

All Access Downtown Guelph

Come Celebrate / June 25, 11am-3pm



Getting around in **Downtown Guelph** is getting easier. Our community has been working hard towards a barrier-free downtown. To celebrate this, we are hosting an all-access party showcasing some of the big improvements such as **removing sidewalk trip hazards, StopGap Ramps, Accessnow.me, Signage, and Accessible Parking and Customer Service.**

Come celebrate with sidewalk art, live music, and special in-store discounts.

All Access

Downtown Guelph

All Access Downtown Guelph – A new event celebrating improvements to accessibility in Downtown Guelph

The past year has seen significant improvements in accessibility in Downtown Guelph, improvements that we think are worth celebrating. StopGap ramps were built and customized for nearly 40 downtown businesses, and the red bricks that had proven such a hindrance to folks with mobility issues were replaced by the City of Guelph with smooth concrete (read this article by DGBA Executive Director Marty Williams on why accessibility is good for business: issuu.com/ventureguelph/docs/june-july-2016/1).

In celebration of these successes, members of the community will be invited to attend **ALL ACCESS DOWNTOWN GUELPH** on June 25th from 11am – 3pm. From seniors and those with mobility issues, to individuals with physical or intellectual disabilities, to parents with strollers and wheelchair users, this event will highlight the improvements made in the Downtown core. There will be live performances, kid's activities, and an information booth where attendees can learn more about accessibility in Downtown Guelph. A map, researched and produced by the DGBA and highlighting accessible parking, washrooms, curb cut-outs and benches, will be handed out on the day.

WHAT CAN YOU DO BEFORE THE EVENT ?

1. **Read** through the attached **Accessibility Toolkit**. Produced by the DGBA with input from the provincial government and accessibility action groups, this toolkit will educate businesses on how best to accommodate those with additional needs, whether they be physical or intellectual. Please share this information with your staff.
2. **Promote the event**. Put an event poster in your window, and use the attached images for promoting the event on social media.

WHAT CAN YOU DO DURING THE EVENT ?

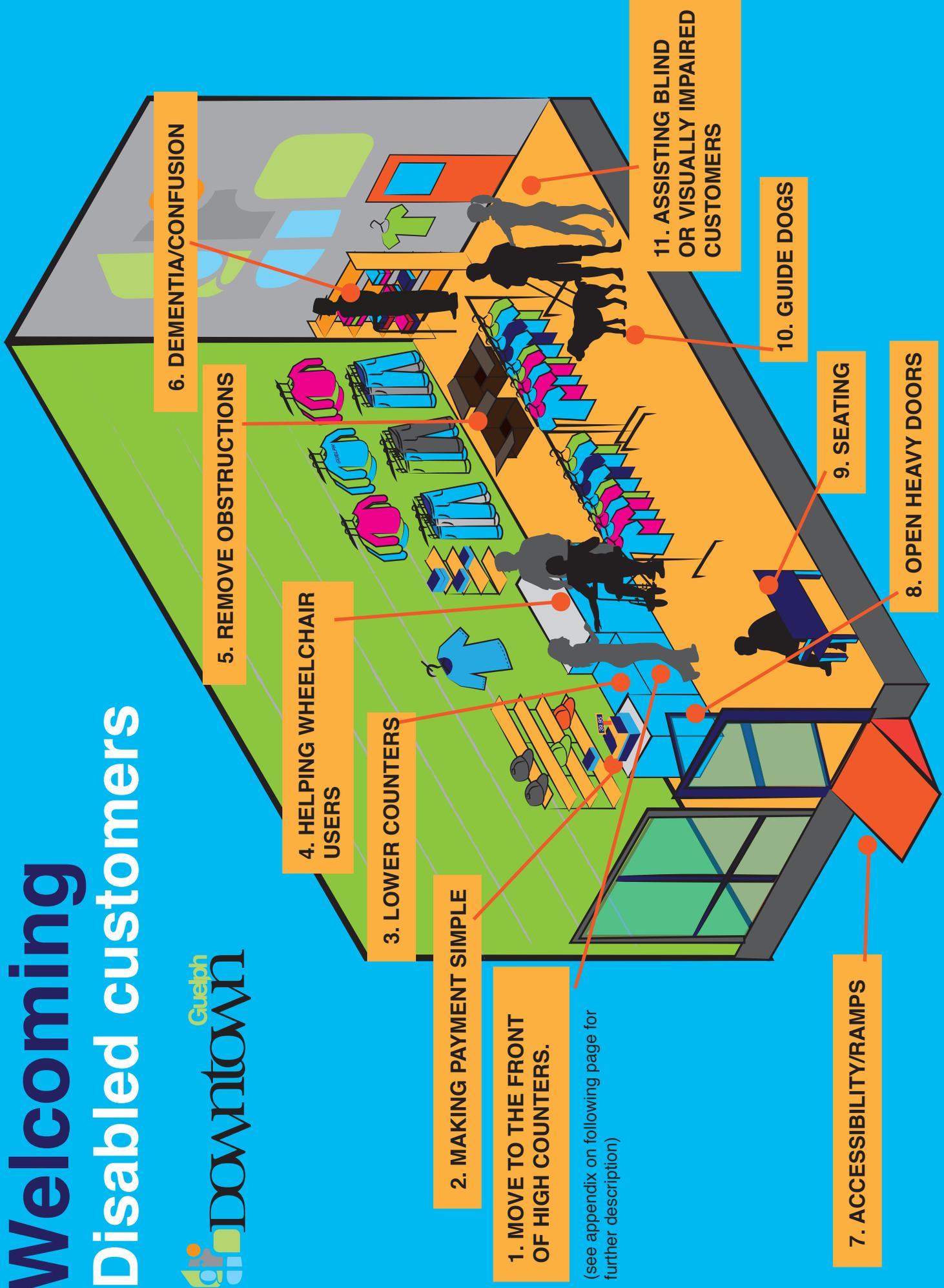
1. **Have a StopGap ramp ?** Please make sure you put it out for the duration of the event (11am – 3pm).
2. **Prop open your door for easier access.**
3. **Offer specials or discounts.** Let us know in advance so we can promote these with you.

