

**The Corporation Of The City Of Quinte West  
By-Law Number 21-092**

**Being A By-Law To Adopt An Accessibility Plan for the City of Quinte West.**

**Whereas** the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 and specifically O. Reg. 191/11, Section 4 (1), states, The Government of Ontario, Legislative Assembly, designated public sector organizations and large organizations shall, (a) establish, implement, maintain and document a multi-year accessibility plan, which outlines the organization's strategy to prevent and remove barriers and meet its requirements under this Regulation; (b) post the accessibility plan on their website, if any, and provide the plan in an accessible format upon request; and (c) review and update the accessibility plan at least once every five years;

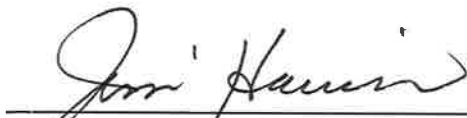
**And Whereas** the City of Quinte West Municipal Accessibility Plan will demonstrate how the City will implement the legislative requirements of the Ontarians with Disabilities Act (ODA) (2001), the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (2005) and manage compliance with emerging AODA regulations related to the Corporation of the City of Quinte West;

**And Whereas** Council deems it expedient to replace the existing policy with an updated Accessibility Plan to maintain compliance with current legislation;

**Now Therefore The Council Of The Corporation Of The City Of Quinte West Hereby Enacts As Follows:**

1. That this By-law shall be entitled the "**Accessibility Plan (2021) By-law**".
2. That the Accessibility Plan, attached hereto, is hereby adopted for the City of Quinte West.
3. That the previous Accessibility Plan is hereby repealed.

**Read A First, Second And A Third Time And Finally Passed This 9th Day Of August, 2021.**



Jim Harrison, Mayor



Virginia LaTour, Acting City Clerk



A Natural Attraction

# City of Quinte West

## Municipal Accessibility Plan

(Revised 2021)

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## **Message from the Mayor Jim Harrison**

The City of Quinte West is committed to removing and preventing barriers so that residents can take part in everything our city has to offer. We are dedicated to continuous improvement in the area of accessibility and to reaching the goals set by the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA).

The City of Quinte West Municipal Accessibility Plan outlines initiatives that will improve accessibility in our community and reflects the City's commitment to the successful implementation of the AODA standards. It is a multi-year plan with annual reports and a review/update every five years that outlines new initiatives and illustrates past achievements in improving accessibility within the city. Council continues to demonstrate their ongoing commitment through the continued support of projects to improve accessibility.

The Accessibility Advisory Committee continues its work to raise awareness of accessibility issues and educate local students on the importance of inclusion. Every year, they have arranged for speakers to visit local schools on International Day of Persons with Disabilities. These speakers have been very well received and help to inspire our local young people about the power, determination, and perseverance of the human spirit to overcome barriers.

Quinte West has a strong commitment to improving accessibility for all residents. In the coming years, we look forward to making the City of Quinte West one of the most accessible cities in the Province.

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT**

The City of Quinte West is committed to providing equitable treatment to people with disabilities with respect to the use and benefit of City programs and services. The City seeks to identify and remove barriers to accessibility and prevent the creation of new barriers. The City is working to provide services in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of all Quinte West citizens, our employees and visitors. The City of Quinte West is equally dedicated to ensuring that all AODA legislated obligations are met in a timely manner and that compliance with these standards is maintained.

### **Background**

**Ontario Regulation 191/11 Part 1 states:**

#### **Accessibility plans**

4. (1) The Government of Ontario, Legislative Assembly, designated public sector organizations and large organizations shall,
  - (a) establish, implement, maintain and document a multi-year accessibility plan, which outlines the organization's strategy to prevent and remove barriers and meet its requirements under this Regulation;
  - (b) post the accessibility plan on their website, if any, and provide the plan in an accessible format upon request; and
  - (c) review and update the accessibility plan at least once every five years.

The purpose of the City of Quinte West Municipal Accessibility Plan is to demonstrate how the City will be implementing the legislative requirements of the *Ontarians with Disabilities Act (ODA) (2001)*, the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (2005)* and to manage compliance with emerging AODA regulations related to the Corporation of the City of Quinte West. In addition, the City recognizes that there is also a need for innovation outside of the legislation and that additional initiatives are required to either prepare for forthcoming legislation, or in some cases, to work beyond the legislation to meet residents' accessibility needs. The City recognizes that achieving these objectives requires a corporate-wide approach in order to identify and remove barriers for residents, employees and visitors.

