

# RURAL MUNICIPALITY OF STUARTBURN

## Accessibility Plan

December 2017  
Amended December 17, 2019 – Res # 405-19  
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This document is available in a variety of accessible formats upon request such as digital, hardcopy, and large print. To make a request, contact the Accessibility Coordinator.

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March 15, 2022

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CAO Signature

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Reeve Signature

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Date

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### Executive Summary

Disability affects the lives of many Manitobans. According to Statistics Canada, in 2012 nearly one in six Manitobans has a disability. This number will continue to grow as our population ages.

On December 5, 2013, The Accessibility for Manitoban Act (AMA) was passed to provide a clear, proactive method to identify, prevent and remove barriers to accessibility. The Accessibility Plan sets out the framework for the RM of Stuartburn to meet its obligations under the AMA and to ensure that our plan reflects local needs, concerns and priorities related to the improvement of opportunities for people with disabilities.

The Accessibility Standards to be developed over the next several years will address barriers and set requirements in five key areas:

1. Customer Service Standard (in effect as of November 1, 2018)
  2. Information and Communication
  3. Transportation
  4. Employment (in effect by May 1, 2020)
  5. Built Environment
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### Statement of Commitment

The RM of Stuartburn is pleased to submit our updated Accessibility Plan. We are committed to ensuring that our policies and procedures promote dignity, independence and equality of all persons with disabilities. We will attempt to identify barriers to equal accessibility and, as funding allows, remove

these barriers. We will continue to attempt to meet the requirements of the AMA and will review and update our current plan in December 2023.

### **Overview of Programs and Services**

The RM of Stuartburn is a rural community in south eastern Manitoba and has the following hamlets within its jurisdiction: Vita, Stuartburn, Gardenton, Sundown and Zhoda. The area is primarily agricultural. There are areas of Crown Land and Nature Conservancy properties that are used recreationally. Vita is considered the hub of the municipality with most businesses, the school, hospital and municipal office located in it. The RM of Stuartburn provides municipal services to approximately 1,750 citizens within its boundaries. Core services include wastewater management, street and road maintenance, municipal drainage maintenance, fire protection, land administration and a transfer station for waste and recycling. The municipality operates three buildings/facilities, with varying degrees of public access. Two of the buildings/facilities are open to the public, while citizens are normally prohibited from entering one of the buildings. The municipality is responsible for communicating with residents about the programs and services it provides and responding to inquiries. As the municipality is a public entity, existing to serve all residents, the removal of accessibility barriers is an important consideration for the municipality.

The municipality administered a survey to all of its residents via mail out.

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### **Municipal Facilities and Services**

For Public Use:

Municipal Office – 108 Main Street North, Vita, MB: Public Meetings, finances, council meeting held twice a month, open to the public for general business and other government and non-government services located within the building (ie:Seine Rat River Watershed District, Piney Stuartburn Weed & Building Inspector and the Piney Stuartburn Economic Development & Tourism Office)

Restricted Public Access:

RM of Stuartburn Fire Hall – 231 Main Street North, Vita, MB: Houses fire trucks and equipment to aid in the extinguishing of fires by the RM of Stuartburn volunteer fire fighters.

*Public access only available during fundraising events*

Limited Public Access:

Vita Transfer Station – SW16-2-7E, 38045 Road 8N, Vita, MB: accepts recyclables, waste and some hazardous waste.

*Public access to grounds only, Employee shack and shop is for employees only.*

## Accessibility Achievements

- The municipal office has automated doors, is wheelchair accessible and has an accessible washroom.
- The municipal office building has a directory board upon entering the building
- In the municipal office and at the transfer station, dedicated staff and customer service representatives are available to greet, direct and offer the public assistance. The staff is empowered to accommodate all visitors. This includes physically writing out cheques and filling out forms on people's behalf, explaining processes, enlarging documentation and physically assisting people with waste and recycling at the transfer station.
- A variety of methods are used to communicate municipal services and programs to the public. This includes advertising in the local newspaper, social media, and direct mail, hanging posters in public areas within the municipality, digital signage and website posts. We also have Connect Alerting to use in emergent situations to alert ratepayers of fires, flooding, or other issues that are urgent in nature.
- The municipal newsletter is available in electronic format and paper copy. The paper copy can be enlarged by request. The municipal newsletter is put into every mailbox in the municipality at the end of every month. It is also available digitally to those who sign up to receive it and is also available on Facebook and on our web site.
- E-transfer has been added as an additional method of payment, giving residents another option for paying without having to come to the office.
- The municipality has an accessible website as of January 2019.
- Our Accessibility Plan is on our website as well as other policies relating to AMA.
- Provide training to employees to increase their awareness of accessibility and ability to identify barriers.

