

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of the *Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001 (ODA)* is to improve opportunities for people with disabilities and to provide for their involvement in the identification, removal and prevention of the barriers. The ODA mandates that each Municipality prepare an annual accessibility plan.

The accessibility plan is intended to address existing barriers to people with disabilities and to prevent new barriers from being established. All municipalities, regardless of the size, are required to prepare annual accessibility plans as part of their regular planning process.

The plan describes the measures the Town has taken in the past and plan to take during the current year to identify, remove, and prevent barriers to people with disabilities who use the facilities and services of the Town, including employees and members of the community at large.

The establishment of an annual accessibility plan will have positive outcomes on the community as a whole. The primary beneficiaries of barrier removal and barrier prevention exercises are people with disabilities. However, a positive result of accessibility planning is that all people benefit.

The Accessibility Plan for 2010 not only provides a review of the barriers identified in last year's plan, but also provides the progress to date in removing and preventing these barriers. The yearly review of the Accessibility Plan provides an opportunity for the Municipality to acknowledge successes, reevaluate timelines and costs, research options, and identify new barriers.

PURPOSE

The Purpose of this plan is to describe the measures the Town of Parry Sound has taken in previous years and will take during the coming year to identify, remove and prevent barriers for people with disabilities who use municipal facilities and services.

OBJECTIVE

The objectives of this plan are to:

1. Report on the measures the Town has taken to identify, remove and prevent barriers to people with disabilities.
2. Describe the measures in place to ensure that the Town assesses its proposals for by-laws, policies, programs, practices and services to determine their effect on accessibility for people with disabilities.

3. List the facilities, policies, programs, practices and services that the Town will review in the coming year to identify barriers to people with disabilities.
4. Describe the measures the Town intends to take in the coming year to identify, remove and prevent barriers to people with disabilities.
5. Describe how the Town will make this accessibility plan available to public.

OVERVIEW OF THE TOWN OF PARRY SOUND

Parry Sound is a community nestled on the rugged shores of Georgian Bay, and home of hockey legend Bobby Orr. It is the economic centre for the West Parry Sound area and a popular tourist destination. It strives to be the home of vibrant culture and commerce, of successful promotion and partnerships, and of opportunity and tradition in an effort to offer an unsurpassed quality of life on the shore of Georgian Bay.

Ideally located, Parry Sound is little more than two hours north of Toronto, and connected via Highway 400. Additional local waterway, airway, and railway services create a transportation network proficient in personal and freight movement to and from provincial, national and international destinations.

Parry Sound has a low population density of 436.4 population/km². According to Ontario Census 2006 the population of the Town of Parry Sound is 6250 and during the summer months has a transient population of approximately 75,000.

Parry Sound being the economic hub supports the following service providers: West Parry Sound Health Centre, Belvedere Heights Home for the Aged, Lakeland Long Term Care, Serenity Place, Friends Apartments, One Kids Place, Community Living, RISE and Muskoka Parry Sound Mental Health. Further, located within the municipality are Provincial Agencies, Federal Agencies, Social Services, Financial Services, Medical Clinics, Hospitality, Cultural and Entertainment.

MUNICIPAL SERVICES:

Corporation of the Town of Parry Sound consists of the following departments: Corporate Services; Finance and Administration; Provincial Offences Office, Community Development (Planning, Building, By-law and Crossing Guards); Public Safety (Fire and EMS); Economic Development and Leisure Services; Operations (environment, roads, parks, facilities).

Municipal facilities considered in the plan are:

- Administration Building

- Fire Department
- Operations Yard
- Cemetery - 2
- Waste Water Treatment Plant
- Water Treatment Plant
- McFarlane Transfer Station
- Temporary Impound
- Parry Sound Library
- Charles W. Stockey Centre
- Bobby Orr Community Centre
- CP Station – public hall
- CN building – Chamber of Commerce
- Town Dock and Big Sound Marina
- Public Washrooms in the downtown core
- Two municipal boat launches
- 4 Municipal parking lots
- Waubuno Beach, and a number of municipal parks (Cherry, William, Yvonne Williams, Old Town Beach, Mission, Booth, Kinsmen, Bay Street parkette.
- Fitness trail
- 2 Dog off leash parks

THE TOWN OF PARRY SOUND COMMITMENT TO ACCESSIBILITY PLANNING.

