



March 2017

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## **Town of Morris 2017/2018 Accessibility Plan**

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### **Municipality**

Town of Morris

### **Address**

Box 28

Morris, Manitoba

ROG 1K0

### **Website**

[www.townofmorris.ca](http://www.townofmorris.ca)

### **Key Contact**

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**This document is available in a variety of accessible formats upon request.**

## STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

**The Town of Morris** is committed to ensuring that all citizens of Morris have equal access to all our services and facilities regardless of their abilities. We are committed to treating people in a way which allows them to have superior quality of life, unlimited opportunities and ensuring we have a community which celebrates the diversity of people. We are committed to meeting the needs of people who face accessibility barriers by identifying, removing, and preventing these barriers and by meeting the requirements of *The Accessibility for Manitobans Act*.

### A. BACKGROUND

On December 5 2013 *The Accessibility for Manitobans Act (AMA)* was passed. The Act provides the process to identify, prevent and remove barriers for all citizens. Part of the Act mandates that smaller municipalities must have a plan in place by 2017 and the plan must be updated every two years.

The Act stipulates that a development of 5 accessibility standards will take place over the next few years and as they come into force municipalities will then be required to adopt the standards. The five standards are:

1. Customer service standard
2. Information and communication
3. Transportation
4. Employment
5. Built environment

The *Customer Service Accessibility Standard* came into effect 2015 and municipalities will have until November 1, 2017 to comply with the requirements. The Customer Service Standard requires that Manitoba organizations establish and implement measures, policies, and practices that:

- Identify and remove barriers to accessible customer service, or if it cannot be removed, find alternate means to provide the good or service.
- Allow assistive devices such as wheelchairs and oxygen.
- Allow support persons to enter and remain with the customer
- Inform the public when accessibility services are not available
- Develop a procedure to receive and respond to feedback regarding accessibility
- Ensure all employees are trained on the Customer Service Standard
- Ensure that Public Events are accessible.

## **B. Overview**

The Town of Morris is located on Provincial Trunk Highway 75, 30 minutes south of Winnipeg in the center of the Red River Valley. Morris is Centerport's southern link connecting it to the U.S. We are a unique transportation hub with two highways and two railways strategically connecting us to the international trade routes. While the Town of Morris is mandated to prepare an Accessibility Plan, it is extremely important to ensure all citizens and visitors can move about the Town Morris barrier free.

The Town of Morris created an Accessibility Working Group to create the Accessibility Plan. The Working group met on a few occasions and have gone back to their respective departments to work with staff to ensure that the plan represents all of the Town of Morris employees. Our first step was preparing a list of all services Morris provides. Also, identifying the barriers one might come across and what can be done to remove the barriers. This information was compiled and makes up the Town of Morris Baseline Report.

### **C. Town of Morris Accessibility Committee**

The following individuals are part of the Accessibility Working Group

Brigitte Doerksen	Chief Administrative Officer
Stephanie Harris	Administrative Assistant
Brian Wiebe	Public Works employee
Angela Wiebe	Recreation Director
Melissa Marion	Director of Marketing and Events -Morris MultiPlex

## **BASELINE REPORT**

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

The Town of Morris provides municipal services to approximately 1885 residents. Core Services are listed as follows:

#### Public Safety

- Fire Protection (Volunteer Fire Department)
- Emergency Measures Operation
- By-Law Enforcement
- *RCMP*
- *Hospital*

#### Planning and Community Development

- Building Inspector
- Economic Development
- Cemetery

## Public Works

- Snow removal (roads and sidewalks)
- Water and Wastewater maintenance
- Infrastructure maintenance

## Recreation, Parks/culture, and Multi Facility

- Morris Pool
- Morris MultiPlex Inc. (arena, curling club, wellness center, banquet halls)
- Outdoor parks (splash pad, rinks, baseball diamonds, soccer field, walking trails)
- Special events (Canada Day)

## Civic Centre (Town office)

- Administration
- Communication
- Record keeping
- Mayor and Council
- Meetings
- Council Chambers
- EOC- Emergency Operating Center (when needed)

## **B. Accessibility Achievements**

Eliminating barriers for persons with disabilities has been part of the towns work practices for many years. Some of the highlights of these practices include:

1: The Town of Morris Office got approval from their grant application for Enabling Accessibility Fund Small Project Component through the Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (EAF) elevator service.