Over the past several years, the City of Quinte West has undertaken a number of initiatives aimed at ensuring that the municipality remains as inclusive and barrier-free as possible. These include, but are not limited to:

- Developing the City of Quinte West Municipal Accessibility Plan as part of the requirements of the *Ontarians with Disabilities Act 2001 (ODA)*;
- Providing Accessible Formats upon request;
- Investing over \$200,000.00 on accessibility retrofits in City facilities;
- \$700,000.00 Accessible Re-construction of Frankford Municipal Office & Library
- Training over 500 City employees and volunteers on Accessible Customer Service;
- Providing Accessible Customer Service training to all staff beyond the AODA parameters.
- Reviewing policies, procedures and other relevant documents to include accessibility;
- Installing Audible Pedestrian Signals at several city intersections;
- Implementing an annual event bringing motivational speakers with disabilities to local schools celebrating International Day of Persons With Disabilities
- Meeting and maintaining compliance with the AODA Customer Service Standard.

## **Methodology**

This multi-year plan has been developed to enable the City to clearly demonstrate how the requirements of the AODA *Integrated Accessible Regulations 191/11 (IAR)* will be implemented. In addition, it enables the City to communicate to residents the non-legislated accessibility initiatives which have been introduced to ensure City services consider accessibility moving forward. These include initiatives in the area of the built environment for which AODA legislation is still forthcoming.

Since 2001, the City of Quinte West has maintained an Accessibility Advisory Committee and since 2011 also has an Accessibility Staff Team. These groups play a vital role in the development of the Accessibility Plan for the City of Quinte West. In addition to these groups and to advance the City's response to the new Provincial legislation, several internal sub-committees were initiated in the areas of employment, transportation, built environment and information & Communication (with an additional Accessible Documents working group) to:

- Assist in the interpretation of the IAR clauses;
- Determine the City's readiness to meet the legislative requirements;
- Identify gaps;
- Create work plans to meet corporate and legislative timelines; and,
- Determine who is responsible for implementation within the City of Quinte West.

The Accessibility Staff Team has compiled an Integrated Accessibility Regulation (IAR) Work Plan, which is attached as a foundation for the City's work towards compliance.

## **Consultation**

Consultation on the Municipal Accessibility Plan and the IAR Work Plan was conducted on an ongoing basis through the City of Quinte West Accessibility Advisory Committee.

## **GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

The guiding principles of the City's Municipal Accessibility Plan include:

- Working consultatively with the Accessibility Advisory Committee to ensure the actions identified in the multi-year plan is responsive to the needs of the community;
- Proactive and timely to meet the provincial compliance deadlines;
- Fiscally responsible by using provincial tools, templates and guides where applicable;
- Proactive to spread the cost of implementation over multiple years;
- Seeking efficiencies by training all existing and new staff;
- Ensuring that areas of accountability are clearly defined by implementing clauses by department; and,
- Developing support tools and templates to assist staff with implementation.

## **IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY**

The City of Quinte West supports the goals of the AODA to make the Province of Ontario accessible by the year 2025. As such, the City's senior management has approved the following approach and supports to fulfill the City's requirements.

## **Leadership**

City Council has supported the creation of accessible services to help improve inclusion across the City which benefits all residents, visitors and employees. Towards that end, the City has adopted an Accessible Customer Service Policy and formed an Accessibility staff Team, through which, Staff shall report on the identification, prevention and or potential creation of barriers within all reports going to the Accessibility Advisory Committee and City Council.

## **Structure and Governance**

The responsibility for the implementation of the AODA falls within all City Departments. This ensures that the decisions regarding accessibility are made in concurrence with the City's Strategic Plan. In 2012, the Accessibility Staff Team created an IAR Work Plan which will see the City of Quinte West reach compliance with all the relevant clauses of the AODA in compliance with Provincial deadlines. Accountability for the various clauses within the new Integrated Accessibility Regulation is a shared responsibility with operational departments. The City Chief Administrative Officer has oversight responsibility for ensuring compliance at the corporate level and operational departments retain the accountability for ensuring that their respective clauses are executed according to legislative requirements pertaining to the service they deliver. For example:

- Websites compliance is led by the Corporate Finance Department;
- Employment requirements are led by Human Resources;
- Information and Communication Supports is led by Corporate Finance;
- Procurement and Kiosks requirements are led by Corporate Finance; and,
- Library requirements are led by the Quinte West Public Library.

General clauses are led by the Accessibility Staff Team with representation from each department and guided by the Corporation's Accessibility Advisory Committee.

## **Municipal Accessibility Plan and Integrated Accessibility Regulation Implementation Work Plan**

The IAR Work Plan considers best practices and lessons learned from the execution of the AODA Customer Service Regulation. In the first phase of the Customer Service Regulation legislative roll-out it became clear that staff needed to begin training as early as possible to ensure a meaningful implementation strategy. This allowed staff time to learn about the standards and implement the requirements into their everyday work as soon as possible in the roll-out of the legislative requirements. The deadline for the training requirement of the



Integrated Accessibility Regulation (IAR) is January 1<sup>st</sup> 2014; however, with so many staff and volunteers to train, it has been determined that training is scheduled to begin in early 2013 to ensure full compliance in compliance with the deadline.

