



## The City of Greater Sudbury 2022-2027 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

### A message from the Accessibility Advisory Panel

It is with great pride that the City of Greater Sudbury's Accessibility Advisory Panel is pleased to lend its support to the City of Greater Sudbury 2022-2027 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan.

This plan focuses on the principles that accessibility is fundamental to the quality of life, well-being, and engagement of individuals with disabilities in the social, economic, cultural, spiritual, and political aspects of society. As persons with disabilities and their families experience economic disparity from their peers as a direct result of costs associated with disability, it is important to consciously increase our knowledge of disability-related supports and ways to remove barriers amongst service providers within our municipality. The plan also demonstrates that being proactive with our approach to facilitating broad consultation with the Accessibility Advisory Panel and the public assists in the identification, removal, and prevention of barriers which reduces overall costs in the long term.

The City of Greater Sudbury 2022-2027 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan establishes that our focus must remain on informing and improving policy, services, and programs through the application of a disability, accessibility, and inclusion lens and engage more broadly the disability perspectives into existing and future strategies.

The plan highlights that when a disability and inclusion lens is reflected throughout the organization, we benefit from a diversity of insights and are better prepared to address the needs of the population we serve.

As we look forward to the next five years, the multi-year plan will help guide the development and implementation of City's policies, civic engagement, programs and services, communications and technology, employee services, and infrastructure that considers individual needs and diverse abilities.

As the City of Greater Sudbury grows and flourishes with new opportunities, incorporating disability issues into social and economic strategies within our multi-year accessibility plan is a fundamental principle that promotes and develops inclusion with dignity for all.

## Introduction

The City of Greater Sudbury is composed of an urban, suburban, rural, and wilderness environment that not only covers a large geographic footprint but also provides a broad range of services to its residents, making it a community of communities.

It is the goal of the City of Greater Sudbury to ensure an “inclusive and accessible community for all residents, while maintaining the respect and dignity of every person that works, lives, visits and plays in our city”, as stated in the City of Greater Sudbury’s 2015-2018 and 2019-2027 Corporate Strategic Plan.

The 2022-2027 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan outlines the strategic choices that the City of Greater Sudbury will prioritize through initiatives and goals that target the assurance that its citizens will have access to an inclusive and equitable community free of barriers.

Through the City’s passage and adoption of strategies and policies that promote values of integrity and accountability, independence and foresight, collaboration and engagement, the City endeavors to facilitate inclusive access to all its municipal programs, services, and facilities while maintaining the dignity and respect of all its residents equally.

## Our Commitment

Though the City prides itself in many of its achievements, it recognizes that accessibility and the needs of our citizens are ever-changing and to affirm inclusivity within our community we must focus our priorities on the work ahead. Achieving success for the future lies within the use of strategic planning initiatives that create programs and services that meet the needs of our growing diverse population.

As the impact of COVID-19 diminished our momentum in achieving our short-term accessibility goals, the overall effect of the pandemic highlighted many areas within the City’s framework that enabled our community to adapt to various needs and create stronger, more inclusive long-term goals.

The City of Greater Sudbury 2022-2027 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan demonstrates the City’s commitment to build upon its previous Accessibility and Corporate Strategic Plans to ensure it is offering its citizens accessible customer services, accessible community mobility, access to recreation, accessible transportation, accessibility educational awareness and

accessible communication strategies that will assist the city in achieving our long-term goals that align with the provincial legislation of an accessible Ontario by 2025.

## Governing Legislation

The legislative foundation that governs accessibility requirements are found under [the Accessibility for Ontarians with a Disability Act \(AODA\)](#). The Province of Ontario is responsible for determining the legislative framework and standards that applies to organizations across the province. Under this framework, municipalities, including the City of Greater Sudbury, are responsible for accessibility as it relates to municipal programs, services, and facilities.

Various pieces of legislation and regulations govern and mandate the provincial laws that directly impact accessibility within a municipality. Such laws are:

- [The Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001](#)
- [The Ontario Human Rights Code, 1990](#)
- [Regulation 191/11– The Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulations](#)

Of particular importance is Part I, subsection 4 (1), (2) of the General Requirements in the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulations, which requires municipalities to:

- (a) establish, implement, maintain and document a multi-year accessibility plan, which outlines the organization’s strategy to prevent and remove barriers to 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.

In efforts to maintain legislative compliance with the established accessibility framework, the City of Greater Sudbury is responsible for maintaining existing legislative expectations, reviewing new legislation and deadlines and acquire feedback from the community to establish new priorities that will assist the City to meet its overall goals.

