



The Corporation of the City of Belleville Multiyear Accessibility Plan 2018 – 2022

Forward:

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (A.O.D.A) is a provincial law that sets out a process for developing and enforcing accessibility standards. The main goal of the AODA is to achieve an accessible province of Ontario by 2025 that is free from discrimination, and where all people regardless of ability have equal opportunity to participate in their community. As the Corporation of the City of Belleville it is our pleasure and responsibility to establish, implement, maintain, and document a multiyear accessibility plan which outlines our strategy to prevent and remove barriers, and meet the requirements of the A.O.D.A.

The main theme of this multiyear accessibility plan is inclusion! This includes both incorporating A.O.D.A standards into City of Belleville internal operations, policies, and procedures and also collaboration between city departments, local businesses, residents of Belleville, and fellow municipalities. The main focus is to promote the full culture shift that needs to occur in order for us to achieve the goal of complete accessibility and inclusion in our community.

This multiyear accessibility plan will hold The Corporation of the City of Belleville accountable to City Council and staff members, the residents in our community, and the province of Ontario at large. Therefore, it is the intention of this document to be a relatable explanation of accessibility policies and procedures in order to encourage public awareness and participation in this accessibility and inclusion culture shift.



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2018 – 2022 Statement of Commitment to Accessibility and Inclusion

Community Vision

“The City of Belleville will be a healthy, progressive, diverse and economically vibrant community that invests in its future in a financially sustainable and environmentally responsible manner.”

Community Mission

“We, the Council and staff of the City of Belleville, are committed to excellence and openness in local government by ensuring accessible and responsive representation, providing innovative and efficient services in support of our community’s vision.”

The Council and staff of the City of Belleville continue to be guided by the values and goals indicated in our Vision and Mission statements, and recognize that achievement of either would not be possible without due consideration of accessibility as a priority. As such, the Council and staff of the City of Belleville will continue to work in collaboration with the Accessibility Advisory Committee regarding planning and decision making throughout the 5 areas addressed through the A.O.D.A under the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (I.A.S.R): Customer Service, Information and Communications, Employment, Transportation, and the Design of Public Spaces.

The Corporation of the City of Belleville remains committed to the cause of an accessible Ontario by 2025, as mandated through the A.O.D.A. Beyond the standards and requirements of the A.O.D.A and I.A.S.R, the City of Belleville strives to achieve innovation and excellence, and be a municipal leader in accessibility. To accomplish this The Corporation of the City of Belleville will be responsive to the needs of the residents which it represents, and will endeavor to establish best practices and be proactive in addressing accessibility planning in our community.

Message from our Mayor



Mayor Taso A. Christopher

As Mayor of the City of Belleville I recognize the important role the municipal government plays in the planning and development of our community. On behalf of myself and on behalf of Belleville City Council I pledge our continued commitment to being proactive in identifying, removing, and preventing barriers to accessibility and inclusion. We will incorporate accessibility principles into our guiding policies and decision making.

The Corporation of the City of Belleville welcomes any feedback regarding accessibility and inclusion in our community. With the valued input from the Belleville Accessibility Advisory Committee we will see through Ontario's shared goal of a barrier free province, where all people regardless of ability have equal opportunity to participate in their communities and benefit from the goods, services, and facilities.

We are pleased to present you with The Corporation of the City of Belleville Multiyear Accessibility Plan 2018 – 2022. We welcome your participation and support as it guides us as we continue down our path to full accessibility and inclusion by 2025 as mandated through the A.O.D.A.

Message from The B.A.A.C

The Accessibility Advisory Committee for the City of Belleville is committed to making Belleville the best community in terms of accessibility for all and making everyone feel the inclusiveness of our City.

As of 2017, the Belleville Accessibility Advisory Committee (B.A.A.C) is comprised of 3 City Councillors, staff representatives, and 6 members from the public the majority of who are people with disabilities. With our community representatives we try to have people with various backgrounds, disabilities, and interests who contribute their unique point of view and expertise toward making our community spaces and services accessible for all people.

The mandate of the B.A.A.C is to advise Council, review site plans, develop a City accessibility plan, and perform other duties as developed by the Committee.

Our vision as a Committee is to bring forth as many barriers as we can and try to address them through either capital spending or public awareness, such as hosting workshops every year to bring to the public's attention Ontario accessibility regulations or updates of these regulations.