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## Accessibility Barriers

The municipality administered a survey to all of its residents via mail out.

RM of Stuartburn facilities range in terms of physical accessibility. The municipal office, which allows public access and is most frequented, is more easily accessible than the transfer station or the fire hall, which have restricted public access.

<b>Facility</b>	<b>Accessibility Barriers</b>
<b>Municipal Office</b> 108 Main Street North	- staff awareness and training - front reception desk design is not accessible for customers in wheelchairs

<b>Fire Hall</b> 231 Main Street North	- staff awareness and training
<b>Transfer Station</b> SW16-2-7E, 38045 ROAD 8 N	- staff awareness and training - public access is a significant barrier for people with mobility issues (only if accessing employee shelter) - lacks signage to assist with navigation of facility and usage directions

**Actions**

<b>Action</b>	<b>Status</b>
<p><b>Accessibility Committee</b></p> <p>Accessibility Coordinator will be identified for the Rural Municipality of Stuartburn.</p> <p>An Accessibility Committee of municipal staff will be created to identify accessibility barriers for people using municipal services, facilities and programs. The committee will be responsible for creating an accessibility plan that identifies and addresses barriers.</p>	<p><b>Complete</b></p> <p><b>Ongoing</b></p>
<p><b>Staff Training &amp; Awareness</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Accessibility Committee will research available accessibility training resources. This includes online resources (ex. Training videos).</li> <li>2. A training plan will be created to assist municipal staff to recognize specific accessibility barriers and take the necessary steps to accommodate. This includes accommodations for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Attitudinal barriers</b>, such as speaking directly to the individual with the disability and not the support person and not assuming that people with speech impairments do not understand what is being said.</li> <li>• <b>Informational and communication barriers</b>, such as making eye contact, speaking slowly to accommodate lip reading, and using plain language.</li> <li>• <b>Technological barriers</b>, such as offering online information in paper format and ensuring the website is accessible.</li> <li>• Systemic barriers, such as accepting job applications online and in-person.</li> </ul> </li> </ol>	<p><b>Ongoing</b></p> <p><b>Ongoing</b></p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Physical and architectural barriers</b>, such as good informational and navigational signage in facilities and accessible paths to meeting rooms and events.</li> </ul> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. Initial training of staff will be prioritized based on position and level of public interaction. Municipal office staff and transfer station attendant will receive training first.</li> <li>4. All municipal staff will receive accessibility training. The scope of training will be specific to individual positions and level of public interaction.</li> </ol>	<p><b>Ongoing</b></p> <p><b>Ongoing</b></p>
<p><b>Facility Accommodations</b></p> <p>A list of municipal buildings/facilities and corresponding accessibility barriers will be created.</p> <p>Key municipal staff are aware of the accessibility issues identified on the list and are already taking steps to address some of them.</p> <p>General signage for all municipal buildings/facilities is being explored. Message would indicate “If you have an accessibility issue and require assistance, please speak to our staff.”</p>	<p><b>Complete</b></p> <p><b>Ongoing</b></p> <p><b>Ongoing</b></p>
<p><b>Processes</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Accessibility Committee will be created to review and document specific accessibility situations that arise. A guide for dealing with similar situations in the future will be created and shared across the organization and added to the municipality’s accessibility plan.</li> <li>2. The Accessibility Committee will create a process for staff to follow when an accessibility barrier is identified with which they are unfamiliar or unsure how to accommodate.</li> <li>3. All new or returning employees will receive appropriate accessibility training as part of their orientation.</li> </ol>	<p><b>Ongoing</b></p>
<p><b>Plan Communication</b></p> <p><b>Internal</b> - communicate accessibility plan to all municipal employees, focusing on available support tools and processes. Communication methods include staff meetings and providing paper copies of correspondence and e-mails.</p> <p><b>External</b> – raise awareness and make the plan available to all RM of Stuartburn residents, as well as the general public. Communication methods include social media platforms, RM website and RM monthly newsletter. Paper copies will also be available at the Municipal Office.</p>	<p><b>Ongoing</b></p>

<b>Budget Allocation</b> Budget will vary and be allocated according to the needs of the program.	<b>Ongoing</b>
<b>Monitor Progress</b> Regular reporting to the Chief Administrative Officer and council regarding RM of Stuartburn accessibility issues, challenges and successes.	<b>Ongoing</b>



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## **Expected Outcomes**

1. RM of Stuartburn residents with accessibility issues are able to access municipal services, facilities and programs while maintaining their independence.
2. All members of RM staff will be more conscious and aware of accessibility barriers and recognize accessibility issues more readily.
3. Staff will feel confident when confronted with accessibility issues having been provided with training and tools to assist.
4. The CAO and council will consider and incorporate accessibility requirements in their short and long term planning going forward.