



The Corporation of the Township of Hamilton



2024-2029 Accessibility Plan

Township of Hamilton

November 2024

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Township of Hamilton Profile

The Township of Hamilton is a rural municipality, a picturesque tapestry of natural beauty and community spirit. Established in 1850, the Township of Hamilton is nestled between Lake Ontario to the south and the tranquil waters of Rice Lake to the north. Featuring eight charming hamlets - Baltimore, Bewdley, Camborne, Cold Springs, Precious Corners, Plainville, Gore's Landing, and Harwood - each with its own unique character, and with a combined population of approximately 11,000. The rolling hills of Northumberland provide a backdrop to the Township's vibrant patchwork of farms and diverse wildlife inhabiting the wetlands and Oak Ridges Moraine.

The southern portion of the Township contains the largest population base and is the hub for most commercial and industrial activities, while the northern region blends agricultural and residential areas with a variety of tourism resorts. Bewdley stands out as a haven for anglers, offering some of the finest fishing experiences in Southern Ontario. The Township surrounds the Town of Cobourg to the south, borders the Municipality of Port Hope to the west, and is adjacent to the Township of Alnwick Haldimand to the east. Covering an area of 256.08 km² (98.87 sq mi) with a population density of 42.7/km² (111/sq mi), the Township is intersected by major transportation arteries, including the Canadian Pacific Railroad, Canadian National Railroad, and Highway 401. Whether it's the call of the countryside or the allure of the lakes, the Township of Hamilton is a testament to the enduring charm of rural Ontario.

Land Acknowledgement Statement

The Township of Hamilton is situated within the traditional territory of the Mississauga Anishinaabeg and Chippewa Nations, collectively known as the Williams Treaties First Nations. Our work on these lands respectfully acknowledges their resilience and their longstanding contributions to the area now known as the Township of Hamilton.



Definition of Disability

The Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001 defines disability and barrier to include the following:

Disability is defined as:

- a. any degree of physical disability, infirmity, malformation or disfigurement that is caused by bodily injury, birth defect or illness and, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, includes diabetes mellitus, epilepsy, a brain injury, any degree of paralysis, amputation, lack of physical co-ordination, blindness or visual impediment, deafness or hearing impediment, muteness or speech impediment, or physical reliance on a guide dog or other animal or on a wheelchair or other remedial appliance or device,
- b. a condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability,
- c. a learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language,
- d. a mental disorder, or
- e. an injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997; (“handicap”).

Barrier means anything that prevents a person with a disability from fully participating in all aspects of society because of his or her disability, including a physical barrier, an architectural barrier, an information or communications barrier, an attitudinal barrier, a technological barrier, a policy or a practice; (“obstacle”).



Governing Legislation

Ontario is the first province and one of the first jurisdictions in the world to enact specific legislation establishing a goal and timeframe for accessibility. In 2005, the Province passed the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), which includes mandatory accessibility standards that identify, remove and prevent barriers for people with disabilities in nearly all aspects of civic engagement, with the goal of making Ontario fully accessible by 2025. These accessibility standards make up the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR) and include:

Accessible Customer Service Standard: This standard ensures that goods and services are provided in a manner that considers persons with disabilities. Requirements include policy development and extensive training thereof for all employees who deal directly or indirectly with the public. The training is key in assuring accessible customer service is provided by the Township.

Information and Communications Standard: This standard helps organizations make their information accessible to people with disabilities. This Standard establishes website accessibility requirements, requirements with respect to providing public information in various accessible formats, and requirements for accepting and responding to feedback in an accessible manner.

Transportation Standard: This standard sets requirements for the provision of public transit to those with disabilities. This includes requirements that all conventional transportation service providers and specialized transportation service providers make current information on accessibility equipment and features of their vehicles, routes and services available to the public, that transportation service providers receive accessibility training, and requirements for priority seating, fares, etc.

Employment Standard: This standard helps to make hiring and employee support practices more accessible, by requiring employers to identify and remove accessibility barriers to the application and interview process, and to establish a written plan for accommodating employees with a disability.

Design of Public Spaces Standard: This standard requires organizations to make new and redeveloped outdoor public spaces more accessible.

The IASR also requires public sector organizations to prepare and maintain a multi-year accessibility plan. The plan must include an organization's strategy to prevent and remove barriers and meet the requirements in the standards. Each year the organization must report on the progress in implementing the plan.



Executive Summary

The Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001 (ODA) aims to improve access and opportunities to people with disabilities and to enable their involvement in the identification, removal, and prevention of barriers so that they can participate fully in the life of the Province. Towards this end, the ODA mandates that each Municipality prepare an annual accessibility plan in consultation with disabled people from their community.

Aim of Plan

This plan describes the measures that the Township of Hamilton has taken in the past and measures those that the Township will undertake in the coming years to identify, remove, and prevent barriers to people with disabilities who use the facilities and services of the Township, including permanent residents, employees, tourists, and other visitors.