The City has set the Committee to meet at the call of the chair, and to work to toward to the betterment of the community in order to achieve an accessible and inclusive City of Belleville.

Councillor Garnet Thompson

B.A.A.C Chair

Introduction

Background:

Creating a barrier free community where everyone has an equal opportunity to participate is important for all people, businesses, and daily community life. In accordance with the A.O.D.A, The Corporation of the City of Belleville has developed this multiyear accessibility plan to promote barrier identification and accessibility planning in our community. The City remains dedicated to ensuring that it meets, and when possible exceeds, the A.O.D.A compliance standards and legislated obligations. For more information on the A.O.D.A please visit [Ontario's web page about accessibility laws](#) , reference Appendix 1, or contact our Accessibility Coordinator.

Since Ontario adopted the A.O.D.A as law in 2005, with I.A.S.R compliance requirements beginning as of January 1st 2010, for us as a municipality most major standards are already in effect. This does not mean that most of the work for an accessible Ontario is done, but rather that the expectations have been set to guide our continued progress to remove barriers and create equal opportunities for people with disabilities to participate in their communities. The Accessibility Directorate of Ontario is focused on continuously improving accessibility standards. Reviewing accessibility standards and policies is a requirement of the A.O.D.A, and will help determine if they are functioning as intended and allows for any needed adjustments. As the Directorate moves forward with their review of A.O.D.A standards, the Corporation of the City of Bellville will also be dedicated to reviewing our internal policies and practices, and being proactive in our response to accessibility matters.

Purpose:

To promote the culture shift in our community and to see the City of Belleville reach its full potential, accessibility must become a way of life and business. It is the intent of this document to address the planning requirements for a municipality under the A.O.D.A, and to serve as a resource that will guide and connect all City of Belleville departments and employees in pursuing improvements to accessibility and equal opportunity for all people. This plan will detail accessibility initiatives currently in progress and provide a five-year outlook to the future. Initiatives will cover aspects throughout the five standards designated in the I.A.S.R (see Appendix 1).

The creation of this 2018 – 2022 multiyear accessibility plan will promote the long term goal of a fully accessible City of Belleville and Province of Ontario at large. Municipal governments play a crucial role in the planning and development of our communities. Accessibility matters must be considered during all stages of planning, decision making, and implementation within the City. Through this plan, the City of Belleville will adapt its

operations with accessibility fully integrated in the way we do business, our policies, and our procedures, and not just as a provincial legislation we are required to comply with.

Methodology:

In addition to referencing the legislative requirements of the A.O.D.A and I.A.S.R accessibility planning in the City of Belleville, including the creation of this document, enlists the involvement of many different stakeholders. This includes City Council, City of Belleville employees from various departments, the Belleville Accessibility Advisory Committee, and the general public. Representatives from these groups have dedicated their time and expertise to the development and review of this plan.

The A.O.D.A uses the same definition of “disability” as the Ontario Human Rights Code¹, one that includes both visible and non-visible disabilities. It is common when considering disabilities and accessibility to think only of those who may use a wheel chair or have other physical mobility conditions. It is imperative when discussing accessibility to consider the wide range of disabilities which can include mobility, vision, deafness or hard of hearing, intellectual or developmental, learning, and mental health disabilities. Disability refers to a broad scope of conditions which may have been present at birth, developed over time, caused by an accident or injury, or be illness or health related. Furthermore disabilities can be either permanent or temporary, and conditions or symptoms can be either constant or intermittent.

Considerations – City of Belleville Profile

Disability does not mean inability. Individuals with disabilities may face limitations or barriers in the environment, often ones that once identified can be minimized or removed completely. Individuals with disabilities are active members of our community, and making the City of Belleville accessible is essential in order for all people and businesses to prosper.

People with disabilities represent a large untapped source of skilled workers which could solve many of Ontario and Belleville’s employer needs. As of 2017 recent data estimates that the unemployment rate for people with disabilities is around 16%, which is more than double the national average. This statistic is especially significant when considering the findings of related reports which conclude that across factors such as job performance, attendance, safety, and turnover rate people with disabilities far out

¹ For the full definition of “disability” as defined by the Human Rights Code please reference Appendix A, the copy of the AODA, and the definition can be found in Part 1 – Interpretation, Section 2. Definitions, approximately page 3 when printed in its standard font.

rank their colleagues without disabilities. Besides the work force, when evaluating the impact of people with disabilities on our economy it is also noteworthy that the estimated spending power of people with disabilities and their families is about \$40 billion annually across Canada. Furthermore, it has been conclusively demonstrated that adopting accessible hiring and business practices has a positive effect on consumers and thus business profits. This fact is very important to Belleville when promoting the City not only as a great place to live and work, but as a place to establish and grow local businesses.

