

# Brockville Museum Accessibility Plan

## Introduction

The Brockville Museum, as part of the Corporation of the City of Brockville, is committed to fulfilling our requirements under *the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*. This accessibility plan outlines the steps the museum is taking to meet those requirements to improve barrier-free access to opportunities, experiences, and services for all.

The Brockville Museum operates as a division within the Corporation of the City of Brockville's Cultural Services Department. As such, museum operations are subject to all City policies and procedures. The museum does, however, develop and maintain its own plans and policies, as needed, to meet divisional goals and operations. This Accessibility Plan aims to provide a framework specific to the museum's operations but should be taken in concert with all plans, policies, and procedures adopted by the City, specifically Procedure/Policy 124 (Accessible Customer Service Policy) and 126 (AODA – IASR), included in the appendix of this document.

From City of Brockville Procedure/Policy 126, AODA-IASR: "The City of Brockville is committed to and guided by the four core principles of independence, dignity, integration and equality of opportunity and supports the needs of persons as set out in *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*. The City of Brockville shall use every effort to ensure that the City of Brockville meets the needs of people with disabilities in a timely manner through the implementation of this policy."

## Review

This Accessibility Plan came into affect in June 2023. This plan is reviewed annually and updated at least once every 5 years (to be updated in or before June 2028). Reviews and updates will be conducted by the museum's staff and Museum Advisory Committee in consultation with the Municipal Accessibility Advisory Committee.

## Training

Training on this plan is provided as soon as practicable after being hired and whenever changes are made to this plan or associated policies. Such training is provided to both staff and volunteers. The City will maintain a record of dates when training is provided.

## Mandate

The Brockville Museum's mandate is to "preserve and utilize an evolving collection of objects and stories representing Brockville's past and present to provide inspiring, inclusive, and collaborative experience that enhance well-being and strengthen the community's social and human capital in the service of Brockville's future". It is intended that "inclusive" be interpreted to include barrier-free access, among its many meanings.

## Section 1: Past Achievements to Remove and Prevent Barriers

The items listed in this section have already been implemented to help provide barrier-free access to museum programs, experiences, services, and facilities. It is intended that these initiatives will continue (or be improved) over the life of this plan.

## Customer Service

See City of Brockville Procedure/Policy 124 & 126 for general provisions, including feedback processes.

## Communication

Staff are trained to interact with each visitor according to that visitor's unique needs, whether there is an obvious barrier or not. "Know your audience" is a key principle in museum interpretation and is applied to all visitor interactions. To this end, staff and volunteers are able to respectfully communicate with people with disabilities in ways that consider their disability.

## Assistive Devices

Staff are trained to be familiar with various assistive devices that may be used by visitors to access museum services, as well as how to make any necessary accommodations. An example is setting up chairs for a program to ensure an electric scooter or walker can be accommodated.

## Service Animals

Persons with disabilities are welcome to bring their service animals into any museum space open to the public, subject to uses identified in City of Brockville Procedure/Policy 124.

## Support Person

Staff and volunteers are trained to identify support persons who may be a paid professional, volunteer, family member, or friend, that may accompany a visitor to assist them. The support person will not be charged an admission fee or charged to attend a program in a support capacity ("support capacity" recognizes that that individual is there specifically to support the person with a disability, not as a program attendee; therefore, in the example of attending a program where, for example, supplies are provided to participants, the support person will not be provided with their own supplies).

## Feedback Process

Visitors are welcome to provide feedback on the way the Brockville Museum provides services to people with disabilities and on this plan. Feedback can be submitted verbally in-person at our front desk or by phone (613-342-4397), by email to [museum@brockville.com](mailto:museum@brockville.com), or by mail to 5 Henry Street, Brockville. All comments will be forwarded to the museum's Curator/Director. Additional accommodations for accessible formats or communication supports can be made upon request.

## Information and Communications

See City of Brockville Procedure/Policy 126 for general provisions.

The Brockville Museum endeavours to provide equal access to all members of the community, both physically and intellectually, to the museum's collections, information, services, and programs, including through electronic means.

The Brockville Museum posts notices, including hours of operation, in a variety of formats: online on the museum's website and Facebook Page, and in print with signs posted on the museum's door and bulletin board. Notices are posted in English.

