City of Steinbach crest

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Accessibility Plan

December 2016

*This publication is available in alternate formats upon request.

PART 1. Baseline Report

a. Overview of Programs and Services

The City of Steinbach provides municipal services to approximately 15,000 citizens in Steinbach. Core services include water and wastewater management, street and sidewalk maintenance, waste and recycling services, land administration, parks and recreation facility management. To provide these services, the city operates and maintains a variety of buildings and facilities which are on both ends of the spectrum in terms of public access. Some facilities are open to the public at all times and others citizens are prohibited from entering. There are also limited times where city staff are required to attend to citizens at their private residents'. Lastly, the city is responsible for communicating with residents about the programs and services it provides and responding to inquiries. As the city is a public entity, existing to serve all residents of Steinbach, the removal of accessibility barriers, is an important consideration for the city.

b. Accessibility Achievements

- Most city facilities have automated doors and/or lever door handles and are wheelchair accessible.

- In most city facilities, dedicated receptionists and/or customer service representatives are available to greet, direct and offer the public assistance. This staff is empowered to accommodate all visitors. This includes physically writing out cheques and filling out forms on people's behalf, as well as explaining processes.

- City facilities where there is no receptionist or customer service representative have signage to provide direction and identify facility amenities.

- City staff has access to interpreters through the office of Eastman Immigrant Services when required.

- A variety of methods are used to communicate city services and programs to the public. This includes advertising in the local newspaper, radio ads, social media, including Facebook and Youtube, direct mail and website posts. The city's website has been recently redesigned with accessibility as a main goal. Significant white space, contrasting panels, plain language, and an easy to read, large font is used. Website links are labeled for content identification and the site is compatible with screen reader software. Any documents available on the city's website are also available in paper copy at City Hall by request.

- Computer and internet access are not a requirement for the public to access city services and programs. Computers are available at the Jake Epp Library for people wanting to correspond or access city information online.

- Steinbach Alert Now, the city's emergency notification service, is a web-based service that provides notification to citizens using text, email and phone call during an emergency. Citizens can either sign up online or they can call or visit city Hall to register for the service. Notifications are offered through TTY for people that are deaf and hard of hearing.

- The city records all city council meetings and makes the videos available on YouTube, which provides a closed captioning service. This is in addition to paper copies of the meeting minutes which are available online and in person at City Hall.

c. Accessibility Barriers

City of Steinbach facilities range greatly in terms of physical accessibility. Newer buildings, such as the Fire Hall and T.G. Smith Centre, are more easily accessible then some of the older facilities. Below is a list of accessibility barriers specific to each city facility:

Facility	Accessibility Barriers
City Hall 225 Reimer Avenue	• Staff awareness and training • Front reception desk design is not accessible for customers in wheelchairs • Staff do not know how to accommodate visitors attending meetings who may have accessibility issues
Operations Building 51 Millwork Drive	• Staff awareness and training • Entrance doors do not have automatic door openers and handles are click and pull style • Front reception desk design is not accessible for customers in wheelchairs • Staff do not know how to accommodate visitors attending meetings who may have accessibility issues
Landfill Facility 104 Hanover Road	• Staff awareness and training • Public access is a significant barrier for people with mobility issues • Lacks signage to assist with navigation of facility and usage directions • Staff do not know how to accommodate visitors attending meetings who may have accessibility issues
Fire Hall 477 Main Street	• Staff awareness and training

Facility	Accessibility Barriers
Aquatic Centre 330 Park Road	- Staff awareness and training - Indoor pool deck door (access from lobby to viewing area) is not wheelchair accessible and is difficult to operate - During an emergency there is no method in place to notify hearing impaired patrons at the facility
T.G. Smith Centre 321 Elmdale Street	- Staff awareness and training - During an emergency there is no method in place to notify hearing impaired patrons at the facility

PART 2. Accessibility Plan

a. Statement of Commitment

The City of Steinbach is committed to ensuring equal access and participation for people with disabilities. We are committed to treating people with disabilities in ways that allow them to maintain their dignity and independence. We believe in inclusion. We are committed to meeting the needs of the people who face accessibility barriers. We will do this by identifying, removing and preventing barriers and by meeting the requirements of *The Accessibility for Manitobans Act (AMA).*

b. **Policies**

The City of Steinbach will review all programs, services and new initiatives and facilities to ensure accessibility.