Myself or my colleague Diana will visit your store prior to the event, however in the meantime if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Thanks for your support and with your help (promote promote promote !) we can make this event a success !

Meg Dunning
Event Organizer
Downtown Guelph Business Association
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Welcoming Disabled customers



6. DEMENTIA/CONFUSION

5. REMOVE OBSTRUCTIONS

4. HELPING WHEELCHAIR USERS

3. LOWER COUNTERS

2. MAKING PAYMENT SIMPLE

1. MOVE TO THE FRONT OF HIGH COUNTERS.
(see appendix on following page for further description)

11. ASSISTING BLIND OR VISUALLY IMPAIRED CUSTOMERS

10. GUIDE DOGS

9. SEATING

8. OPEN HEAVY DOORS

7. ACCESSIBILITY/RAMPS

Welcoming Disabled customers

APPENDIX TO INFOGRAPH

1. MOVE TO THE FRONT OF HIGH COUNTERS

If you need to speak to someone in a wheelchair for more than a few moments, it is advisable to move to the front of any high counters in-store. Try to put yourself at a wheelchair user's eye-level to avoid stiff necks.

2. MAKING PAYMENT SIMPLE

- Tell the customer clearly how much their items cost and ask the customer how they want to pay.
- Remember to tell the customers about any offers or promotions.
- If a disabled customer gives you cash, count change out loud, coin by coin, as you place it in the customer's hand.
- Allow the customer to pick up a card machine and hold it close to see the numbers as they enter their pin.
- Offer payment by chip and signature. Use a signature stamp provided by their bank.
- Tell customers if you offer contactless payment.

3. LOWER COUNTERS

Lower counters will help you to serve customers using wheelchairs more easily.

4. HELPING WHEELCHAIR USERS

- Avoid leaning on a wheelchair. This is the equivalent of leaning or hanging onto a person.
- Remember to speak to the wheelchair user, not their companion unless instructed otherwise.
- A wheelchair is a user's personal space. Never push a wheelchair without the user's consent, or move crutches, canes or walking frames, without the user's consent.

5. REMOVE OBSTRUCTIONS

Try to keep aisles free from obstacles and ensure furniture does not restrict access for people with mobility impairments or sight problems. This will aid customers navigation in-store, such as those using wheelchairs or scooters and people who have difficulty walking.