In the summer of 2017 the provincial government introduced a new employment strategy for people with disabilities called Access Talent. Part of this strategy includes the roll out of a new “supportive employment” model which will allow both job seekers and employers to access support during all stages of the job search and hiring process. In 2018 Belleville will be one of three Ontario communities to participate in a pilot phase for this new model. The Access Talent strategy is based on a call to action for all Ontario businesses, specifically those with 20 or more employees, to hire at least one additional worker with a disability. This would create about 56,000 new jobs for people with disabilities, who represent an overlooked large and talented pool of motivated job seekers.

As of 2017 over 15% of Ontario’s population has a disability, including more than 40% of people over age 65. In other words, approximately 1.85 million people in Ontario have a disability; that’s about one in seven people. The number of people with a disability will continue to increase as the population ages, and according to statistics Belleville’s population is already older than the provincial average. According to a past Municipal Comprehensive Review (Watson and Associates Economists Ltd, 2013), population growth in Belleville has been the result of net migration of persons over the age of 55. This review projected that by 2036, the 55+ age group will represent 47% of Belleville’s population. From an accessibility perspective the implications of this trend are far reaching and preparations or adjustments will be needed in our community across all 5 areas of the IASR.

Belleville is a great place to live, work, play, and invest. This statement of our city profile should remain true for all citizens and visitors of Belleville regardless of age, income, or ability. When we put accessibility considerations as a priority we make Belleville a better place to live, work, play, and invest for everyone. Only when we do this can we see the City of Belleville reach its potential and flourish into a vibrant and inclusive community.

City of Belleville A.O.D.A Report Card

A.O.D.A Compliance Requirement	Implementation Date	Compliance Report
Provide accessible customer service	January 1 2010	✓ Compliant and On-going
Provide accessible taxi services	July 1 2011	✓ Compliant and Improvements on-going
Provide accessible emergency and public safety information	January 2012	✓ Compliant
Provide accessible emergency information to staff	January 2012	✓ Compliant
Provide taxi registration and identification in accessible formats	January 1 2012	✓ Compliant
Create accessibility policies and a multi-year plan	January 1 2013	✓ Compliant and On-going
Buy goods, services, or facilities that are accessible to people with disabilities	January 1 2013	✓ Compliant and On-going
Include accessibility features when purchasing or designing self-service kiosks	January 1 2013	✓ Compliant and On-going
Provide accessible transportation services	January 1 2013	✓ Compliant and Improvements on-going
Train your staff on Ontario's accessibility laws	January 1 2014	✓ Compliant and On-going
Make it easy for people with disabilities to provide feedback	January 1 2014	✓ Compliant and On-going
Make websites accessible	January 1 2014	On-going / In Progress
Make your employment practices accessible	January 1 2014	✓ Compliant
Make your public information accessible when asked	January 1 2015	✓ Compliant and On-going
Make new or redeveloped public spaces accessible	January 1 2016	✓ Compliant and On-going
Make all websites and web content accessible	January 1 2021	In Progress

** For more information on the City of Belleville's compliance with these A.O.D.A requirements please contact our Accessibility Coordinator **

Progress! Highlights of Achievements

Since the City of Belleville's last multi-year accessibility plan, several exciting milestones have been achieved. Here are some highlights of our achievements we have completed so far.

Customer Service

- ✓ Internal Policy for Accessibility Standards for Customer Service
- ✓ Training on accessible customer service for all city employees and volunteers
- ✓ Continued dedication to accessible customer service standards, with an established feedback process to identify any gaps or barriers to service
- ✓ Will arrange accommodations upon request for municipal programs, services, and facilities (example: American Sign Language interpreters for Glanmore tours)
- ✓ In partnership with the East Ontario Training Board the Belleville Accessibility Advisory Committee holds an annual Accessibility Open House to promote public awareness and training opportunities



Photo One

Photo One: Picture of a gentleman receiving courteous service from a City Hall Clerk at one of the modular work stations, which power adjust for height to accommodate various needs.

