

3.5 People with Disabilities

People with disabilities would like to participate in their community as much as other citizens but may be limited by environmental and attitudinal barriers that make participation difficult or impossible. It is important to distinguish a disability from a handicap. A “disability” is a functional limitation or restriction of an individual’s ability to perform an activity. A “handicap” is an environmental or attitudinal barrier that limits the opportunity for a person to participate fully. Environmental and attitudinal barriers can be removed or significantly reduced to enable people with disabilities to participate in their communities. The City is committed to improving opportunities for people with disabilities to be active members of the community and to live independent lives.

Since 1991 the City has supported the tri-municipal Advisory Committee on Disability Issues (ACDI) as the primary advisory body to Council and staff on issues concerning people with disabilities. Any future actions taken by the City in this area will be undertaken with the assistance of the ACDI and may involve other groups that have particular expertise.

For the purposes of this section it is acknowledged that disabilities are identified by the individual and may include, but are not limited to, mobility, agility, hearing, sight, speech, cognitive or mental disability.

GOAL

To maximize opportunities for people with disabilities to be full and active members of the community.

Objective 1: Raise community awareness about issues concerning people with disabilities.

Actions

The City will:

1. Continue to encourage the ACDI to publish information to educate the community on issues concerning people with disabilities.
2. Develop an award program to recognize organizations that make extraordinary efforts to improve access to their buildings and public areas for people with disabilities.

Objective 2: Improve access in the community for people with disabilities.

Actions

The City will:

1. Employ its bylaw making powers, where feasible, to address issues concerning people with disabilities.
2. Continue to support the Advisory Committee on Disability Issues (ACDI) as the primary advisory body to Council and staff on issues concerning people with disabilities.
3. Continue to consult with the ACDI regarding municipal decisions that may impact people with disabilities such as the design of neighbourhoods, streets/sidewalks and parking, public open space, parks, and municipal buildings.
4. Continue to address issues of accessibility, where feasible, when upgrading or renovating City facilities and in reviewing all development applications.
5. Work with the Recreation Commission to improve access to Centennial Theatre. *
6. Work with the North Shore Arts Commission to improve access to art locations for people with disabilities.*
7. Develop a process to inspect City parks, green spaces and public areas to identify access issues for people with disabilities including potential City responses.*
8. Develop processes to inspect all City owned public buildings to identify access issues for people with disabilities and potential City responses, and to advise private building owners of existing situations where access problems exist and should be addressed. *
9. Develop voluntary guidelines for restaurants, retail businesses, and other buildings accessed by the public to improve access for people with disabilities.*

Objective 3: Increase participation of people with disabilities in community affairs.

Actions

The City will:

1. Encourage the participation of people with disabilities on Council advisory committees and special project committees.
2. Endeavor to hold City-sponsored events in accessible locations.

Objective 4: Improve employment opportunities for people with disabilities living in the City.

Actions

The City will:

1. In cooperation with Human Resources Development Canada and other relevant agencies, investigate the role the City could play to improve employment opportunities for residents with disabilities.*

* Denotes actions to be taken in cooperation with the ACDI.