Legislative compliance not only includes compliance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act and its associated regulations, but also ensuring compliance with accessibility provisions of other acts. The City of Greater

Sudbury continues to make use of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, Integrated Accessibility Standards Implementation Plan that was established in 2013 as part of the Annual Accessibility Plan. This plan outlines the legislative requirements of the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulations and guides the appropriate departments and staff with tasks across the organization that are to be completed in order to achieve compliance and meet legislated deadlines. Regular updates are made to the plan as new standards are introduced and compliance is achieved.

## **City of Greater Sudbury 2017-2021 Achievements**

Over the last 5 years the City of Greater Sudbury achieved much success at reducing barriers and improving accessibility within our services, programs, and facilities by focusing on the 5 key priorities found in the City of Greater Sudbury 2017-2021 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan.

The plan strategically outlined Legislative Compliance, Community Mobility, Access to Recreation, Education and Awareness, Meeting and Event Accessibility as the 5 areas that assisted in guiding the City's focus for projects, while ensuring that the city would maintain and reach its goals for a more accessible municipality.

To achieve these priorities and improve the accessibility of municipal programs, services and facilities, a number of projects were undertaken by various operating departments. Some of these projects and initiatives include, but are not limited to, the following:

### **One-Stop Service Centre and 3-1-1 Services Customer Portal**

The One-Stop Service Centre located at 200 Brady Street, Tom Davies Square renovation created an area where multiple services and programs can coexist side-by-side to better serve our residents. This unified approach to providing services and access to resources assisted in streamlining departmental services and reducing the number of locations a citizen would attend to receive multiple services at once. Thoughtful signage using plain font with high-contrasting colours showcases a multi-level accessible front counter that has plenty of space for residents to navigate. Each wicket has designated signage that assist with line queueing when a resident moves from one service to the next.

The City of Greater Sudbury continues to offer accessible services online and over the telephone for residents who wish to utilize the 3-1-1 service and customer portal which provides access to a higher level of customer service around the clock to our residents who wish to request information, report an issue or update previous inquiries.

## **Provincial Court Services**

A hybrid-model of in-person and remote proceeding was established for the Provincial Offences, Ontario Court of Justice in 2021. This model was established during Covid-19 to provide better access to justice than previously seen in courts beforehand. The use of ZOOM allows the public to attend court proceedings by way of electronic method and in-person simultaneously depending on the needs of the individual. The implementation of this model not only assisted the City of Greater Sudbury to meet the requirements of the Ministry of Attorney General for a fully accessible court system but assisted in reducing overall provincial court backlog caused by the pandemic.

## **Municipal and School Board Elections**

The 2022 Municipal and School Board Election was planned with accessibility in mind. During the selection of voting locations, accessibility evaluations and audits were conducted by City of Greater Sudbury Election Team staff on all potential locations. With a vote anywhere model, 60 locations were used for ease of access for Election Day, and three locations were used during two advance polling days.

Additionally, a large emphasis was placed on the creation of an accessible communications strategy for both voters and candidates. Election materials were created using simple language and high contrasting colours. Information regarding the election was made available in a number of communication formats.

Internet voting was used during the entire voting period in an effort to improve accessibility by enabling voters to cast ballots from home using their own adaptive technology as appropriate from advance polls to election day.

The City of Greater Sudbury's Accessibility Advisory Panel took part in a pre-election consultation to evaluate and provide feedback regarding the accessibility and usability of this model.

## Legislative Compliance

The City of Greater Sudbury continues to develop policies and procedures as required by the legislation to ensure the accessible and equitable delivery of municipal programs, services, and facilities.

## Community Mobility

A strong emphasis on the ability for every citizen to have the means to move freely about the community independently without barriers was a high priority in the City of Greater Sudbury 2017-2022 Accessibility Plan. This goal was achieved in the areas of:

### Roads and Sidewalks

The City of Greater Sudbury continued the installation of accessible sidewalks and curb cutouts, pedestrian crosswalks and audible signals throughout the municipality increasing accessibility to navigate from one location to the next.

### Municipal Facilities

The City continued conducting accessibility audits for their municipal buildings and facilities to ensure that projects were organized in a priority order and need for accessibility. Further, commencement of the installation of mobility device charging stations occurred. Designated accessible seating along with a charging station were also introduced in council chamber.

