

# 2015-2016 City of Greater Sudbury Municipal and Transit Accessibility Plan

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The *Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001* required municipalities to prepare an annual Accessibility Plan for both the City of Greater Sudbury and Greater Sudbury Transit. This 2015-2016 Annual Accessibility Plan has been prepared within the broader context of the City of Greater Sudbury's Multi-Year Plan for the period 2013 - 2017 as was approved by Council Resolution 2012-360 in the fall of 2012. The Multi-Year Plan is available online at: [http://www.greatersudbury.ca/sudburyen/assets/File/Multi-Year%20Accessibility%20Plan\(1\).pdf](http://www.greatersudbury.ca/sudburyen/assets/File/Multi-Year%20Accessibility%20Plan(1).pdf)

The City's Accessibility Advisory Panel provides advice to staff on the implementation of the Multi-Year Plan, Annual City of Greater Sudbury Municipal Accessibility Plan and the Greater Sudbury Transit Accessibility Plan. The members of the panel for the term 2015 – 2018 are:

Maureen Beaudry	Sharon McLay
Lionel Courtemanche	Travis Morgan
Norma Fitzgerald	Andrew Olivier
Holly Janakowski	Pamela Rowe
Joscelyne Landry-Altmann, Councillor	Linda Whiteside

The Accessibility for *Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 Ontario Reg 191/11 Integrated Accessibility Standards* outlines the accessibility standards and priorities for municipalities with respect to Communications, Employment Standards, Transportation and Design of Public Spaces in order to achieve a fully accessible community by 2025.

While the legislation is used as a guideline, the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan and its three priorities of Legislative Compliance, Community Mobility and Access to Recreation, have formed the basis of accessibility work undertaken to date. Moving forward, we will continue to work to achieve the priorities outlined in the 2012-2017 Multi-Year Plan, while looking ahead to upcoming capital projects as opportunities to enhance accessibility within our City for all residents.

## **Municipal Accessibility**

The City of Greater Sudbury has achieved compliance in all elements of the Integrated Accessibility Standards, Ontario Regulation 191/11 which were to be implemented in 2015. Legislative compliance includes not only compliance with the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* and its associated regulations but also ensuring compliance with Accessibility provisions of other acts. For example the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*, specifically Section 12.1(1) enforces that the *clerk responsible for conducting an election shall have regard to the needs of electors and candidates with disabilities*. The City of Greater Sudbury provided an accessible 2014 Municipal and School Board election and worked to provide all voters the opportunity to exercise their democratic right. Accessibility provisions during the election included, internet voting, voter assist terminals, magnification sheets at voting locations and putting provisions in place to ensure that voting locations were accessible. Prior to the election members of the Accessibility Advisory Panel were given the opportunity to learn about, test and provide feedback on internet voting and the voter assist terminals. The feedback provided by

the panel was very positive with respect the ease of use and access of both systems. Throughout the 2014 Municipal and School Board election period, the City of Greater Sudbury made accessibility information available on its election website.

January 1, 2016 marks the implementation of Part IV.1 Design of Public Spaces Standards (Accessibility Standards for the Built Environment) and the City of Greater Sudbury is working with applicable departments to establish compliance within the legislated deadlines. As it is the mandate of the City of Greater Sudbury to provide accessible services, programs and buildings to residents, the Accessibility Advisory Panel will have an opportunity to take part in the consultation and design process for upcoming City of Greater Sudbury capital projects. The panel will provide input into specific projects such as; the redesign of the Tom Davies courtyard, renovation of the Tom Davies Square foyer, the Brady Green Stair, and the Official Plan review with a goal of increasing accessibility within the project scope and budget.

Access to recreation remains a focus of the City of Greater Sudbury, providing opportunities for inclusive play, citizen engagement and enjoyment in all our City has to offer. In the fall of 2015 ground was broken on the new accessible change and washroom areas at the main beach of Bell Park and the accessible beach wheelchair has been received. It is anticipated that this project will be completed in time for the 2016 summer beach season.

### **Greater Sudbury Transit Accessibility**

The City of Greater Sudbury conventional transit fleet is fully accessible and as transit vehicles are replaced they feature the newest and most accessible features available. City of Greater Sudbury runs a parallel Handi-Transit service to the conventional system and over the course of the past year a major focus has been to review the service so as to make it more efficient and responsive to rider needs.

The City of Greater Sudbury's Policy on Transportation for Persons with Physical Disabilities reflects an Ontario Court ruling that persons with disabilities who need assistance in order to use transit services because of cognitive disabilities need a support person and not parallel transit systems. Greater Sudbury Transit has implemented measures to facilitate ridership by support persons on conventional transit, including the provision of training passes for attendants and the support person pass program which allows them to ride for free on the conventional and specialized transit system.

Since the implementation of this policy through the introduction of the harmonized and expanded service, Handi-Transit ridership has increased from 42,616 rides in 2003 to 134,000 rides in 2014 and Handi-Transit now provides service that exceeds equivalence to the conventional transit system.

An extensive public consultation and review process was undertaken prior to the implementation of the revised eligibility criteria and trip booking systems. The service provider, users, stakeholder groups and the Accessibility Advisory Panel were consulted during two public information and feedback sessions and a survey was sent out to regular Handi-Transit users. Recommendations brought forward as a result of the public input sessions and survey respondents were taken into consideration and factored into the development and implementation phases of the new eligibility criteria and trip booking programs. Other municipalities were also consulted on their best practices. The revised eligibility criteria, trip booking information and ridership applications were rolled out to the public in January of 2014

and information was posted to the City of Greater Sudbury's website <http://www.greatersudbury.ca/living/accessibility/handi-transit/>.

In 2014, the City of Greater Sudbury Transit was able to achieve full compliance to all AODA regulations requiring compliance on or before January 2016 including full fare parity, matching service hours, a revised eligibility assessment process and extended hours to accept booking requests.

### **Conclusion**

Looking ahead to upcoming capital projects and recreational opportunities through the lens of accessibility will enable both staff and the Accessibility Advisory Panel to focus on a systematic approach to building accessibility in municipal programs, facilities and services. Each year, the Greater Sudbury Municipal and Transit Accessibility Plans are presented to Council for approval and are subsequently made available on the City of Greater Sudbury Website. Copies of the Plans are also provided to individuals and organizations upon request.

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