



City of Steinbach

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**City of Steinbach**

# **Accessibility Plan: 2022-2024**

**January 31, 2022**

\*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 18,000 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 are not. There are also limited times where City employees are required to attend to citizens at their private residences. 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**

- City employees responsible for customer service or accessibility policies receive training on how to serve people that are disabled with accessibility barriers within the first weeks of employment.
- The City of Steinbach funds an accessible transit service for senior citizens and people with disabilities. Fare rates are kept low through subsidies from the provincial Mobility Disadvantaged Transportation Program and local taxation.
- The City of Steinbach has formed an Accessibility Committee of at least three members that review all programs, services, policies, procedures, employee training, new initiatives, new facilities and feedback with

accessibility challenges in mind. The goal of this committee is continuous improvement in preventing, reducing and removing accessibility barriers.

- The City of Steinbach has a plan for receiving and responding to feedback concerning accessibility issues.
- 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. These employees are 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 employees have 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, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube, direct mail and website posts. The City's website is designed 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 or speech impaired.
- City council meetings are steamed live on YouTube and video recordings are also made available for playback on the City YouTube channel. YouTube provides a closed captioning service for the hearing impaired. 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 than some of the older facilities. Below is a list of accessibility barriers specific to each city facility:

<b>Facility</b>	<b>Accessibility Barriers</b>
<b>Operations Building</b> 51 Millwork Drive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Entrance doors do not have automatic door openers and handles are click and pull style.</li> </ul>
<b>Aquatic Centre</b> 330 Park Road	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access from lobby to viewing area is not wheelchair accessible. If assistance is required, please see Customer Service.</li> <li>• When entering the facility, please report hearing impairment to Customer Service. Customer Service will communicate the impairment to the Instructor Guards.</li> </ul>
<b>T.G. Smith Centre</b> 321 Elmdale Street	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• During an emergency there is no method in place to notify hearing impaired patrons at the facility.</li> </ul>

## **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 accessibility barriers as is reasonably possible and by meeting the requirements of *The Accessibility for Manitobans Act (AMA)*. These policies are available on the City of Steinbach website and in public facilities operated by the City of Steinbach.

### **b. Policies**

#### **1. Accessible Communication**

The City of Steinbach aims to remove communication barriers through the use of various communication tools and methods for people that self-identify as being disabled by a barrier. This includes welcoming and supporting the use of: alternate information presentation formats or methods, assistive devices, support persons and service animals where possible.

#### **2. Accessible Facilities**

The City of Steinbach aims to maintain barrier free access to its public facilities so that they benefit everyone as intended. Public entrance ways, hallways and meeting rooms are maintained with accessibility concerns in mind. Where possible, City employees are available upon request to assist with existing accessibility barriers in older buildings. We welcome and support the use of: assistive devices, support persons and service animals where possible.

In the event of a planned or unexpected disruption of services or facilities for customers disabled by barriers, we will post notices on the premises and on the City of Steinbach website to announce the disruption. We will post notices for inaccessible washrooms, automatic doors and entranceways. Notices will be posted at the entrance to affected public facilities.

### **3. Assistive Devices, Support Persons & Service Animals**

The City of Steinbach welcomes and supports the use of personal assistive devices, support persons and service animals when accessing our goods, services or public facilities. In cases where assistive devices, support persons or service animals present significant and unavoidable health or safety concerns, other measures will be taken to ensure the person with a disability can access our goods, services or facilities.

When it is not easy to identify that an animal is a service animal and if appropriate, City employees may ask:

- a. Is the animal assisting you?
- b. What assistance has the animal been trained to provide related to your disability?

If service animals are prohibited by another law, we will do the following to ensure people with disabilities can access our goods, services or public facilities:

- a. Explain why the animal is excluded
- b. Discuss with the customer another way of providing goods, services access to public facilities



## **4. Accessibility Committee**

The City of Steinbach will maintain an Accessibility Committee of at least three members that reviews all programs, services, policies, procedures, employee training, new initiatives and facilities with accessibility challenges in mind.

## **5. Employee Training**

City employees responsible for customer service or accessibility policies receive training on how to serve people that are disabled with accessibility barriers. Training includes:

- Background and purpose of The Accessibility for Manitobans Act.
- The requirements of the Accessibility Standard for Customer Service.
- Explanation of all policies relating to the Accessibility Standard for Customer Service.
- How to interact and communicate with people disabled by barriers including those who use assistive devices, service animals or support people.
- How to use the equipment or devices available on-site or otherwise provided, to help people access goods, services and public facilities. These include automatic doors and wheelchair lifts at the swimming pool.
- What to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty in accessing our goods, services or public facilities.
- City employees will also be informed and trained where necessary when changes are made to our accessible customer service policies.

## **6. Feedback**

The City of Steinbach welcomes feedback on how we provide accessible customer service. Feedback helps us identify barriers and respond to concerns. The City of Steinbach accepts feedback on accessibility issues and complaints in person at any of our public facilities, over the phone, and on

our website. All accessibility feedback is reviewed by the City of Steinbach Accessibility Committee. A City employee will respond to issues and complaints within three regular business days. Documentation of feedback is available on request.

### **c. Actions Planned for 2022-2024**

- The City of Steinbach Accessibility Committee will continue to meet with the purpose of reviewing City policies, practices, new By-Laws, programs, services, employee training, communications, and feedback with accessibility concerns in mind. Where possible, the committee will make recommendations to reduce and remove accessibility barriers.
- Review requirements of the Manitoba Accessibility Standard for Employment and implement necessary changes to policy and standard practices.
- Review Accessibility for public events of the City of Steinbach.

### **d. Expected Outcomes for 2022-2024**

1. Steinbach residents with accessibility barriers are able to access city services, facilities and programs while maintaining their independence.
2. City employees are trained to be more conscious and aware of accessibility barriers and recognize accessibility issues more readily.
3. City employees are confident in accommodating an accessibility barrier having been provided with training and the tools to assist.
4. Senior management considers and incorporates accessibility requirements in their short and long term planning going forward.



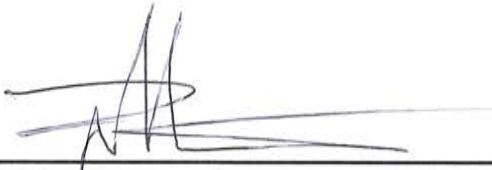
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