### Transportation Services

The development and implementation of the Transit Action Plan for both conventional and specialized transit services was created along with the reconfiguration of the City of Greater Sudbury's transit system with the launch of GOVA, GOVA Zone and GOVA Plus system. A reconfiguration of the City of Greater Sudbury's process on the specialized transit system regarding eligibility criteria and the hearing of appeals for GOVA plus riders provided better means of access for modes of transportation from location to location throughout the city.

The addition of 3 new bus shelter locations were added to the already existing 118 bus shelters. With 83% having been purchased, upgraded, or renovated this allowed the City of Greater Sudbury Transit Service to meet AODA standards. The continued work towards renovating or replacing the remaining 17% of bus shelters is underway. Further changes were made to expand bus routes.

Physical improvements within the transit system occurred with the installation of rear facing seats and TFT technology providing better access to wayfinding measures. With audible cues and visual colour contrasting fonts these improvements provide better access for residents to navigate bus routes throughout the City of Greater Sudbury.

## **Access to Recreation**

With the City of Greater Sudbury's large geographic footprint and diverse landscapes, access to recreation was a high priority. The ability to provide access to our indoor and outdoor resources in an inclusive and accessible manner was achieved with projects such as:

### [Long-Term Care Facilities and Senior Homes](#)

An Outdoor Seniors Exercise Park was established at Pioneer Manor in 2021, providing an accessible outdoor adult fitness area which was geared for seniors and those living with disabilities. The park consists of 5 exercise stations that are designed to help increase physical activity levels and improve mental health and quality of life.

### [Accessible trails and Walking Paths](#)

The walkway leading from the Outdoor Winter Park Patio to the Seniors Grown Together Community Garden was widened to allow residents, family members and visitors using mobility devices to pass each other safely. The City of Greater Sudbury worked on the development and continuous improvement of accessible trails and walking paths throughout the city to ensure better access to recreation within the City's limits. The opening of new parking lot and switchback path to provide accessible access and parking at Bell Park was also established.

### [Recreational Services](#)

A new online booking system for the City of Greater Sudbury recreation programs was launched providing access to services online for registration for courses and services throughout the city. The system provides an accessible,

user-friendly, portal that allows residents and their families to sign-up for classes, register for courses, access recreational program and drop-in information around the clock.

### Ongoing Recreational Projects

With the installation of new accessible equipment at municipal playgrounds, the adoption of the Recreation Accommodation Policy, the revitalization of Municipal recreational court surfaces and amenities and the approval for a therapeutic pool the City of Greater Sudbury is working diligently at providing better access, without barriers to more recreational services for all its citizens.

## Education and Awareness

The importance of educating and increasing awareness of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disability Act* and the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulations was a priority set out to assist municipal staff in creating training and educational programs that would help staff understand various needs a citizen may have when accessing city services, programs, and facilities.

### Training and Policies

In April 2022 members of the communication team, clerk's and information technology took part in a two-part training session to update their knowledge of creating accessible documents and writing for the web accessibility.

Further, all staff and contractors receive the accessibility customer service training which meets the AODA legislative requirements as well as a copy of the City of Greater Sudbury Corporate Accessibility Policy, City of Greater Sudbury Accessible Customer Service Policy, Use of Service Animals and Guide Dogs in City of Greater Sudbury Facilities Policy and Recreation Program Accommodation Policy - By-law 2019-94.

### Communication Services

The City of Greater Sudbury Website Initiatives Continued to work towards making the CGS public facing website content accessible as per the legislative guidelines and the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 Level AA



### Feedback and Tracking

Through the Customer Relationship Management System and Feedback Form a new process for tracking accessibility complaints and feedback has been implemented with Clerk's Services. Feedback and complaints regarding accessibility of services, programs, and facilities are received, processed, and tracked according to priority and department. The process ensures continuity and consistency for assessing, addressing, rectifying, and removing barriers while increasing staff knowledge of the various service needs of citizens across the municipality.

### Consultation and Public Engagement

The City of Greater Sudbury saw continued work on increasing accessibility awareness for city staff by providing access to consultations with the Accessibility Advisory Panel and community partners. In efforts to raise the City's accessibility profile and increase the focus on the importance of becoming an inclusive, barrier free, and accessible City the Accessibility Advisory Panel and city staff conducted various engagement sessions and walkthroughs within the community.

## Community and Event Accessibility

Ensuring that all residents and visitors of the City of Greater Sudbury can fully participate in all facets of community life was the final priority established in the City of Greater Sudbury 2017-2022 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan.

### Events

Events such as closed-captioned movie night at Bell Park and free accessible swims at local municipal pools increased inclusivity within the community.