Objectives of Plan

This plan, and the attached schedules, includes:

1. The role and function of the Accessibility Advisory Committee in the preparation of the Accessibility Plan and in municipal decision-making.
2. A review of the past and current initiatives to address barriers for persons with disabilities.
3. The measures the Township will implement to identify, remove, and prevent barriers.
4. A timeline for upcoming barrier-identification initiatives, including facilities, programs, policies, practices, and services to be reviewed.
5. The process by which the Township will monitor progress, ensuring targets are being met in accordance with the Accessibility Plan.
6. How the Township will communicate the Accessibility Plan to the public.



Progress Monitoring and Reporting

The Accessibility Plan is intended as a working document. Comments and recommendations will be noted throughout the upcoming years and will be reflected in regular updates to this Plan.

Accessibility improvements and changes to accessibility legislation will also be reflected in updates to this Plan.

Additional evaluation and reporting efforts include:

- Regular review of the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan;
- Annual report prepared for Council to identify progress of the Plan's implementation, accomplishments and achievements; posted online and available in alternative formats upon request;
- Compliance reports submitted annually to the Province of Ontario.

Communicating the Plan

The Township of Hamilton will continue to review and expand consultation strategies to engage key groups in providing accessibility related feedback, including people with disabilities.

Members of the public are encouraged to make comments on the Township of Hamilton's Multi-Year Accessibility Plan and accessibility matters in general. There are several ways you can contact the Township to express your accessibility-related comments, including the following:

The Corporation of the Township of Hamilton
8285 Majestic Hills Drive, Camborne ON, K9A 4J7

Phone: 905-372-2810

Email: info@hamiltontownship.ca

The Multi-Year Accessibility Plan will also be available in print, upon request, at the Township Office located at 885 Majestic Hills Drive, Cobourg, Ontario, K9A 4J7, and posted on the Township's website.



The Accessibility Advisory Committee

The Township of Hamilton authorized the establishment of the Accessibility Advisory Committee by By-Law No. 2002-45 (Passed September 24, 2002). The Committee is established in accordance with the Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (ODA), c.11, as amended. The Committee has cited the following objectives in its mandate, as provided in the Committee's Terms of Reference:

- To promote equal opportunity and access for all persons, regardless of needs in order that all persons may participate as fully as possible in all aspects of community life in the Township of Hamilton.
- To act as an advisory body to Council. All recommendations shall be forwarded to Council for consideration.
- To update and monitor the Accessibility Plan annually for the Township of Hamilton and recommend goals and objectives relating to accessibility issues in the municipality for Council consideration.
- To make recommendations on accessibility improvements to municipally owned facilities.
- At the discretion of the Chief Building Official, the Accessibility Advisory Committee be requested to comment on applicable applications and developments.

Composition of the Committee

The Accessibility Advisory Committee as set out in its own mandate, will at any time be composed of a minimum of 5 members and a maximum of 7 members. The Committee's Terms of Reference specify that the Committee's composition will meet the following criteria:

- The majority of members must be persons with disabilities or representing a person with disabilities.
- One member must be a professional from the stakeholder community, with no voting privileges.
- One appointed member of Council.
- One staff liaison, with no voting privileges.



Post Barrier-Removal Initiatives

Prior to the development of this Accessibility Plan, Hamilton Township acted to reduce and prevent barriers to people with disabilities in the following 3 ways:

It installed elevators at Cold Springs Memorial Hall and the former Baltimore Community Centre to improve the accessibility of these areas.

It enforced the accessibility requirements legislated in the Ontario Building Code by ensuring that renovations in municipal buildings and the construction of new buildings met the minimum Code accessibility standards.

It established new parking by-laws to provide designated spaces for vehicles displaying a Disabled Person Parking Permit and set fines to prohibit the use of such spaces by other vehicles.



Commitment to Accessibility

The Township of Hamilton is committed to the enhancement of persons with disabilities to have equal access to opportunities within the community. Council authorized the Accessibility Advisory Committee to prepare a Multi-Year Accessibility Plan that will enable the Township of Hamilton to meet these commitments:

Leadership

- Renewed commitment to fostering a culture of accessibility and inclusion by Township Council, the Chief Administrative Officer, and department heads.

Policies and Procedures

- Examine and address potential barriers at Township public spaces, such as parks and facilities.
- Continue to ensure that all public information is available in accessible formats and is made available at the same cost, when requested.
- Annual review of the Township's Accessible Customer Service Policy to identify opportunities to reinforce and promote requirements that enhance accessible customer service.
- The development of a Communications Plan with input from the Accessibility Advisory Committee.
- Ensure that all new employees complete mandatory training, including Accessible Customer Service and sensitivity training.
- Continue to promote and offer regular accessibility-related training to Members of Council, senior staff, managers, and front-line staff through a variety of channels, including in-class, events, webinars and e-learning on Integrated Accessibility Standard Regulation requirements and obligations under the Ontario Human Rights Code.
- Accommodation practices will be reviewed to ensure people with disabilities are able to fully and meaningfully participate as a Township employee.

