

Victoria Hall Accessibility Audit

As a note, Victoria Hall falls under exemption from the AODA and Building Code for accessibility standards. That does not mean that there shouldn't be an attempt to create more accessibility; however, there will be more barriers to getting the approvals than otherwise.

As well, there are some constrictions based upon the current structure of the building, including the layout of our offices and that there are multi-use purposes for a lot of the areas (Concert Hall, Court Room, etc.). However, it would be a shame to lose the historical nature of this building without understanding the use that occurs when the building is completely open and COVID is less of a concern.

The biggest recommendation is to monitor and understand the use of the building when it is completely open to the public. This should be done as part of the customer service review and strategy.

Please keep in mind that if there is any large scale renovations on the inside, that it may be seen as a retrofit which will have different rules under the AODA and Building Code.

Top Recommendations

1. Where possible, widen the hallways and doorways to allow for a full motorized wheelchair and/or scooter to easily pass through the doorway, especially when the doors are propped open.
2. Create a barrier-free pathway from the front doors to Council Chambers.
3. Work to find a good solution to widen the elevators to allow for more wheelchair space and turning radius.
4. Purchase a [Mobile StairLift Chair](#) to help with evacuations whenever the elevators are shut down.
5. Work to incorporate more accessible washrooms on the top floors, especially in the staff washrooms.
6. If COVID persists, and the Town hires a person with a mobile or visual disability, consider upgrading the screening option for in person to use the front doors to conduct their screening rather than the courtroom.

Amenities

1. Consider incorporating kitchenette spaces on every floor to allow people to have their lunches near their desks and/or a small meeting area to eat at with appropriately heighted tables.
2. Consider incorporating wheelchair friendly picnic tables to some of the open and green spaces near Town Hall for outdoor eating options.
3. Consider rezoning the Market Building parking lot and/or the metered parking spaces next to Town Hall to have more wheelchair spots for meetings and/or staff to park.

4. Consider lowering the height of the fountains and bottle refill stations to allow for people with mobility devices to use them comfortably.
5. Where possible, consider upgrading to have lighter doors that have vision panels and a lever handle to allow for easier entrance into the various rooms.

Wayfinding/Signage

1. Use [beacon technology](#) throughout Victoria Hall to help direct those with visual impairments to different locations such as departments, washrooms, exits, etc.
2. Upgrade the signage that is currently in use to have raised lettering and/or braille options for different departments and amenities.
3. Incorporate floor pathing such as textile strips near doorways or stairwells to indicate where a person is heading.
4. As new accessible door buttons (activators) are incorporated, ensure that they are at the same height as the ones that are currently installed.
5. Ensure that there are signs beside the doors or on the walls that indicate the department to assist people in finding the place that they are looking for.

Concert Hall

1. Lower the service counter for the tickets and information to appropriate height (28").
2. Rearrange the current layout of the service area to allow for more room to enter in for a wheelchair, including more turning radius.
3. Ensure that there is a ramp to the stage for people with disabilities to be able to get up onto the stage for performances.
4. Update and ensure the bleachers are compliant and provide spaces for people with disabilities.
5. Work to ensure that the dressing rooms for those who rent out the space for weddings or events are available and accessible to people with disabilities.
 - a. The Mobile StairLift Chair may be beneficial to assisting with this.
6. Widen the dressing room door to allow for wheelchair access into both dressing rooms.

Citizen's Forum

1. Consider purchasing a shorter bar that will incorporate mobility friendly options.
2. Move or remove the carpet that could be a barrier for a wheelchair to smoothly move through the outer chamber into the Citizen's Forum.
3. Incorporate additional tables with varying heights, not just "standing" height, to allow for people with disabilities to use the area with more ease.

Council Chambers

1. Remove and update the carpet to ensure there is no pilling or roll up of the carpet.

2. As the carpet is upgraded, install an [Induction Loop System](#) for those with hearing disabilities to be able to hear Council easily.
3. Remove the two stair rise to the Mayor's seat in Council Chambers.
4. Ensure that the Councillors' desks are wide enough for a person to sit comfortably in with a mobility device.
5. Ensure that the Staff desks are wide enough and high enough for a person to sit comfortably in with a mobility device.
6. Ensure that the chairs are adequately spaced to incorporate the ability for someone with a mobility device to sit in the gallery.
7. Ensure that there are varying heights in the podiums used by presentations or delegations for people to make public comments no matter their ability.

Meeting Rooms

1. Ensure that all tables are the appropriate height for mobility devices to properly wheel under and be able to use the table.
2. Meeting rooms should have enough turning radius for wheelchairs.
3. Ensure that there is adequate space to remove chairs and not have them be in the path of turning radius or moving from one side of the room to another.

Work Spaces

1. As desks are replaced, incorporate sit-stand desks for all workstations to increase the ability for people to move as necessary.
2. Ensure all workspaces have adequate turning radius for people with disabilities to work in them.
3. Ensure all aisles between cubicles or offices are wide enough for a mobility device to be able to comfortably move through and turn, if necessary.