Continuous work with the Accessibility Advisory Panel and community partners occurred to ensure city staff considered the various needs of patrons when events and meetings are being planned.

### Meeting Management System and Reports

Clerk's Services updated their Meeting Management System to ensure that agendas, meetings, minutes and reports for Council and Committee meetings are available in an accessible format online.

The meeting management system's use of integrated system components assisted Council Chamber in transitioning to a hybrid model of in-person and online Council and Committee Meetings which provided citizens

with further access with livestream and closed captioning functionalities to knowledge that directly impact their community.

## Other Achievements

### The Pioneer Manor Bed Redevelopment Project

The project consists of building a new five-story, 160-bed wing at the back of Pioneer Manor Home. The 149 residents located in the Killarney/Lilac/Mallard and York/Ramsey/Scenic Home Areas will be moved into the new wing with the addition of 11 new beds. This project aligns with the City's priorities as it creates an environment that is welcoming, supportive, while building sustainable infrastructure to meet the current and future needs for residents of the community.

### Environmental services

Between 2017-2021 Environmental Services built a new construction and demolition site at the Sudbury landfill making it easier to access diversion areas for concrete, brick and block, cardboard, and wood items.

A small vehicle transfer station was created at two of the outlying landfill sites in Hanmer and Azilda. Additionally, work on the landfill Leaf and Yard disposal areas are underway to make the site more accessible to all users.

### Housing Services

Housing Services staff worked with community housing partners to upgrade their accessible units to current standards.

The Social Housing Revitalization Plan was approved in 2019. The repair and regenerate of existing community housing stock occurred to increase accessibility and remove barriers within the community housing sector.

A 15-bed congregate care location with support services opened for individuals who struggle with alcoholism.

The project for 1351 Paris was completed, which consisted of 40 affordable, market rent senior units. Housing Services also participated in the Ontario Renovates and Home Ownership Programs where approximately 179 households participated, and 25 households were able to purchase a home through the Home Ownership Program in the past five(5) years.

Approximately 60 households participated in the Sudbury Housing Assistance Rental Program that bridged individuals waiting to secure subsidized housing with the Community Housing portfolios.

An online portal for subsidized housing application was introduced in 2020. The online application process allows applicant households to apply online for subsidy, to make changes to their existing files and revise their housing selections.

### Small businesses

Work on the Downtown Business Incubator began. The project provides fully accessible office space and access to several resources to create a hub of economic activity in Greater Sudbury that supports early stage, innovative, high growth potential business start-ups across a spectrum of sectors/industries. Accessibility was considered when designing the space including different areas such as the co-working spaces, meeting rooms, universal bathroom, lounge areas, kitchen, boardroom, and breakout areas.

## Looking Forward

The City of Greater Sudbury Accessibility Advisory Panel (AAP) was instrumental in the development of the City of Greater Sudbury 2022-2027 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan. The Panel consisted of 8 citizen appointed representatives of which the majority of whom are persons with disabilities and 2 Councillor representatives.

In consultation with departmental staff, the AAP diligently worked together to establish 5 key priorities that the City of Greater Sudbury can use as a foundation for the next five years to ensure the City of Greater Sudbury reaches its goals of becoming a more diverse and accessible city.

Gathering feedback from personal experience and the community, the Accessibility Advisory Panel members should be recognized for their efforts of championing the constant improvement of accessible services at the City of Greater Sudbury.

It is the strong recommendation of the Accessibility Advisory Panel that the City of Greater Sudbury increase our efforts at prioritizing accessibility within the framework of the City's policies, practices, procedures and departmental budgets, and focus on the development and implementation of the City's civic engagement, programs and services, communications

and technology, employee services and infrastructure that considers individual needs and diverse abilities to maintain momentum and reach our accessibility goals for the future.

## 5 Key Principles to an Accessible Municipality

### 1. Accessible Communication

Communication is a fundamental aspect to any society. As societal needs and practices change over time, the importance of ensuring that the City's communication practices and strategies equate to the same level of change is paramount. Clear and concise accessible communication not only assists those with disabilities but assists our community overall to connect with one another efficiently and equally.

*Achieving success by:*

- Improving and standardizing wayfinding strategies and the technology in which supports these throughout city services, programs, and facilities.
- Continuing to utilize plain language text and accessible font with all communication pieces and by incorporating caption technology where possible.
- Improving and standardizing signage throughout the city in an accessible format.
- Continuing to improve accessibility on the City of Greater Sudbury website.
- Increasing the number of accessible documents, forms, and presentations available to the public.
- Continuing to improve and standardize accessibility with the use of social media.
- Creating standardized Accessible Guides, templates and checklists for staff and municipal partners.

