

Municipal Accessibility Survey 2009 - CONFIDENTIAL



Once again, we require your assistance. Our focus this time is Accessibility. Under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* each municipality is required to create and annually update an Accessibility Plan to ensure that our facilities, policies and protocols are inclusive of individuals with disabilities. In order to achieve that goal, one tool is to perform a **CONFIDENTIAL** survey of area residents to determine whether we are meeting your needs. All responses will remain confidential; you are not required to identify yourself in any way. At the end of the process the following are the possible outcomes for our municipality. We hope to achieve the following with your help:

- Ensuring equal access for all citizens improving their quality of life;
- Identifying and removing barriers within our municipality;
- Using barrier-free design principles in our planning;
- Attracting a wider range of residents and tourists to our municipality using Accessibility as a marketing tool;
- Including and accommodating more people with disabilities within the Municipal workplace;
- Planning for an increased number of people with disabilities as the population ages; and
- Limiting the risk of human rights complaints.

Disability

A disability is often not what we think. Aside from what society considers the “usual” disabilities, there are many types and forms which are often overlooked. (Definitions and examples follow.) The purpose of this survey is to determine if you, the ratepayer, feel that there are barriers to your accessibility within the municipality that need to be addressed. Are there physical, communication or attitudinal barriers that prohibit you from enjoying your life here?

Are there barriers that prevent you from participating as fully in events held at municipal facilities as you may like? Then let us know. Please take the time to complete this CONFIDENTIAL survey and return it to us so that we

may address the issue, hopefully removing the barrier allowing you greater access to **your** municipality. When completing the survey think of today, and think of 5 years from now, how might needs change for you and your loved ones?

If you would like to further participate in the preparation of our accessibility plan, please call the municipal office and let us know or provide your contact information on the attached survey. We would be happy to have you on board.

Definitions:

- A **barrier** is anything that prevents people with disabilities from fully participating in all aspects of society. Barriers are diverse and come in many different forms.
- **Architectural** barriers may result from the design of the building, the shape and size of rooms, location or size of doorways, or width of hallways, for example. Steps and narrow doors are barriers to people using wheelchairs or other mobility devices.
- **Physical** barriers refer to objects added to the environment, such as doors, door knobs, windows, elevators, furniture, light switches, bathroom hardware, etc. Hard to turn doorknobs or heavy doors can be barriers for older men and women as well as for people with limited upper body mobility and strength.
- **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. Confusing messages, too many words and minimal graphics used on brochures and pamphlets may prevent proper communication of information to users, including people with learning disabilities. Poor lighting, small print sizes and hard to read fonts can be barriers to people with low vision.
- **Attitudinal** barriers refer to persons who do not know how to communicate with people with disabilities; or persons who display

discriminatory behaviours towards people with disabilities. Barriers can also be the result of the attitude of a front line person such as a receptionist who ignores a client or customer with a developmental disability.

- **Technological** barriers refer to devices such as computers, telephones, or inadequate or inappropriate assistive technologies. Everyday practices such as announcing messages over intercoms may be barriers for people who are deaf, deafened or hard of hearing.
- **Systemic** barriers refer to the overall organization and can result from an organization's policies, practices and protocols if they restrict or exclude persons with disabilities.

Defining disability

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 uses the same definition of "disability" as the Ontario Human Rights Code:

- any degree of physical disability, infirmity, malformation or disfigurement that is caused by bodily injury, birth defect or illness and, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, includes diabetes mellitus, epilepsy, a brain injury, any degree of paralysis, amputation, lack of physical co-ordination, blindness or visual impediment, deafness or hearing impediment, muteness or speech impediment, or physical reliance on a guide dog or other animal or on a wheelchair or other remedial appliance or device;
- a condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability;
- a learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language;
- a mental disorder; or
- an injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the *Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997* ("handicap").

Under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* a municipality is required to review and update its Accessibility Plan regularly. In order to address your needs, we need to identify them. Please take the time to complete the attached confidential survey and return it to the municipal office or library.

There is a copy of the survey on-line on the "Accessibility" page at www.townshipsofheadclaramaria.ca if you would rather email your responses. Alternately, you may call the office and we can complete the survey with you.

Please note that all responses will be kept completely confidential and will only be used for purposes of completing our Accessibility Plan. There is no requirement to include any identifying remarks, names or addresses.

Municipal Accessibility Plan Survey 2009

Please detach, complete and return to the Municipal Office at your earliest convenience but no later than August 30, 2009. Thank you for your assistance in this important matter. Remember, all information will be kept strictly confidential. You do not need to include any identifying information, remarks or comments. Our updated Accessibility Plan will be available later this year on our webpage at www.townshipsofheadclaramaria.ca and in the municipal office.

1. Do you or anyone in your family/residence (living within Head, Clara & Maria - permanent or seasonal) have a disability as defined above?
 - a. Yes _____
 - b. No _____
 - c. If yes, please specify which type of disability? (Check all that apply)
 - i. Physical _____
 - ii. Blindness or visual _____
 - iii. Deafness or hearing _____
 - iv. Muteness or speech _____
 - v. Physical reliance on a guide dog or other animal _____
 - vi. Reliance on mobility assistant device such as wheelchair _____
 - vii. A condition of mental impairment or development disability _____
 - viii. A learning disability _____
 - ix. A mental disorder _____
 - x. An injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under WSIB. _____

2. Do you or anyone in your family/residence routinely face any barriers to access within the municipality? (Check all that apply, refer to definitions and examples above.)
 - a. Yes _____
 - b. No _____
 - c. If yes, please specify which type of barrier and the location (municipal hall, municipal office, disposal sites, parks, boat launches, municipal library, roads, other.

- i. Architectural _____
- ii. Physical _____
- iii. Information or Communication _____
- iv. Attitudinal _____
- v. Technological _____
- vi. Systemic _____

Comments

3. Do you or anyone in your family/residence have any other type of disability that is not included above?

- a. Yes _____
- b. No _____
- c. If yes, please specify

4. What types of barriers do you face as a result of this other disability?

5. Do you have any suggestions to remove the barriers that you face within the municipality?

6. If you would like to become a member of our advisory committee please let us know.

Name: _____

Phone Number: _____

Yes, I am interested in becoming an advisory member of the Accessibility Planning Committee. _____

Other comments or suggestions for improving Accessibility within the Municipality.