6. DEMENTIA/CONFUSION

Customers may become confused or distressed and not know where they are or why, for example those with dementia. Reassure them and allow them to sit down somewhere quiet. Tell the customer where they are and ask if they know what they want. People with dyslexia or Asperger's, may also require guidance.

Welcoming Disabled customers

APPENDIX TO INFOGRAPH

7. ACCESSIBILITY/RAMPS

If location permits your business should accommodate people who use a wheelchair or scooter. Try to make your premises step free or accessible by using permanent or portable ramps. Deep-pile carpets or rugs can also be barriers to access.

8. OPEN HEAVY DOORS

Offer to open heavy doors for customers who use sticks, crutches, walking frames or wheelchairs.

9. SEATING

People who use walking aids may find it hard to use their hands when standing up, for example to count out money. Offer a seat if you can and offer to open doors. If a customer has difficulty walking be prepared to offer more personalized service. Find a place for the customer to sit down and bring goods directly to them.

10. GUIDE DOGS

The customer may have a guide dog. Remember these are working dogs and should not be treated as a pet. Speak to the customer rather than making a fuss of the dog. More information about helping customers with guide dogs is available at <http://www.guidedogs.ca/>

10. ASSISTING BLIND OR VISUALLY IMPAIRED CUSTOMERS

- Ask the customer how you can help.
- Remember to talk and speak clearly
- Offer an arm to guide the customer to their requested location in-store

Other ways in which to serve customers who cannot get into your shop include:

- Serving the customer outside if it is a small item.
- Shop for the customer and bring the goods to them.
- Regular customers could call you with a list of what they want and have their shopping ready for them to pick up later.

Check List for Businesses

– Meeting the Needs of Your Customers

“Understand, Engage, Advocate”

Good business means anticipating what your customers want and need. It is a good idea to talk to your customers about any issues they may have when accessing your facilities and using your services. The following is a checklist of items to assist you in meeting the needs of your older customers and customers with disabilities. Many of these are no or low cost improvements.

- Entrance:** Easy to use door handles, automatic door opener, hand railings on both sides that can be easily gripped, good lighting. Avoid mats that are not flush and make sure ramps are non-slip, not too steep and strong enough to handle a mobility scooter/power wheelchair.
- Signage:** Large/clear font, plain language, good contrast. A-frames should be appropriately placed to not be a trip hazard.
- Training:** Customer service training, including disability (AODA) and age friendly training. Staff should know how to use accessibility equipment (e.g. portable ramps) and how to provide practical support to customers.
- Marketing:** Diversity, positive identity, clear and appropriate language. Choose a simple layout with legible text.
- Website:**
 - o Does your website conform to the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) Web Content Accessibility Guideline?
 - o Is the information on your website clear and easy to use? Does it have clear language which is easy to understand, easy to read, good sized text, and use of images with text?
 - o Is there useful and accurate information about the facilities including: Accessible parking, barrier-free features, accessible washrooms for customers, hearing enhancement systems, assistance available for customers, restricted access.
- Customer Service:**
 - o Confident communication - “May I help you?”. Good manners, practical assistance, avoid making assumptions, maintain eye contact, speak slowly and clearly.
 - o Providing good customer service to disabled customers will sometimes mean doing things differently – ask your customer how best to assist them.
- Additional features** that may make it easier to meet the needs of older customers and customers with disabilities:
 - o Large print
 - o Clear Signage
 - o Lower counters
 - o Designated seating

Resources

Age Friendly Information:

<http://guelph.ca/living/recreation/recreation-programs/support-services/>
www.guelph.ca/agefriendly

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities (AODA):

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/accessibility-laws>
<http://www.aoda.ca/>
<http://www.accessforward.ca/>

Information regarding disability:

<http://theonnc.ca/resources/infographics/>
BIA Handbook: <http://obiaa.com/accessibility/>

Business Case for Accessibility:

https://navigator.wlu.ca/content/documents/fileItemController/business_case_for_accessibility.pdf

Accessibility:

www.guelphaccessibilityproject.com
<http://guelph.ca/living/accessibility/>

Web:

<http://www.w3.org/WAI/>

Venues:

<http://www.planat.com/>
<http://accessnow.me/>
www.stopgap.ca
www.refugerestrooms.org