City of Steinbach will make information available in an accessible format or provide communication supports to people with disabilities in a way that considers their disability.

c. **Actions**

Action	Status
Accessibility Committee Accessibility Coordinator will be identified for the City of Steinbach. An Accessibility Committee of city staff will be created to identify accessibility barriers for people using city services, facilities and programs. The committee will be responsible for creating an accessibility plan that identifies and addresses barriers.	Complete
Staff Training & Awareness 1. The Accessibility Committee will research available accessibility training resources. This includes online resources (ex. training videos) as well as resources that exist in the community (ex. Steinbach Family Resource Centre, Eastman Immigrant Services etc.).	Ongoing

Action	Status
2. A training plan will be created to assist city staff to recognize specific accessibility barriers and take the necessary steps to accommodate. This includes accommodations for: ○ **Attitudinal barriers** *such as* speaking directly to the individual with the disability and not the support person and not assuming that people with speech impairments do not understand what is being said. ○ **Informational and communication barriers** *such as* making eye contact, speaking slowly to accommodate lip reading, and using plain language. ○ **Technological barriers** *such as* offering online information in paper format and ensuring the website is accessible. ○ **Systematic barriers** *such as* accepting job applications online and in-person. ○ **Physical and architectural barriers** *such as* good informational and navigational signage in facilities and accessible paths to meeting rooms and events. 3. Initial training of staff will be prioritized based on position and level of public interaction. Front line staff including receptionists and customer service representatives will receive training first. 4. All city staff will receive accessibility training. The scope of training will be specific to individual positions and level of public interaction.	

Action	Status
Facility Accommodations A list of city facilities and corresponding accessibility barriers will be created. Key city staff are aware of the accessibility issues identified on the list and are already taking steps to address some of them. General signage for all city facilities is being explored. Message would be along the lines of "If you have an accessibility issue and require assistance, please speak to our staff."	Complete Ongoing
Processes 1. The Accessibility Committee will be created to review and document specific accessibility situations that arise. A guide for dealing with similar situations in future will be created and shared across the organization and added to the city's accessibility plan. 2. The Accessibility Committee will create a process for staff to follow when an accessibility barrier is identified with which they are unfamiliar or unsure how to accommodate. **3.** All new or returning employees will receive appropriate accessibility training as part of their orientation.	Ongoing

Action	Status
Plan Communication **Internal** – communicate accessibility plan to all city employees, focusing on available support tools and processes. Communication methods include employee bi-weekly newsletter, intranet ("Datacity"), and department staff meetings ("Toolbox" talks). **External** – raise awareness and make plan available to all Steinbach residents. Communication methods include quarterly direct mail newsletters, city website, and social media platforms. Paper copies will also be available at City Hall.	Ongoing
Budget Allocation Budget will vary and be allocated according to the needs of the program.	Ongoing
Monitor Progress Regular reporting to senior city staff and council regarding city accessibility issues, challenges, and successes.	Ongoing

d. Expected Outcomes

1. Steinbach residents with accessibility issues are able to access city services, facilities and programs while maintaining their independence.

2. All levels of city staff will be more conscious and aware of accessibility barriers and recognize accessibility issues more readily.

3. Staff will feel confident when confronted with accessibility issues having been provided with training and the tools to assist.

4. Senior staff will consider and incorporate accessibility requirements in their short and long term planning going forward.

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Contact Person:

Rhona Dundas, Corporate Services Manager
204-346-6530
rdundas@steinbach.ca

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Troy Warkentin
City Manager