Information about museum programs and services are posted on the museum's website and through print material available onsite. Staff are able to provide verbal information about programs and services over the phone and in-person. Print copies of forms are available at the museum's front desk. Large print forms are available upon request. All forms and information related to programs and services are offered in English.

Program staff are trained to tailor booked programs to the needs of the audience. When booking, please discuss needs and expectations with the Interpretation & Public Program Coordinator. Sample accommodations may include types of activities, adjusting material to accommodate level of reading ability, adjusting routes to remove potential physical barriers, and utilizing a sound system.

Since 2014 the Brockville Museum has been working to make its entire collection available online using MINISIS. The online catalogue includes written object descriptions, associated history, and an image of the object. Although this project is ongoing, as of 2023, over 18,000 objects can be found online along with over 11,000 images. There is no cost to access the database. A subscription or membership is not required. Access is available anywhere there is an internet connection. Access to the online database can be provided by appointment onsite at the Brockville Museum.

### Employment

See City of Brockville Procedure/Policy 124 & 126 for general provisions.

### Procurement

See City of Brockville Procedure/Policy 124 & 126 for general provisions.

### Self-service kiosks

Not applicable

### Training

See City of Brockville Procedure/Policy 124 & 126 for general provisions.

### Design of Public Spaces

The Brockville Museum aims to provide barrier-free access to all public spaces operated by the museum.

Current provisions include:

#### Building

- Ramped (from municipal sidewalk) entrance with handrail and push-button door opener
- Elevator access to second floor exhibit gallery
- Minimum 36" navigable route through public spaces
- Ramp with handrail and high-contrast strip to transition from rear Beecher House to front Beecher House
- Wayfinding signage is present in the lobby and galleries to help visitors navigate

#### Washrooms

- Push-button door openers on main washroom doors
- Grab bars in accessible stalls in washrooms
- There are two stalls in women's washroom (one of which is accessible) and one stall (which is accessible) and one urinal in men's washroom
- Washrooms located in main lobby area

### Exhibit Design

The Brockville Museum endeavours to ensure that exhibits are accessible and capable of being used and enjoyed by visitors of all ages and abilities.

- Minimum font size 24 on all exhibit panels and labels, most in sans-serif font
- Use and application of colour contrast analyser for exhibit panel design
- Most text at height that is readable from a seated or standing position
- Most objects positioned to be viewed from a seated or standing position
- French language translation of English language text panels available in written format for all permanent exhibits
- Lighting directed to provide good lighting on exhibit panels, recognizing that some objects require lower light levels

## Transportation

Not applicable

## Section 2: Strategies and Actions for Improvement

This section details actions the Brockville Museum aims to undertake between 2023 and 2028 to improve barrier-free access to museum programs, experiences, services, and facilities. These initiatives aim to enhance provisions already in place (outlined in Section 1). It should be acknowledged that some initiatives may be beyond the scope of the museum to implement independently, being subject to Council direction provided through the annual capital budget process.

### Customer Services

The Brockville Museum is committed to providing accessible customer service to people with disabilities. This means that the museum will provide services and facilities to people with disabilities with the same high quality and timelines as others.

The museum will continue to adhere to City of Brockville Procedure/Policy 124 & 126 and the processes identified in Section 1 in the delivery of customer service.

### Information and Communication

The Brockville Museum is committed to making our information and communications accessible to people with disabilities.

The museum will continue to adhere to City of Brockville Procedure/Policy 126 and the processes identified in Section 1 in the dissemination of information and communications. Additionally, the museum will undertake the following initiatives to improve access to information and communications:

- Redevelop the museum’s website to ensure it meets all current accessibility standards by December 2023.
- Make all publicly available forms available in an online fillable and accessible format by June 2024. (For the purposes of this action, “accessible format” means that the document can be properly read by a screen reader).
- Make all publicly available documents created after September 2023 available in an accessible format. (For the purposes of this action, “accessible format” means that the document can be properly read by a screen reader). For example, Museum Advisory Committee Minutes and the Museum’s Annual Report.
- Ensure the consistent use of “alt text” for images used in documents, the website, and social media sites created/used after January 2024.