Information and Communication

- ✓ The City of Belleville will, upon request, provide communication supports or any public documents in an accessible format that takes into account individual accessibility needs
- ✓ Established feedback process for the general public to express opinions, concerns, and complaints regarding accessibility in our community. The City of Belleville responds to all feedback in a timely manner
- ✓ Belleville Library's website has received a W.C.A.G AA rating, a compliance requirement which is not due until 2021

Employment

- ✓ The City of Belleville remains committed to equal employment opportunities, and will notify the public about the availability of accommodation for applicants with disabilities in its recruitment processes
- ✓ The City of Belleville will develop individual accommodation plans for employees with a disability which will take into account their individual accessibility needs. Accommodation plans include, but are not limited to, accessible formats and communication supports, emergency response procedures, accessible work space features, performance management, and career development

Transportation

As of 2017 improvements to accessibility for the City of Belleville public transit consist of: (for further details regarding accessibility and our public transportation please reference Appendix C, Belleville Transit's Accessibility Plan)



Photo Two: A resident boards the Mobility Bus using the power lift at the back of the bus

Photo Two

- ✓ All 16 traditional buses currently in fleet include accessibility features such as kneeling entrance way with a ramp, visual and audio announcements for next stop, grab bars, and priority seating with space for mobility devices which includes a securement option
- ✓ A specialized Mobility Bus service option which includes 3 formal mobility buses, plus accessible taxis
- ✓ Increased hours of Mobility Bus service to match service hours of the conventional service option
- ✓ Call center for booking Mobility Bus service with computerized booking system
- ✓ 3 new accessible bus shelters at city stops, plus accessibility renovations to the down town transit terminal which includes accessible platforms and shelters
- ✓ During winter months, resources made available to address snow removal issues at bus stops
- ✓ Both specialized and conventional services allow a support person to accompany a person with a disability for free

- ✓ All transit employees (and volunteers when applicable) are trained in accessible customer service specific to their positions, and based on the Corporation's Accessibility Standards for Customer Service Policy.

Built Environment

- ✓ Incorporation of A.O.D.A Design of Public Spaces standards in the City Centre Revitalization & Redevelopment Project, including features such as slope ratios, ramps, curbs, parking, sidewalks, entrances to facilities, and wayfinding
- ✓ Continued progress in upgrading to audible and visual safety alarms and signals across the City
- ✓ Front entrance to City Hall has been completely renovated to meet accessibility requirements including features such as: expanded front entrance doorways, front entrance lift, upgraded elevator, modular work stations at customer service desks, widened public washroom entrance, and power door operators
- ✓ Gilead Hall received a fully accessible washroom
- ✓ Gerry Masterson facility underwent upgrades for stairs and doorways, and received a ramp all according to accessible design standards
- ✓ Glanmore Accessibility Project completion, including an accessible entrance way with a vertical lift to the main floor, complete with an accessible kiosk which provides a virtual tour option of the upper and lower floors with closed captioning
- ✓ Installed a deck at Thurlow Ball Field public washroom to provide an accessible entrance to the facility.
- ✓ Completion of Quinte Sports and Wellness Centre
- ✓ Approximately 15 new power or automatic sliding doors have been installed at various municipal buildings



Photo Four: A fan gets ready to cheer on the Belleville Senators from accessible seating at the Yardman Arena



Photo Five: A fully renovated washroom with accessible features such as grab bars, toilet and toilet paper height placement, and an audible and visual emergency push button.

Goal Statements 2018 – 2022

Customer Service

- Continue training requirements for all city employees and volunteers. Review implementation and documentation process to update for best practices.
- Review of customer service training modules to ensure applicable to different departments and positions (for example transit specific customer service training)
- Review City of Belleville Accessibility Standards for Customer Service Policy

Information and Communication

- Website redevelopment project to become compliant with W.C.A.G A or AA (must be AA by 2021)
- Review and improve feedback process, and solicit more community involvement to increase occurrence of feedback
- Develop online feedback process
- Increase public awareness and utilization of the availability of accommodations and information in accessible formats

