

City of North Bay

Municipal Accessibility Advisory Committee

**2008 Update
Municipal Accessibility Plan**

September 2008

(Large Print Version)

Submitted To: Mayor & Council

Submitted By: North Bay Municipal Accessibility Advisory
Committee

Executive Summary:

- 1) This Update is a review of the continued progress on the 2003 Municipal Accessibility Plan, focused on the Long-Term recommendations in that Plan.
- 2) Council and City Staff are to be commended on continued progress made on a number of fronts since the Plan was adopted. Significant investments have continued, particularly in mobility services. Future investments in making barrier-free City-owned buildings are scheduled. Communications practice and procedure improvements are also occurring regularly.
- 3) The Committee recommends that Council continue with its program of accessible Transit fleet replacements.
- 4) The Committee requests that Council and Staff address and act upon the recommendations contained in Section 6 of the report.

1.0 Introduction to the 2008 Update

- Council adopted original Municipal Accessibility Plan (MAP) in September 2003
- Requirement under the *Ontarians with Disabilities Act (ODA)* for annual reviews of the Plan, commenting on specific improvements to services and on areas requiring further improvement in order to increase accessibility to City-owned or City-run facilities, programs or services
- Reporting requirement continues under the new *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA)*, adopted in May, 2005
- This Update will make observations about City of North Bay accomplishments and possible improvements to City-owned and operated facilities, programs and services

- Like the original Accessibility Plan (which was a Joint Plan under the *ODA*), this update will reflect both City operations and City Transit programs and services

2.0 Process behind Update

- Compare City actions in a number of areas against the Long-Term recommendations contained in Section 5.0 of the 2003 Municipal Accessibility Plan

3.0 How the M.A.A.C. Consulted

- Contacts/follow up with City Staff throughout 2008
- Comments given to Committee members throughout the year
- MAAC Accessibility Awareness Week – education to the public as well as submission of comments received
- Through the MAAC Website individuals are able to complete a survey and submit their concerns to the MAAC.

4.0 Achievements/Improvements

- Acknowledgements to the Council and Staff for continued progress and for the investments made
- Use the Long-Term recommendations from the 2003 MAP as a guiding tool

4.1 Mobility

- Focus continues on Transit investments and service improvements made
- Conventional ‘Low Floor’ coaches – 2 more have been purchased in 2008

- With the arrival of these coaches, Transit is now 61% accessible.
- Long term projection is that Transit fleet will be completely accessible by 2012.
- The replacement of Transit coaches in favour of Low Floor accessible coaches will provide increased opportunity in mobility for people with disabilities
- Para-bus fleet – the aging buses continue to be replaced – new coach has been approved for 2008
- All City bus stops have been named as required by the Human Rights Commission, and are being announced as required.

4.2 Facility/Design

- Architectural consultants have been hired to assist in the design of modifications (including barrier-free renovations) for 18 City playground and parks buildings
- A review of design considerations for accessible Transit shelters is underway
- Transit Staff continue to work with representatives from various organizations representing the disabled in an effort to continually improve accessibility features
- The CNIB conducted an audit on behalf of the MAAC regarding Audible Signals locations in the City. The report has been forwarded to the Managing Director of Engineering, Environment and Works for consideration.

4.3 Communications

- A MAAC-hosted National Accessibility Awareness Week event was planned and run during the fourth week of May in the new accessible Transit Terminal
- The Advisory Committee invited Staff representatives from local groups in order to share information and build awareness
- The MAAC is sending out information flyers to promote the use of the new accessible buses

4.4 Policy/Procedure/Practice

- MAAC has now reviewed both the Accessible Customer Service Standard and has provided Council with a recommendation on the proposed Accessible Public Transportation Standard, both under the AODA.

5.0 Results of the Community Consultations

The individuals and groups who responded acknowledged progress made by the City in different areas, but raised a number of issues that could be considered (see the list that follows):

- The timing of para-bus and the pre-scheduling required to use this system
- Snow removal on sidewalks needs to be improved due to the fear of getting stuck in the wheelchair
- Accessibility at the North Bay Public Library is difficult – elevator access and design & safety plan is not apparent for disabled individuals
- Lack of accessibility ramps at sidewalks at Highway 11/17 and Seymour Street Intersection

- Sidewalk design. Consideration should be given to the grooves in pavement, and the impact on individuals in wheelchairs

6.0 Specific Recommendations for 2009

- Continue purchase and installation of audible traffic signals in consultation with the MAAC and CNIB, with the objective of acquiring 4 new signals over the next four years. The report prepared by CNIB on behalf of the Committee is attached for consideration
- Allow the MAAC (or an accessibility consultant) to review drawings or designs for any new City building or major renovation to make comment on accessibility and design features
- Relocate activation buttons for automatic doors at City-owned buildings for easier use and convert to 'Press Pads'. Consider the installation of automatic doors at all main entrances to City-owned buildings and large public assembly areas within these buildings.
- Ensure the construction of mid-block ramps and sidewalk ramps at intersections for any reconstruction of City Streets. Ramps are required at Seymour Street and Highway 11/17 intersection.
- Work with the City to continue to review facilities to address ongoing accessibility issues.

Appendices

Municipal Accessibility Advisory Committee Members – 2006 to 2010

Denise Alkins (Chair)
Nicole Glanz (Member)
Brian Trivett (Member)
Barb Smith (Member)
Nora Long (Member)
Dorothy Robidas (Member)
Councillor Judith Koziol (Council Representative)
Beverley Hillier (City Staff Representative / Secretary)
Peter Carello (City Staff Representative / Secretary)
Dorothy Carvell (City Transit Representative)

The following members offered their resignation from the MAAC Committee:

Serge Falardeau
Jim Greig

The Committee thanks both Serge and Jim for their effort and contribution to the MAAC Committee

Excerpt: 2003 Municipal Accessibility Plan

Table 4 – Long-Term (13-48 months) Recommendations

<i>CNB Facility, Program or Service</i>	<i>Type of Concern/Barrier</i>	<i>Recommended Solution</i>
Solid Waste Collection	Policy, Practice, Procedure	Investigate door-to-door service for persons with special needs
Para-Bus/ParaTaxi Services	Mobility	Increase levels of service, integrate during peak hours of service
Traffic Signals	Facility/Design	Install audible signals on all traffic lights
Sidewalks/Trails	Mobility	Develop 'scooter routes' around city
Sidewalks	Mobility	Provide sidewalks on 1 side of street
Parks/Picnic sites	Facility/Design	Make all sites accessible
City Hall	Facility/Design	Complete accessibility improvements
Human Resources	Practice/Procedure	Develop an Accommodations Policy for hiring persons with disabilities
City Transit	Mobility	Commence conversion of regular fleet, more Para -Buses
Council Meetings	Practice/Procedure	Live captioning of Council Meetings
Roads/Sidewalks	Mobility	Continue improvements to ramps, curb cuts, signage, accessible parking spaces
Parking Spaces - Downtown	Mobility	Create side-loading parking spaces on Main St., Parking Garage