- Alt Text:
  - All media images must have alt text image descriptions. Use simple and plain language.
  - Alt text should be limited to no more than 140 characters. The goal should be between 5 and 15 words.
  - Will consider the context of the image: why is this image being used and what information is being conveyed?
- Ensure the consistent use of captions in all museum-produced videos created after January 2024 posted to the museum’s social media sites and YouTube Channel.
- Make the entire museum collection accessible online by 2028, including images of each object.

## Employment

Employment practices relating to the Brockville Museum are managed by the Corporation of the City of Brockville. See City of Brockville Procedure/Policy 124 & 126 for general provisions.

## Procurement

Procurement practices relating to the Brockville Museum are managed by the Corporation of the City of Brockville. See City of Brockville Procedure/Policy 124 & 126 for general provisions.

## Self-service kiosks

The Brockville Museum is committed to incorporating accessibility features/considering accessibility for people with disabilities when designing or acquiring self-service kiosks. Self-service kiosks are not currently offered by the Brockville Museum, but should that change over the life of this plan, appropriate accessibility considerations will be implemented.

## Training

Staff training is coordinated by the Corporation of the City of Brockville. See City of Brockville Procedure/Policy 124 & 126 for general provisions.

## Design of Public Spaces

Working with the Corporation of the City of Brockville’s Facilities Department, the Brockville Museum will meet accessibility laws when building or making major changes to public spaces.

Additionally, the Brockville Museum will work towards the following improvements to the design of its public spaces:

## Building

- Make a map of public spaces/exhibition galleries available at the front desk to help provide orientation by May 2024.
- Advocate to have a parking spot in the adjacent parking lot designated for accessible parking by 2028.
- Advocate to improve access to the museum’s patio space, including enlarging the landing outside the door and adding an automatic opener by 2028.
- Advocate to upgrade the push button at the front door to an automatic opener, positioned farther down the ramp to provide seamless entry by 2028.
- Advocate for a new front desk and lobby design that better accommodates wheelchairs, walkers, scooters, and strollers by 2026.
- Advocate for adding braille to wayfinding signage (including washroom doors and elevator) by 2028.

## Washrooms

- Install change table in the washroom by December 2023.
- Advocate for the renovation of the washrooms to create gender neutral facilities by 2028.

## Exhibit Design

Starting in September 2023, implement the recommendations detailed in *The Accessibility Toolkit: A Guide to Making Art Spaces Accessible* by Humber College and *Tangled Art + Disability* in the planning, design, and installation of all new exhibits.

Specifically, The Brockville Museum will strive to meet the following recommendations in all exhibits created after September 2023:

- Artwork mounted 102-127 cm (40 – 50 inches) from the floor to the centre of the artwork.
- Height of table or display case should be a maximum 91 cm (36 inches) from the ground, smaller objects positioned toward the front of the case.
- Pathways between exhibition items should be at least 1.5 metres (65 inches) wide.
- Proper lighting is crucial in the gallery. Position lighting so as to avoid glare and dark shadows on the artwork.
- Ensure there is enough light to read any labels and instruction panels, eliminating glare and reflection.
- Avoid using posts and rope to indicate viewing distance as they could be a safety hazard.
- Use legible, sans serif fonts (such as Arial or Helvetica) and avoid script, italic and serif fonts. Do not use entirely capitalized words.
- Use high contrast colours between text and a solid, non-glossy background.
- Glossy paper can create glare and reflections.
- Labels:
  - Labels should be mounted at an accessible height for guests sitting and standing, in a consistent place near all works throughout the gallery.
  - Label length is 100 words maximum. Sentence length does not exceed 25 characters.
  - Large label text (including artist statements and exhibition information) should use a minimum 100-point font.
- Font viewing distance recommendations:
  - 24 point font: less than 7.6 cm (3 inches)
  - 48 point font: 1 metre (39 inches)
  - 100 point font: 2 metres (79 inches)
  - 148 point font: 3 metres (118 inches)

## Transportation

Not applicable

## For more information

For more information on this accessibility plan, please contact Natalie Wood, Museum Curator/Director at 613-342-4397 ext 6221 or [museum@brockville.com](mailto:museum@brockville.com). This accessibility plan is publicly posted on the museum's website: [www.brockvillemuseum.com](http://www.brockvillemuseum.com).