2: The town office had their Elevator Installed

3. The Morris MultiPlex Facility

4: HandiVan

5: Got Approved for the Handy Van Garage through

6: Morris Multiplex provided accessible parking spot

7: Signed up for Accessibility Awareness Training to all Corporation staff, volunteers, and contractors from the Manitoba federation on Non-Profit organization inc, June 4<sup>th</sup>

8: Morris multiplex pool is currently applying for a grant to receive a chairlift.

9: Expanded their scope from summer child and youth program to include year-round activities. This program ensures that children and youth with disabilities have the opportunity to participate.

## **C. Accessibility Barriers**

### **Attitudinal Barriers –**

Teach our employees how to talk with and understand individuals with disabilities, and not to talk to the individual support person assuming the person with the disability doesn't understand.

- Listen to the person with the disability. Do not make assumptions about what that person can or cannot do.
- Talk directly to the person with the disability, not through his or her companion. This applies to a person with ANY disability.
- Extend common courtesies. Shake hands or exchange business cards. If the person cannot shake your hand or grasp your card, they will tell you. Do not be ashamed of your attempt
- If the customer has a speech impairment and you are having trouble understanding what he or she is saying, ask the person to repeat rather than pretend you understand.



- Offer assistance to person with a disability, but wait until your offer is accepted before you help

## **Informational and Communication Barriers-**

Our website is only available to people who can read, have good vision. Our phone service is only to the receiver who can hear and speak.

All Town of Morris information comes in writing. Nothing is set in place for the visually impaired or someone with a reading disability.

Our town newsletter is only in writing, small print at that.

Ask if the receiver understands, don't just assume they understand and vice versa, if we don't understand what the individual is trying to say ask again.

Contact services that represent persons with disabilities: Brailled documentation, Real time Captioning service, American Sign Language interpreter service, Communication disabilities access Canada etc... (Appendix C)

How accessibility affects each area in our organization/town

Steps we have taken to improve (accessibility, policies, and procedures

Barriers users still face in accessing your programs, facilities, and service.

## **Technological Barriers-**

Our website is not set up for the reader who uses a screen reader software.

Our stop lights are not set up for the visual impaired.

Water Bills?

We need to make sure every email is accessible to people who use screen readers and offer alternative methods of communications

Welcome job applications in several different formats

## **Systemic Barriers-**

Morris makes sure that accessibility is considered when making plans for events and invite attendees to tell you in they have a specific accessibility need. We have an accessibility checklist for our events.

When and if an employee returns to work after an absence due to a disability our first step is to talk about their specific need, then inquire about the specifics.

Implement a fragrance-free policy

## **Physical and Architectural Barriers-**

\*Town Office entrance is all manual should be wheel chair access door openers

\*The front desk is so high where the administrative assistant must lean over and look down at the individual

\*Front inside door is narrow

\*Washrooms at the town office and morris multi plex are all accessible

\* We need to implement and develop a maintenance plan for when accessible equipment becomes non-functional

\*We always maintain clear paths and parking lots

Include organizations representing persons with disabilities in public consultation.

## **D. Policies**

The Town of Morris will review all services, programs, and new initiatives to ensure accessibility. The Town will also make information available in an accessible format or provide communication supports to people with disability's in a way that considers their disability.

## **E. Actions**

The Town of Morris will create, provide and receive information and communicate in ways that are accessible to people with disabilities, where practicable.

The Town of Morris is committed to providing accessible customer service to people with disabilities. This means that we will provide goods and services to everyone equally and in the same high quality.

We will provide training to all the Town staff and committees on providing accessible customer service.

## **F. Conclusion**

Council and staff continue to move forward to create a universally accessible community by providing a proactive process to identify, prevent and remove barriers to accessibility. These barriers include physical, informational, attitudinal, technological, and barriers created by policies or practices. Considering the purpose of the Accessibility Plan is to develop, implement and enforce accessibility standards, with respect to goods, services, information and communication, facilities, accessibility accommodations, employment, buildings, structures and premises, the Town is committed to continuing its pursuit in the prevention and removal of barriers to persons with disabilities. Not to mention that it is simply, the right thing to do and makes good economic sense. The Town has made several important accessibility improvements within our bylaws, facilities, policies, programs, practices, and services. It is in our best interest and in the interest of our community to continue to move forward in the identification, removal, and prevention of barriers. Feedback on the accessibility of its facilities, programs, and goods and services is always welcome.

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**If you require further information on the  
Town of Morris Accessibility Plan,**

Please contact:

The Town of Morris

Phone: 204-746-2531

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[www.townofmorris.ca](http://www.townofmorris.ca)

**Standard and accessible formats of this accessibility plan are provided  
upon request.**

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