The Corporation of the Town of Parry Sound is committed to the continual improvement of access to all municipality own facilities, premises and services for all those with disabilities, including employees and the community at large.

A staff member, the Accessibility Coordinator, will identify and plan for the elimination of the barriers through the preparation the Accessibility Plan. The Coordinator and Chief Administrative Officer will review the status of the plan every six months to ensure targets are being met.

Parry Sound, having a population less than 10,000 is not required to form an advisory committee. However, the Accessibility Coordinator for the Town is a member of the Parry Sound and Area Disability Advisory Council (PSADAC). The Town relies on the resources and expert opinions of this council for input into the annual plan and community feedback.

PSADAC objectives are:

- To isolate issues that encumbers persons with disabilities at moving on to employment and develops solutions and strategies.
- To engage the community, link the support structures and conduct public awareness activities.

- To develop and implement an annual conference focused on disabilities and issues related to our region in addition to designing and implementing workshops for consumers.
- To link and consolidate by means of an advisory council to present to Government and exchange accurate information to Government for future service and program planning.
- To share information and exchange resources, ideas and solutions to maximize community potential.

DEFINITION

Barrier: A barrier is anything that prevents a person with a disability from fully participating in all aspects of society because of his or her disability.

There are many kinds of barriers:

Architectural barriers may result from the design of the building, shape of rooms, size of doorways, or width of hallways, for example.

Physical barriers refer to objects added to the environment, such as doors, windows, elevators, furniture, bathroom hardware, etc.

Information or communication barriers make it difficult for people to receive or send information. For example, a person with a visual disability may not be able to read printed materials, read signs, locate landmarks, or see a hazard. A person with an intellectual disability may not understand information that is not expressed in plain language.

Attitudinal barriers refer to persons who do not know how to communicate with people with disabilities, or persons who display discriminatory behaviours.

Technology barriers refer to devices such as computers, telephones, inadequate or inappropriate assistive technologies.

Systemic barriers can result from an organization's policies, practices and protocols if they restrict persons with disabilities.

BARRIER IDENTIFICATION PROCESS

Town of Parry Sound welcomes feedback from all persons and is committed to providing quality service that is accessible and takes into account a person's disability. The Accessibility Coordinator solicits input on the identification and removal of barriers from the community, Municipal Management Team and Parry Sound and Area Disability Advisory Council. There are Customer Feedback suggestion boxes located at the following municipal facilities: Bobby Orr

Community Centre, Parry Sound Public Library, Fire Hall, Charles W. Stockey Centre and the Municipal Office. Further, the Municipal Website provides an opportunity to give input on the website, the provisions of goods and services and accessibility of municipal facilities.

Also, the Town will address barriers based on Provincial legislation – ***Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA)***. The purpose of the AODA is to achieve a fully accessible Ontario by 2025. To achieve this goal the AODA will implement five standards: Customer Service; Transportation; Employment; Information and Communication and the Built Environment. The Customer Service standard is now in effect and has resulted in the development of the Customer Service Manual.

COMMUNICATION OF THE PLAN

Upon approval, the plan will be made available to the public through the following means:

- The document will placed on the Town’s website – www.townofparrysound.com
- Copies of the plan will be available upon request by: email, in person or upon written request.
- Upon request, the plan will be made available in some alternative formats.

ACHIEVEMENTS

Schedule “A”

BARRIERS TO BE ADDRESSED IN 2010

Schedule “B”

Conclusion

The ODA and the AODA has legislated that municipalities across Ontario improve access for persons with disabilities. As providers of service to the public, the Town plays a significant role in ensuring full access to those living in our community.

While the work is primarily designed for persons with disabilities, many of the achievements in improved accessibility are a direct benefit to all Parry Sound residents.

The municipality will continue to develop plans and initiatives for the community in accordance with the Provincial Legislation.

Feedback on the accessibility of facilities and services at the Town is always welcome. Please contact Tammy Purdy, Accessibility Coordinator, as indicated below:

Mail: Town of Parry Sound
52 Seguin Street
Parry sound, ON
P2A 1B4

Phone: 705-746-2101

E-mail: accessibility@townofparrysound.com

In person: Town of Parry Sound
Parry Sound Mall
70 Joseph St.
Parry Sound, ON