaces
- Announced in an accessible manner
- Welcome to persons with disabilities by announcing the City's provision of special accommodations and by specifically including those with disabilities at all events
- Announced with advance notice if a support person is to pay an admission fee
- Accompanied by a guide or checklist that people can use to access the meeting space
- Hosted following a pre-inspection of meeting places to identify and correct accessibility issues

Planning ahead:

Continue to review and improve the process and make sure we hold public events in an accessible place.

Review the current guides and checklists that people can use to access meeting spaces.

7. **Signage Objective** – to ensure that accessible signage is installed at all City of Brandon properties where the public is expected to attend.

An initial assessment of signage across City properties was conducted in 2016 to review compliance with CSA accessibility standards. At that time, the City identified key areas within where signage was either non-compliant or lacking.

This resulted in strategic planning to prioritize locations most in need of accessible signage updates. Design guidelines were developed for accessible signage that included font size, contrast, and positioning for maximum visibility, as was an ongoing maintenance schedule to address wear and tear of accessible signage.

Planning ahead:

Conduct regular audits of signage within all City properties to ensure ongoing compliance with updated accessibility standards to ensure that the established maintenance schedule is being adhered to, and that updated signage reflects compliance, clarity, and visibility.

Establish a routine schedule for signage updates and compile an annual report to document compliance progress.

Possible Hurdles and Perceived Challenges:

- Budgetary limitations may impact the speed of signage upgrades
- Maintenance challenges related to wear and tear on exterior signage, requiring more frequent replacements
- Balancing accessibility improvements with aesthetic or historical preservation requirements for certain city properties
- Ensuring consistency across a large number of facilities and unique needs within each property

Funding Required:

Funding is required to support initial audits, replacements, and ongoing maintenance for accessible signage. This includes specialized equipment or contractor support for installation.

8. **Parking Objective** – to ensure accessible parking is available at all City-owned properties where the public is expected to attend, in compliance with CSA Standard B6512-18.

An initial review was conducted of parking facilities for accessibility compliance in 2016. At that time, the City identified properties that lacked accessible parking and created a prioritization plan for upgrades, and developed a phased plan for upgrades, focusing on high-use public locations first.

Accessible parking signage and markings at key locations was implemented and now all City properties have accessible parking spots.

A long-term schedule was created for parking space maintenance to ensure accessibility features remain functional. To-date, City Hall was completed December 9, 2016; Brandon Police Service on March 3, 2017; Fire Hall #1 March 24, 2017, and Brandon Municipal Airport July, 2017.

Planning ahead:

Re-assess all designated parking spots at City-owned properties using the latest CSA standards as a guide. Develop a phased plan to address upgrades first at priority locations, especially where public use is high.

Establish measurable goals for upgrading all parking facilities to meet updated accessibility standards.

Implement a maintenance schedule specifically for accessible parking spaces, ensuring upkeep of signage, markings, and other necessary elements.

Regularly monitor and evaluate progress, updating the prioritization plan as accessibility requirements evolve.

Possible Hurdles/Perceived Challenges:

- Budget limitations may restrict the ability to implement all required upgrades in a single fiscal year
- Potential difficulties ensuring compliance and proper upkeep during winter months when snow removal could obscure markings
- Constraints on parking space allocations, especially in highly populated or older areas
- Need for public awareness around accessible parking spaces to ensure proper usage and discourage misuse

Funding Required:

Funding is needed to complete the planned upgrades, maintain accessible features, and conduct audits for ongoing compliance. The budget will prioritize high-use locations and provide for phased implementation at all other city-owned properties.

9. **Accessible washroom objective** – to provide fully accessible washroom facilities at all City of Brandon properties where the public is expected to attend.

The City completed an initial review of washrooms in all city properties for accessibility compliance in 2016 and identified properties that lacked accessible washrooms and created a prioritization plan for upgrades.

As identified in the audit, upgrades to the Sportsplex Pool changerooms were completed in 2022. Larger changing stalls, changing tables, and an accessible shower head were installed as part of the upgrades.

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 seven public washrooms and six employee washrooms were planned to be developed. The plan also included the installation of 23 automatic door openers to provide access to buildings and washrooms.

The Brandon Municipal Airport expansion and renovation completed in July 2017 included accessible design for the public washrooms.

Planning ahead:

Conduct regular audits of all public washroom facilities to confirm compliance with accessibility standards.