Employment

- Streamline accessibility in employment practices by integrating A.O.D.A standards into City of Belleville policies (ex. recruitment, emergency procedures, accommodation plans)
- Review of Recruitment policy, amend to remove any systematic barriers and reflect A.O.D.A regulations
- Research the new launch of Access Talent - Ontario's Employment Strategy for People with Disabilities and review how new principles or tactics can be applied within the Corporation and within in our community

Transportation

(Reference Appendix 3 for Belleville Transit's Accessibility Plan)

- Seek consumer feedback regarding gaps and barriers in transportation, monitor feedback and identify steps to address concerns
- Continue to improve and modernize booking service
- Continue upgrading bus shelters; 10 new shelters to be ordered and placed for 2018
- Completion, review, and implementation of "User Guide" for specialized service
- Continue to hold annual public meetings for transit and include people with disabilities

- In consultation with the B.A.A.C, move forward with Capital Project to improve accessibility at bus stops (such as curbs, depressed curbs, sidewalks, signage, shelters)
- Creation of webpage for Mobility Bus service; review and modifications to information provided on the City of Belleville website regarding accessibility in the conventional service
- Collaborate with neighboring transit systems to create overlap in order to best serve mobility across the county
- Review of By-Laws and licensing regarding accessible taxicabs and supplemental agreement for Mobility Bus service
- Explore campaign options to promote increased ridership of both transit service options, especially for inclusive use of the conventional service

Built Environment

- Focus on accessibility features during Phases 3 of City Centre Revitalization & Redevelopment Project
- Promote planning for addressing washroom facility issues at Zwick's Park
- Continue phased improvements to sidewalks and curbs,
- Continue phased in replacement of pedestrian signals to audible and visual signals
- Installation of power door operators for the Quinte Sports and Wellness Centre
- Replacement doors for the Robert E Ladoucier Transit Centre
- Develop City of Belleville Design Standards to incorporate A.O.D.A and Ontario Building Code built environment standards into our internal policy and procedures

City of Belleville Accessibility Initiatives

- Develop a Corporate Accessibility Policy. Review, amend, or adopt further internal City policies to ensure A.O.D.A mandated requirements are integrated in our daily procedures and operation. **WHY?** This will encourage best practices and ensure accessibility considerations are consistently included from all areas of the I.A.S.R: Customer Service, Information and Communications, Employment, Transportation, and the Design of Public Spaces. As a corporation this will help push the culture shift that accessibility considerations must be incorporated in the way we do business, not just as a separate provincial legislation to comply with.
- Encourage more public involvement and awareness of accessibility issues and initiatives. **WHY?** Through events such as the accessibility open house, public info sessions, public involvement in B.A.A.C meeting, and much more we can increase the awareness of accessibility matters and city initiatives in our community. While the Corporation of the City of Belleville is tasked with the planning and development for our community, the feedback and support of all residents of Belleville is used as a guide and is the means by which we can make this culture shift a reality to enjoy a prosperous and accessible community.
- To increase public awareness, there is a proposal to adopt a consistent process by which City workers are identifying basic physical hazards or barriers to accessibility out in the community. The proposal includes a standard colour and marking that city workers would apply out in the community to indicate a hazard or barrier has been identified, such as bright pink circle spray painted over a raised/cracked sidewalk. **WHY?** This would in turn indicate to the public that the city is aware of and working to fix small everyday barriers on a consistent and on-going basis. Additionally, during the interim before the city has had the chance to address the identified issue, the marker also serves as a general safety warning of a possible hazard.
- Compilation of a resource detailing site reviews for barrier identification and evaluation and highlighting existing accessible features. Phased site visits to all municipal buildings and properties to begin compilation of a resource to identify, document, plan for, and track the removal of barriers in our community. **WHY?** In striving to be a municipal leader in accessibility it is important to measure our successes and recognize the tasks that are ahead of us. Barrier identification is an essential first step in accessibility considerations and will allow for more efficient planning. Having this complete resource will provide three significant benefits: 1. will allow for efficient and organized planning and tracking of barrier

removal; 2. will serve as a guide for residents and visitors to know what municipal buildings, properties, and sites are accessible and promote the inclusive use of these facilities; 3. becomes a tangible measurement which will demonstrate municipal progress to the residents of Belleville and mark our continuous commitment in upgrading accessibility standards.

