

## Policy: Accessibility Plan

Section: Community Development

Policy #2017-03

Resolution #337-17

Effective Date: October 24, 2017

### **BACKGROUND**

The Accessibility for Manitobans Act (AMA) was passed on December 5, 2013 to provide a clear, proactive process to identify, prevent and remove barriers to accessibility.

Removing barriers to accessibility will give Manitobans of all abilities the opportunity to:

- participate fully in everyday life
- access and benefit from a system, service, product or environment

The legislation requires accessibility standards to be developed over the next several years. The standards will address barriers and set out requirements in five key areas of daily living.

1. customer service standard
2. information and communication
3. transportation
4. employment
5. built environment

### **APPLICATION**

#### **Part 1. Baseline Report**

##### **A. Overview of Programs and Services**

- Provides recreational activities and programs for youth, adults and seniors.
- Provides facilities to the public for recreational purposes and meeting spaces including a community hall, recreation complex, library, wading pool, playgrounds, campground, outdoor kitchen, museum and municipal board room.
- Provides municipal services through utility and tax payments, website, public complaints, utility services, general inquiries and information, water and waste management, public works, drainage and beavers, garbage pick-up, council minutes and agendas, and bylaw enforcement.

##### **B. Accessibility Achievements**

- Having accessible venue options for programs and meetings.
- Improvements in website design and accessibility capabilities including reader compatibility, online forms, council meeting minutes, local events and notices.
- Designs print materials and event advertising with large, easy to read fonts and colours.
- New accessible municipal office with accessible washrooms, ramps, and doors with lever handles and door openers.
- Installing wheelchair ramps with hand rails on municipally owned buildings.

- Investigation and planning costs for accessible improvements to municipally owned buildings.

### C. Accessibility Barriers

- The Recreation Complex needs upgrades in order for it to be a complete barrier-free facility including the skating arena ice surface, the upstairs curling lounge, and washroom facilities.
- Main street municipal buildings including the Community Development Office and Library need upgrades to improve accessibility.
- Groups representing persons with disabilities or seniors have not been consulted to determine how inclusion could be promoted throughout the community.
- Poor wireless and internet service in our community creates communication issues.

## Part 2. Accessibility Plan

### A. Statement of Commitment

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

### B. Accessibility Committee

The accessibility working group is comprised of members of the Community Development subcommittee. The subcommittee includes the Community Development Officer (accessibility coordinator) and four members of Council (working group).

### C. Policies

- Gilbert Plains Municipality will consider accessibility during development of programs, services and new initiatives to ensure accessibility.
- Gilbert Plains Municipality will make information available in an accessible format or provide communication support to people with disabilities in a way that considers their disability.
- Each year Council will consider accessibility within the budget to allow for further correction of identified barriers.
- Accessibility considerations will be made during municipal decisions related to by-laws, planning, building and the creation of municipal services.

#### D. Actions

<u>Action</u>	<u>Timeline</u>	<u>Strategy</u>	<u>Responsibility</u>
Accessibility Plan	2017	Establish working group to create and adopt accessibility plan policy.	Working group, Council
Accessibility on website	2017	Create a page dedicated to accessibility information on the municipal website.	Community Development Officer/ Administration
Public forms	2017	Include the active offer on all publications (Example: "Available in all formats upon request").	Administration
Wheelchair accessible front counter	2017	Explore alternate methods of providing customer services where physical barriers exist. Staff will continue to proceed to the front of the desk to communicate with those who need assistance until physical barriers can be removed.	Working group
Apply for grants	2018	Apply for accessibility grants to help cost share making all municipally-owned buildings accessible.	Community Development Officer
Handicap parking spaces	2018	Have spots designated for handicap parking on more Main Street locations.	Working group, Public Works
Sidewalks/Curbs/ Streets	2019	Design accessible curb ramps for sidewalks. Repair/replace sidewalks and walkways. Improve low spots/dips on streets for those with mobility aids.	Public Works
Staff training	2018	Employee awareness of communications and practices appropriate for interactions with members of the disability community and removing barriers.	Administration
Public Events	2017	Continue to design print materials for events in large print and easy to read fonts. Make advertisements and information available electronically. Ensure meeting places are an accessible venue and offer to accommodate in any way possible.	Community Development Officer
Public Communication	2018	Encourage community members to provide yearly feedback about the plan to be considered during yearly reviews. Feedback can be submitted in-person, electronically, or other requested submission methods.	Community Development Officer/ Administration

#### E. Review

Gilbert Plains Municipality is committed to ensuring equal access and participation for people with disabilities. The Accessibility Plan will be reviewed annually allowing council, staff and the public to monitor the barriers identified and the direction to which the Municipality is moving to remove barriers under the AMA. Action items will be taken into budget considerations on a yearly basis.

#### F. Communication

Copies of the Accessibility Plan will be available at the Gilbert Plains Municipal Office located at 201 Main Street North, Gilbert Plains, Manitoba and will also be posted on the municipal website at [www.gilbertplains.com](http://www.gilbertplains.com). Should a copy be requested in an alternate format or text size the staff will assist to the best of their ability.

Contact Person: Julie Russell  
(Accessibility Coordinator)

Phone: 204-548-2519  
Email: [gpcdo@mymts.net](mailto:gpcdo@mymts.net)