Implement a maintenance schedule focused on accessible features, such as grab bars, automatic doors, and appropriate signage.

Review and update washroom layouts to maximize accessibility, prioritizing comfort and ease of use for all visitors.

Write a policy statement mandating that future renovations and improvements include the provision of at least one universal washroom.

Possible Hurdles/Perceived Challenges:

- Budget limitations may slow progress on updating or retrofitting existing washrooms to meet accessibility standards.

- Older facilities may require extensive renovations, which could be challenging within current infrastructure.
- High-traffic areas may require more frequent updates and maintenance, increasing associated costs.
- Ensuring accessibility standards remain consistent across facilities, especially as new standards are introduced.

Funding Required:

Funding is necessary to support the design, construction, and maintenance of accessible washroom facilities. This budget will cover initial upgrades, ongoing maintenance, and ensuring compliance with future renovations or new construction.

10. **Increase awareness and re-education objective** – to develop a mechanism to create awareness and re-education for all the employees, both in person and via virtual sessions.

Virtual meetings and events became common during the pandemic and created an opportunity for more inclusive participation, particularly for those who face barriers to transportation or within built environments. The use of virtual platforms continues to make events and meetings more broadly accessible, and attention remains on ensuring the platforms and the way they are used ensure accessibility for all.

Planning ahead:

Develop and implement training session to reinforce accessibility policies, practices, and procedures.

Identify the distinct functional needs required to facilitate the range of virtual types of events used by City staff (meetings, training sessions, large group events, etc.).

Evaluate Zoom, MS Teams, and other platforms for their abilities to accessibly facilitate required or desired activities for different types of events.

11. **Social media objective** – to create an effective process to communicate with the community through social media.

Efforts are currently made to ensure social media content follows existing best practices in accessibility.

People with disabilities need to be aware of the accessibility of City buildings, services, and programs. All community members need to know how their actions can either support accessibility within the community or create barriers.

Planning ahead:

Corporate Communications will construct a template for social media campaigns, which includes guidance on how to ensure social media posts are accessible.

Departments will make sure to follow Corporate Communication's guidance for social media campaigns.

Establish different platforms to increase public awareness.

B. EMPLOYMENT STANDARD

The City of Brandon relies on an arrangement of policies, measures, and practices to confirm and deliver on its commitment to the ongoing identification, removal, and prevention of barriers in its facilities, services, and programs.

The City includes the following disclosure on all job postings to inform candidates of the City's willingness to provide reasonable accommodations to potential candidates:

The City of Brandon is committed to an inclusive, barrier-free environment and will accommodate the needs of applicants under the Accessibility for Manitobans Act (AMA) throughout all stages of the recruitment and selection process. We thank all applicants for their interest; only those advancing in the competition will be contacted. If contacted to participate in the process, please advise if you require an accommodation.

The City of Brandon has the following policies, measures, and practices in place:

- City of Brandon Accessibility Policy #3012
- Employee Guide to Ensuring Accessible Customer Service
- Procedure for Accessibility Devices
- Discrimination Against Persons Who Use Service Animals (MHRA)
- Procedure: Documents
- Procedure: Feedback
- Procedure: Identifying Barriers
- Procedure: List of Manitoba Accommodation Service Providers
- Procedure: Public Events
- Procedure: Terminology Guide
- Saving a PowerPoint 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
- Accommodation Plan Worksheet
- Request for Medical Accommodation

- Request for Accommodation

Planning ahead:

Revision of both the Employee Accommodation Policy and Early and Safe Return to Work Policy

Train management and staff under the guidance of Human Resources about accessible employment and related legislation.

Accommodating sight loss applicants. A memorandum of understanding has been signed with CNIB to understand the process and develop framework accordingly.

Establish a framework of accommodation when recruiting an employee.

Develop a record of training summary. This does not fully exist, although some preliminary record keeping is in place.

Update procedures for workplace emergency response and emergency assistance. The City currently has emergency evacuation plans for all facilities and departments that apply to staff and visitors, and have been effect since 2015-2016. Those emergency plans are set to be reviewed and restructured in 2025. Using a template model, each facility's emergency plan will include an updated disclaimer for employees who require accessibility during an emergency. This will be part of initial training and orientation, as well as ongoing reviews. Any barriers that are identified through the training and review process will be considered for subsequent projects.

C. INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION STANDARD

1. **Web Applications:**

In 2021, the City completed audits of all our websites and applications to check for accessibility. Time permitting, another audit may be scheduled. This audit included checking all websites for WCAG 2.1 AA Standard. Any items that we have control over to fix were fixed. As we build out new applications and websites, we keep WCAG 2.1 AA in mind and ensure we are adhering to these requirements.

All our external websites have "Accessibility Tools" installed, which is a third-party (ReachDeck) to help add another level of accessibility on our websites. This tool offers the following:

- Text-to-speech: click on or select any text to hear it read aloud.
- Translation: written and spoken translations in multiple languages
- Text magnification enlarges text and reads it out loud.

- MP3 generation converts selected text into an MP3 audio file.
- screen mask: blocks distractions on screen with a tinted mask
- Web page simplifier removes clutter from the screen, displaying only the main text.
- settings: customize options to suit individual needs or preferences

Planning ahead:

Continue to ensure any new applications and websites meet WCAG 2.1 level AA.

2. **Web Content:**

An email was sent out to all staff that have access to editing our city websites, informing them of the new legislation requirements and letting them know that going forward everything placed on our website must comply with the legislation.

Since this date, Innovation, Technology & Communications (ITC) has not allowed any documents to be added to the website that do not meet requirements. However, there are a number of City employees with access to editing websites, so this may still be happening.

Planning ahead:

Ongoing training on what is allowed and how to create accessible documents will ensure staff updating our websites are doing so in an accessible way.

3. **Accessible Information and Forms:**

The City does not currently inform the public in any way that information can be requested in accessible formats.

Planning ahead:

An Alternate Form Request form has been added to www.brandon.ca and contact information has been updated on the website.

We will look at adding the following disclaimer on documents and webpages, where it makes sense:

Alternate formats available upon request.

The City will also include a link to the form in the disclaimer as well online.

4. **Providing Accessible Information:**

The City does not do this because there is no mechanism for people to request information.

Planning ahead:

Utilizing the same requisition form mentioned above, it will include a section asking for the document name and location if it is on the City's website. If and when an acceptable, accessible format is determined, employees can generate a new document and provide it to the requester.

5. **Feedback Process:**

The City has an appropriate feedback process in place. Issues can also be reported in the Report an Issue form on the City website or by the Contact Us form. There is currently no dedicated feedback form for accessibility.

https://www.brandon.ca/images/accessibility/Procedure-Feedback.pdf

Planning ahead:

The City will include a contact section or a specific form under the Accessibility section with information on how to provide feedback.

Training:

Training has been provided to some departments regarding accessibility while creating graphics, pdf's, updating the website, etc. ITC currently provides the training and there are three additional departments that have requested to receive this training.

Planning ahead:

Training should be provided, at minimum, to anyone who has access to update content on City websites, social media, signs, and designing of printed materials such as media ads, posters, flyers, etc.

Training should include, but not be limited to:

- What does accessibility mean for design/websites?
- How to make your content accessible on the website and in print
- Creating accessible documents, pdf's, etc.
- Accessibility on social media

D. TRANSPORTATION STANDARD

As part of an ongoing commitment to inclusivity and accessibility, the City of Brandon is aware of the Accessible Transportation Standards under the Manitoba Accessibilities Act, which will come into effect on January 1, 2027. The City is actively working to ensure that our public transportation services and vehicles for hire regulations meet these new standards, providing barrier-free and equitable access for all residents, including individuals with disabilities.

Our accessibility plan reflects the city's dedication to compliance with provincial regulations and our broader vision of fostering a fully inclusive community. We continue to consult with stakeholders and community members to ensure our approach meets the accessibility requirements, aiming to create a welcoming and accessible environment for everyone.

E. BUILT ENVIRONMENT STANDARD

The City of Brandon will promote awareness throughout its departments and new developments.

Planning ahead:

Attempt to remove barriers in buildings through ongoing maintenance and renovation projects.

Continue to work with departments seeking guidance on removing barriers and making their spaces more accessible.

Once the accessibility investment strategy has been approved, prepare business cases for consideration in annual budget submissions.

Conclusion:

The City of Brandon recognizes that accessibility is a human right. We are committed to treating all people in a way that allows them to maintain dignity and independence. We believe in inclusion and are committed to meeting the needs of people who face accessibility barriers by identifying, removing and preventing these barriers.