- Considerations for updating accessibility signage to reflect a more active portrayal of the disabled population. **WHY?** The once universally adopted sign for accessibility of a stick figure sitting in wheelchair has now become an item of contest for some accessibility activists.



The argument is that the old sign portrays a very passive image of someone with a disability. For this reason there is a growing movement to modify the signage to a more dynamic symbol of accessibility, that of a stronger stick figure actively pushing their wheelchair. There have been advocates for both the current universal symbol as well as the modified dynamic symbol, including several municipalities in Ontario who have already adopted the modified symbol.

- Collaboration efforts with local business and community organizations. To move forward in unison and to promote a full culture shift within the City of Belleville, The Corporation of the City of Belleville will look to establish partnerships in accessibility with local business and community organizations. **Why?** Part of striving to be a municipal leader in accessibility means not only on a provincial level, but also on a community level we are modelling commitment to accessibility and accessible practices. Furthermore, we look to support others in the same endeavor, and will look to offer consultation or outreach services to the public in support of meeting A.O.D.A standards across our community.

Implementation Strategy

How we will get there:

Policies and procedures detail the way we do business as a corporation. Since internal policies guide our daily operations, one of the goals of this document is to outline a plan of how the City of Belleville will build the frame work to incorporate accessibility considerations, initiatives, and A.O.D.A requirements into these existing polices, or will call for the creation of new ones if needed. From an operational perspective, a goal has been identified for each of the 5 areas under the I.A.S.R. The purpose of these goals are to guide the Corporation and ensure continued success in planning and development for a fully accessibly community. These goals will be updated each year through the Annual Multiyear Accessibility Plan Review. The 5 goals for 2018 are:

1. **Customer Service Standard:** Develop a Corporate Accessibility Policy and review the Customer Service Policy & training/documentation process.
2. **Information and Communication Standard:** Improve feedback process and develop plan to solicit more community awareness and involvement
3. **Employment Standard:** Review Recruitment policy and amend as needed to incorporate A.O.D.A standards
4. **Transportation Standard:** Follow up with 2015 Operational Review of Belleville Transit's Specialized Service (Mobility Bus), and further establish clear goals and timelines for improvements to accessibility and function. See Belleville Transit's Accessibility Plan (Appendix C)
5. **Design of Public Spaces Standard:** Create internal Design Standards Policy which integrates built environment accessibility standards as specified by the A.O.D.A and Ontario Building Code.

The A.O.D.A challenges us to develop, implement, and maintain policies governing how we will achieve accessibility. As a large public sector organization the Corporation of the City of Belleville must have at least one document describing these policies. Many of our internal policies have reference to A.O.D.A standards or requirements, however in the spirit of promoting the full culture shift towards accessibility and inclusion this is no longer enough. It is no longer enough to say that we, The City of Belleville, are compliant with or follow A.O.D.A standards. To truly embody what it means to be a fully accessible community and to be a municipal leader in our accessibility and inclusion initiatives, The City of Belleville must modernize our internal policies and procedures to integrate accessibility standards into the way we do business.

WHY? It is important to keep policies and procedures current and relevant; this will help us become a municipal leader in more ways than just accessibility. A review of policies will assist in identifying any missed systematic barriers, or any new ones which may

have developed since the document was created, that are preventing Belleville from achieving its mission to be a healthy, progressive, diverse, and economically vibrant community. Reviews of policies and procedures will allow for the opportunity to make updates based on past experiences and to address current or projected needs.

We're all in this together:

Achieving the goals set out in this multiyear plan will require the commitment of all employees and volunteers from the City of Belleville, as well as support from all residents. As a corporation, the City of Belleville is comprised of many different departments which all play a critical role in achieving success and establishing ourselves as an innovative leader of accessibility. By working together towards a shared vision and being aware of the role each department plays, we can ensure our collaborative efforts are efficiently and effectively responding to the needs of our community. To promote the full culture shift it is essential for accessibility considerations to be integrated into all aspects of how we operate as a corporation. To this end each department within the Corporation of the City of Belleville has provided a statement of commitment to accessibility and inclusion:

Chief Administrative Officer, Rick Kester

“As stated in the City of Belleville’s Mission Statement, we will ensure that all City departments are accessible by the public in order to obtain information and receive assistance and guidance. We will strive to ensure all citizens are treated equally in the manner we deliver services and programs and endeavor to provide barrier-free access to all of our facilities. We will focus on service excellence by understanding and anticipating the needs of our citizens and be proactive in addressing our community’s needs.”

