

For Immediate Release

New Municipal Accessibility Policy Toolkit Supports Local Government Leadership in Ontario

August 6, 2025 - Traditional territory of the xʷməθkwəyʼəm (Musqueam) First Nation / Richmond, BC—The Rick Hansen Foundation (RHF) with support from the Government of Ontario Ministry for Seniors and Accessibility and in collaboration with leading accessibility experts including MaRS Discovery District, is proud to launch a new online **Municipal Accessibility Policy (MAP) Toolkit**. The Toolkit is a free, easy-to-use resource to help Ontario municipalities identify and remove built environment barriers in their communities.

Designed specifically for municipal staff, planners, and decision-makers across Ontario—and available to any Canadian municipality looking to make progress on accessibility—the MAP Toolkit provides a step-by-step framework to help local governments develop, implement and update policies that improve physical accessibility in public spaces.

“Municipalities play a critical leadership role in ensuring their communities are inclusive and accessible to people of all ages and abilities,” says Amanda Basi, Sr. Director Programs at the Rick Hansen Foundation. “This Toolkit offers ways to create meaningful change no matter what stage local governments are at in their accessibility journey.”

“Our government is committed to building inclusive communities where everyone can thrive,” said Raymond Cho, Minister for Seniors and Accessibility. “By funding this project, we are taking significant steps towards removing barriers in municipalities all across the province.”

“It was a rewarding experience to work with the Rick Hansen Foundation to bring the Municipal Accessibility Toolkit to life,” said Sue Talusan, Policy & Impact, MaRS. “Strong policy tools like this are essential for helping municipalities turn accessibility goals into concrete action. Collaborations such as this one help ensure that equity and inclusion are embedded into the systems and spaces that shape our communities.”

Why This Matters Now

According to the [2022 Canadian Survey on Disability \(CSD\)](#), **approximately one in four people in Canada have one or more disabilities** that limit their daily activities, up from 22% in 2017. The survey also highlights that **nearly 60% of people with disabilities experience physical-environment barriers** in daily life or at work. As Canada’s population ages, the number of people with disabilities continues to rise, making accessible spaces increasingly fundamental to equitable communities.

Adds Basi, “Municipalities shape the spaces we live, work, learn, and play in. The MAP Toolkit isn’t just a resource—it’s a catalyst to long-term change, providing municipal leaders tangible tools to make buildings and public spaces welcoming and accessible for everyone.”

Toolkit Highlights

The MAP Toolkit, structured into four practical sessions with accompanying worksheets, empowers municipal leaders to:

1. **Get Started** – Define goals and uncover local built environment accessibility gaps.
2. **Where You’re At** – Prioritize sites and develop or update strategic approaches.
3. **Shift Perspectives** – Cultivate empathy and prioritize interventions.
4. **Plan the Route** – Build and prioritize business cases, roadmaps, and funding strategies.

Each session includes downloadable worksheets and practical guidance to support everything from a single accessibility design project to a municipality-wide policy overhaul for the built environment. The Toolkit also supports municipal efforts to meet obligations under the **Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)**.

This project is possible thanks to funding from Ontario’s Ministry for Seniors and Accessibility. The views expressed do not necessarily reflect those of the Province.

Learn more and download the Toolkit at www.RickHansen.com/MAP.

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About the Rick Hansen Foundation

The Rick Hansen Foundation (RHF) was established in 1988, following the completion of Rick Hansen’s Man In Motion World Tour. For over 35 years, RHF has worked to raise awareness, change attitudes, and remove barriers for people with disabilities through its signature programs such as [RHF Accessibility Certification](#) ratings and training. Visit RickHansen.com to learn more.

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