In addition to the AODA requirements, the City continues to work to increase accessibility for residents and visitors by creating additional non-legislated initiatives that support the goals set by Council in accordance with the AODA. Examples of this work include: Audible Pedestrian Signals, numerous construction projects on City buildings, properties and facilities, ongoing structural changes to streets, sidewalks, parks and open spaces.

## **LEGISLATED GOALS:**

### **Customer Service**

Maintain compliance with the Accessible Customer Service Standard and continue to identify additional customer service enhancements as required:

- a) Provide accessible Customer Service training to staff and volunteers;
- b) Receive and respond to feedback about the manner in which goods or services are provided to persons with disabilities; and,
- c) Provide notice of service disruptions.

### **General Requirements**

Meet and maintain compliance with the AODA's Integrated Regulation general requirement:

- a) Complete a review of all relevant City of Quinte West bylaws, policies, procedures and guidelines to reflect the requirements of the AODA Integrated Accessibility Regulation;
- b) Ensure the procurement of City goods, services, facilities and kiosks include accessibility criteria and features; and,
- c) Provide training as soon as practicable whenever on-boarding and ongoing training whenever there are policy changes. Training will be appropriate to the duties of the employee, volunteer or other person on the AODA Integrated Accessibility Regulation and the Human Rights Code to all employees, volunteers; all persons who participate in developing the organization's policies; and all other persons who provide goods, services or facilities on behalf of the City of Quinte West.

### **Employment**

Ensure the City of Quinte West's employment policies and practices are inclusive of people with disabilities:

- a) Ensure all employees and successful applicants with disabilities are informed of available supports and accommodations;
- b) Ensure applicants with disabilities are informed of available accommodations during the recruitment, assessment and the selection processes;
- c) Consult with employees to provide and arrange for accessible formats and communication supports;
- d) Provide to employees, upon request, individualized workplace emergency response information;
- e) Maintain a return to work process and provide individual documented accommodation plans for employees with disabilities when required;
- f) Ensure the needs of the employees with disabilities are taken into account for the purposes of performance management, career development, advancement and redeployment.

### **Information and Communication Supports**

Provide accessible information and communication to residents, visitors and employees:

- a) Ensure City processes for receiving and responding to feedback are accessible to people with disabilities by providing for, or arranging for, the provision of accessible formats and communication supports;
- b) Upon request, provide accessible feedback and communication supports in consultation with the requestor, in a timely manner that takes into account the person's accessibility needs and at no additional cost for all City documents including emergency plans and public safety information;
- c) Ensure all City of Quinte West websites and web content conform to the World Wide Web Consortium Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 initially at level A and increasing to Level AA in accordance with the timelines set out by the AODA Integrated Regulation; and,
- d) Inform the public of the availability and provide accessible materials where they exist and provide accessible formats and communication supports upon request.

### **Design of Public Spaces**

- a) Increase accessibility of City facilities through the auditing and implementation of an annual retrofit plan based on approved budgets; and,
- b) Retrofit up to all City facilities with respect to: automatic door openers, washrooms, ramps, reception desks, change rooms, door widening, parking areas and various other issues based on City budget and Federal/Provincial funding approvals.

### **NON-LEGISLATED GOALS:**

In addition to the legislated goals under the AODA, the City of Quinte West is committed to additional initiatives that help ensure the City is becoming more and more barrier-free; including:

### **Customer Service**

a) Host an annual International Day of Persons With Disabilities event bringing guest speakers to students in local schools to share their message of inclusion as well as the power, determination, and perseverance of the human spirit to overcome barriers

### **Employment**

- a) Monitor the percentage of applicants with disabilities who participate in the self-identification survey as part of recruitment process;
- b) Monitor the successful hires of persons with disabilities relative to the percentage of those who self-identified as part of the application process;
- c) Increase the completeness of the internal data base of existing employees with disabilities to reflect their representation in the workforce.

### **Information and Communication**

- a) Finalize a review of quintewest.ca and prepare for a 2021 launch of the improved version of the City's website which will incorporate AODA legislative technological requirements.
- b) Increase accessibility in the Quinte West Public Library locations

### **Transportation**

- a) Development of procedures which are consistent with the Accessible Customer Service Policy and the spirit and intent of the AODA;
- b) Facility improvements to enhance barrier-free access to bus stops and installation of accessible bus shelters
- c) Training for staff consistent with the requirements of the AODA Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation;

### **Design of Public Spaces**

Increase accessibility for pedestrians by installing 3 metre wide multi-use paths along several streets and APS push buttons with vibro-tactile arrows on all new signalized intersections.

## **Compliance Monitoring**

The Accessibility Advisory Committee and the Accessibility Staff Team shall monitor progress of this plan and shall coordinate and report on progress annually to Council.