Director of Corporate Services / City Clerk, Matt MacDonald

“The Corporate Services Department is committed to the continuous improvement of accessibility, understanding that we play an integral role in creating an accessible and inclusive community under the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (I.A.S.R): Customer Service, Information and Communications, Employment, Transportation, and the Design of Public Spaces. Our Department includes the Clerks and Deputy Clerks Office, Parking services, Property services, Information Systems and Accessibility services; all of which have the ability to impact not only our corporate requirements but more importantly the needs of our community members in a positive way from an improved access perspective in a respectful and dignified manner.”

Human Resources, Manager Tim Osborne

“The City of Belleville is an equal opportunity employer committed to inclusive, barrier-free recruitment and selection processes and work environments. We will accommodate

the needs of applicants under the Ontario Human Rights Code and the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (A.O.D.A) throughout all stages of the recruitment and selection process. Please advise the Human Resources Division to ensure your accessibility needs are accommodated throughout this process.”

Economic & Strategic Initiatives, Manager Karen Poste

“The Economic and Strategic Initiatives section of the CAO’s office is committed to providing services that are completely accessible. We understand that we play a critical role in creating an accessible and inclusive community and we will work cooperatively with City staff and the local business community to ensure everyone understands the benefits of creating an accessible community. Our department works with local business and City departments and deals with communications for the entire City and we will continue to ensure we operate in the most accessible and inclusive way and we will work towards ensuring we continue to improve accessibility in our community.”

Engineering & Development Services, Director Rod Bovay

“The Engineering & Development Services Department will proactively ensure that private development, municipal public spaces, and transportation infrastructure are constructed in accordance with the provisions of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, through our powers under the Planning and Building Code Acts and our management responsibilities for construction of municipal public space and infrastructure projects.”

Environmental Services, General Manager Perry Decola

“The Environmental Services Department is committed to Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (A.O.D.A) by ensuring that we will not create systematic barriers and that we maintain accessibility for all operational facilities, especially those that are open to the public. Our Department is a utility and infrastructure based service that provides water, sewer, and environmental delivery and compliance for the residents of the City of Belleville.”

Transportation & Operational Services, General Manager Joseph Reid

“The Transportation and Operation Services Department is committed to improving accessibility, and understand we play an integral role in creating an accessible and inclusive community under the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (I.A.S.R): Customer Service, Information and Communications, Employment, Transportation, and the Design of Public Spaces. Our Department includes City Transit Services, Parks & Open Spaces and Transportation Services such as roads, traffic and pedestrian services; all of which is committed to improvements to accessibility needs within our community.”

Recreation, Culture & Community Services, Director Mark Fluhrer

“To accomplish this, the Recreation, Culture & Community Services Department and all staff and volunteers, will continue to provide inclusive and accessible services and facilities “where everyone is welcome”. The department will be proactive and responsive in addressing our legal obligations and the diverse needs of the community; always working to provide a positive and respectful experience for those using our facilities and services.”

Finance / Treasurer, Director Brian Cousins

“The Finance Department is responsible for the overall treasury management for the Corporation of the City of Belleville. This includes services such as budgets, investments, policies, purchasing, revenue and taxation, and water customer service. Throughout daily operation the Finance Department is careful to offer responsive and accessible customer service, including providing any public information with communication supports or information in alternate formats upon request. Furthermore, we will maintain a commitment to incorporate accessibility features and design criteria when purchasing and procuring goods and/or services on behalf of the City of Belleville, and will do so in consultation with the Accessibility Advisory Committee.”

Fire & Emergency Services / Fire Chief, Director Mark MacDonald

“Belleville Fire and Emergency Services are committed to enhancing accessibility, as it is our desire and civic duty to create an accessible and inclusive community under the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (I.A.S.R). This approach would include Customer Service, Education and Communications as well as employment accommodation considerations.”