Procedures for Preventative and Emergency Measures

- During preventative and emergency maintenance or if there are temporary disruptions to an accessible element all avenues will be investigated to provide an alternate element until the original or a new element is re-established. Excluding emergency maintenance, if an alternative element can not be



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achieved, prior to work commencing the affected area will be posted onsite if possible and on the municipal website notifying of the scheduled work with anticipated timelines.

Digital Services

- Implement a new user-friendly Township website.
- Expansion of digital services in compliance with AODA requirements resulting in an improved customer experience.
- Ensure that digital services are designed striving for all users to have equal access to information and functionality.

Procurement

Under the Integrated Accessibility Standard Regulation, the Township is required to incorporate accessibility design, criteria and features when procuring or acquiring goods, services or facilities, except where it is not practicable to do so.

- Consider the needs of people with disabilities at all stages of the procurement process to help ensure that goods and services at Township facilities are accessible.
- Digitize our bids and tenders process to improve the opportunity of doing business with the Township for all suppliers, including those with disabilities.

Accessibility Planning

- The continual improvement of access to all municipal facilities and spaces, including incorporating accessibility retrofits where possible during renovations.
- Continue to prioritize accessibility in every element of infrastructure projects at Township owned facility and public spaces.
- Support the role of the Accessibility Advisory Committee in reviewing building plans and, where possible, incorporate their recommendations into the building plans.
- Ensure that trails, parks and other outdoor public spaces are built in accordance with the Design of Public Spaces standard.

The attached Schedules reflect our multi-year initiatives. The Committee, through conversation and consultation with other supporters of persons with disabilities, will continue to identify future needs for consideration by Council.



Schedule A – Projected Targets

The following table features a list of the proposed future initiatives to enhance accessibility in the Township of Hamilton in and effort to make the Township holistically accessible and inclusive. These initiatives are in addition to the regular and ongoing maintenance improvements, such as sidewalk improvements, road and sidewalk snow clearing, and connectivity improvements that contribute to accessibility within the Township.

Task	Projected Timeline	Status
Surfacing and trail upgrades to the Cold Springs Sun Shelter		Proposed
Accessible playground upgrade and trail at Camborne School House Playground	2028	Proposed
Accessible picnic tables in various Township parks	Summer 2025	Proposed
Automatic door openers installed in washrooms of the Baltimore Recreation Centre	2025	Proposed
Install levered kitchen faucets at the Baltimore Recreation Centre, Bewdley Community Centre, and Cold Springs Hall	2025	Proposed
Develop a Communications Plan for the Township that considers access to information in a variety of formats	2024	In Progress
Migrate to a website host that supports AODA compliance	2025	In Progress
Renovate Council Chambers	2025	In Progress



Schedule B - Completed Projects

The following table features a list of the Township’s notable accessibility initiatives completed since 2015, and the related legislated compliance status.

Ongoing

Legislated Requirement	Status
Develop, implement and maintain policies governing how the organization achieves or will achieve accessibility through meeting its requirements under the accessibility standards. Establishment of a Multi-Year Accessibility Plan.	In Compliance: The Township developed a 2024-2029 Multi- Year Accessibility Plan.
Incorporate accessibility criteria and features into procurement practices so that goods, services and facilities are more accessible to people with disabilities unless it is not practicable to do so	
The Township of Hamilton will train all employees and volunteers, all persons who participate in developing the organization's policies and all other persons who provide goods, services or facilities on behalf of the organization about the standards of the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation as well as the Human Rights Code as it pertains to persons with disabilities.	In Compliance: New employees are trained as soon as practicable, and all employees are trained on a regular basis.
Provide or arrange for provision of accessible formats and communication supports for persons with a disability upon request. Notify the public of the availability of accessible formats and communication supports for the feedback process.	
Create guidelines for accessible open spaces.	



2015 to 2017

Subject	Recommended Action	Status
Buttersfield Park	Accessible Parking Lot	Complete
All Township Facilities and Fire Stations	Door handle update	Complete
Castle Hill Park	Accessible playground, paved walkway and picnic tables	Complete
Transportation	Initiative through Community Care launched and increasing participation	Complete
Policy and Procedure	Update Human Resources policies and procedures	Complete

2018 to 2019

Subject	Recommended Action	Status
Policy and Procedure	Create guidelines for accessible open spaces	Complete
All Township Facilities	Replace taps and knobs in municipal facilities	Complete
Baltimore Recreation Centre	Accessible Playground and Picnic Tables	Complete
Cold Springs Memorial Hall	Accessible Washroom (lower level) Accessible door widening, device and alarm	Complete
Gores Landing Wharf	Rehabilitation of Wharf, reviewed by Accessibility Committee. Accessible paved pathway Accessible picnic table	Complete
Harwood Waterfront	Accessible Washroom and Ramp	Complete



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2022 to 2024

Location	Recommended Action	Status
Cold Springs	Accessible Playground	Complete
Baltimore Recreation Centre	Accessible Park Washrooms	Complete