### 2. Accessible Education and Awareness

Learning is the key to success for any municipality. Improving our understanding of accessibility and providing an atmosphere where learning from one another's experience encourages innovation and advancement for all services and programs within the city.

*Achieving success by:*

- Placing accessibility at the forefront of any initiatives, decisions, and projects.

- Increasing hands-on experience of the range of accessible needs for staff and community partners.
- Continuing to improve the knowledge of the impacts of mental health on accessibility.
- Continuing to provide and improve on accessible training modules for all staff and stakeholders.
- Continuing to provide and improve on the identification of barriers and their impact on the citizens in which the city serves.
- Continuing to provide and improving on the dialogue between city staff and agencies that champion inclusivity, accessibility, and diversity.
- Continuing to accept feedback and complaints and improving services.

### **3. Accessibility by Design**

Prioritizing the improvement of accessibility for municipal facilities and infrastructure are a fundamental aspect to maintaining sustainability for future generations at the City of Greater Sudbury.

*Achieving success by:*

- Continuing to audit municipal facilities for accessibility.
- Continuing to improve on standardizing accessible requirements in new projects and renovations of facilities.
- Increasing access to accessible features such as ramps, automatic door push buttons, accessible parking, accessible service counters, universal washrooms throughout all facilities at the City of Greater Sudbury.
- Ensuring spaces more accessible to people who are sensitive to chemicals or fragrances by using a harm reduction approach; eliminate unnecessary fragranced products and select fragrance free alternatives when appropriate. This will also involve making spaces accessible for both the physical space and the people who come into that space, as well as effectively communicating through outreach materials that this is an accessibility issue.
- Continuing to increase the number of accessible event spaces available throughout the city.
- Continue to make roads, sidewalks, and bus shelters fully accessible.

### **4. Accessible Community Mobility**

To reach the goals of making the City of Greater Sudbury fully accessible, community mobility is a key priority to achieving success. Residents and visitors should be able to navigate the city from one location to the next without encountering barriers that inhibit access the services the city provides.

*Achieving success by:*

- Continuing to improve transit fair box upgrades and retrofitting transit vehicles.
- Improve wayfinding, maps and technology that assist residents with navigation.
- Continuing to ensure that City of Greater Sudbury Transit Services meets and exceeds compliance in accessible requirements.
- Continue to review City of Greater Sudbury Transit policies and practices for specialized transportation.
- Continue to consult the public, persons with disabilities and Accessibility Advisory Panel on best practices for community mobility
- Continue to improve on the transit main line and services expansion.

## **5. Access to Recreation**

Access to recreation is a vital part in creating a sense of community for the residents of the City of Greater Sudbury. Providing recreational services that are accessible allows all members of the municipality and its visitors to participate in the various leisure activities that available.

*Achieving success by:*

- Continuing to improve the city's numerous walking and trail paths.
- Increasing the number of accessible green space throughout pockets of the city and meandering access to gazebos at Bell Park.
- Continuing to improve and increase the number of accessible parking at recreational facilities.
- Continuing to improve waterfront access to public beaches.
- Continuing to improve waterfront access for all members of the city.
- Continuing to prioritize and retrofit existing built environment barriers.
- Continuing to improve and increasing signage and wayfinding for outdoor recreational services.

## Conclusion

Accessibility is fundamental to the quality of life and well-being of every citizen of the City of Greater Sudbury. The information we provide and the ways we communicate are key to delivering our programs and services to the public.

The City of Greater Sudbury 2022-2027 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan aims at focusing the City's priorities to ensure that we are consistently and continuously providing municipal services, programs and facilities that are inclusive, accessible, welcoming, and supportive. This plan further highlights that when shifting our attention to accessibility first, our ability to execute our specific goals become easier to achieve as a whole.

The City of Greater Sudbury is committed to identifying, preventing, and removing accessible barriers with the help and guidance of the 5 key principles for an accessible municipality: Accessible Communication, Accessible Education and Awareness, Accessibility by Design, Accessible Community Mobility and Access to Recreation.

As we incorporate the expertise and knowledge of people with personal experiences with disability into policies, programs and services and include the Accessible Advisory Panel in the development and evaluation of strategy initiatives, the City of Greater Sudbury is determined to achieve its future accessibility objectives.