Role of the B.A.A.C

The Belleville Accessibility Advisory Committee (B.A.A.C) is comprised of members of council, staff representatives (such as the Accessibility Coordinator), and members of the community, the majority of whom are people with a disability. The BAAC offers input and advice on a wide range of municipal processes; they review and monitor accessibility in the city, and assist the municipality in carrying out its duties under the AODA. Responsibilities of the BAAC include, but are not limited to:

- Providing input based on first hand experiences about accessibility in the City of Belleville
- Advising the city staff and council regarding the implementation of accessibility standards in the ongoing development of policies, practices, and procedures
- Reviewing site plans and drawings, up to and include site visits
- Assisting with the identification of barriers and suggest priorities for accessibility in project planning throughout the city

Identification of Barriers

It is important to know that disabilities are not barriers to participation or independence; barriers develop in our environment when the needs of people with disabilities are not being considered. To maximize efficiency in planning and decision making it is important to first identify any barriers to accessibility, and also to be cognizant that we are not creating any new barriers along the way. Assessments for barrier identification will involve evaluation of all possible forms, including:

- **Attitudinal** – behaviours, perceptions, and assumptions that discriminate against persons with disabilities.
- **Physical or Architectural** – occurs in the built environment and often prevent access for people with disabilities
- **Systematic** – organizational barriers, often policies or procedures, that unfairly discriminates and possibly prevents persons with disabilities from fully participating
- **Technological** – occur when technology or the way it can be used does not consider the needs of people with disabilities
- **Communication** – arise when consideration is not given to how persons with disabilities receive or send information, or when persons with disabilities cannot easily receive and/or understand information that is available to others

Feedback

We want to hear from you! Members of the public are invited to review this document and submit feedback regarding any aspects the multi-year accessibility plan. Furthermore, the City of Belleville encourages the public to submit feedback regarding any accessibility matters in our community. Generating feedback is an important tool to help identify barriers to accessibility, and guide the Council and staff of the City of Belleville in our daily operations. There are a variety of ways you can submit feedback:

1. An official feedback form can be printed off the City's municipal website and submitted. Completed feedback forms can be submitted by email, mail, or dropped off at City Hall.
2. By Phone: (613) 967-3200 ext.3502 for the Accessibility Coordinator
or TTY: (613) 967-3768
3. By Fax: (613) 967-3206
4. In Person or By Mail: The City of Belleville
City Hall, 169 Front Street
Belleville, Ontario K8N 2Y8
5. Online: (currently in development)

Notes for Further Consideration

Certain aspects of the A.O.D.A and I.A.S.R have immediate requirements in order to be in compliance; for example under the Customer Service Standard requirements were instantly enforced by 2010 or under the Information and Communication Standard by 2021 all websites and all web content must be accessible by W.C.A.G AA criteria. However, most compliance requirements under the I.A.S.R are not retroactive. The implementation dates for each compliance requirement throughout the I.A.S.R mark the start of enforced rules by which to identify, remove, and prevent barriers to accessibility and to require accessibility planning as we move forward. That said, it's not a matter of if retroactive requirements will be enforced through the A.O.D.A, but rather when! In striving to be a municipal leader The City of Belleville will take a proactive stance on accessibility planning. In keeping its commitment to the goal of a fully accessible and inclusive City of Belleville and Province of Ontario, The Corporation of the City of Belleville will continue to evaluate and set goals to ensure we progress towards this result.

Currently in progress, there are proposals for the development of two new standards under the I.A.S.R: accessibility considerations for Health Care and for Education. In March 2017 a committee was established for the Health Care Standards Development, this would be the first new standard since the I.A.S.R was introduced. Meanwhile, the Accessibility Directorate of Ontario has partnered with the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development to work on collecting public feedback regarding an accessibility standard for education. Over the summer of 2017 they also accepted applications to sit on the committee for the future development of an education standard.

For more information regarding legislative reviews, committees and councils please visit: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/accessibility-legislative-reviews-committees-and-councils#section-1> or contact our Accessibility Coordinator.

Considering the municipality's crucial role in planning and development for our community, the Council and staff of the City of Belleville will endeavor to take initiative and be a municipal leader when it comes to incorporating new or redeveloped standards in accessibility and inclusion. Based on the news about these proposed I.A.S.Rs the City of Belleville will take an advanced stance in considering the accessibility features of our health care and education systems. Where possible, when the Corporation of the City of Belleville participates in reviews, planning, and decision making in these areas we will strive to be as proactive as possible in anticipating and dealing with accessibility matters.

Appendix

1. A.O.D.A & I.A.S.R
2. List of Properties and Facilities
3. Belleville Transit's Accessibility Plan