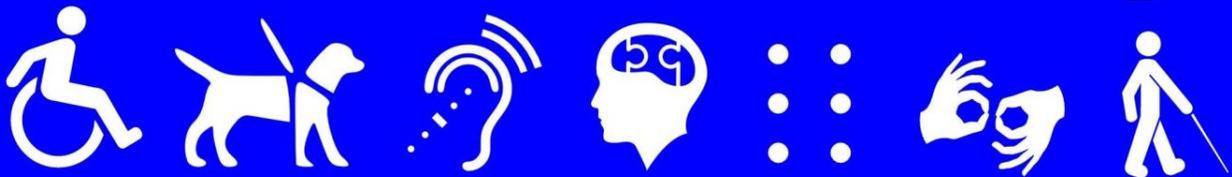


# Accessible Whitby



## Town of Whitby Accessibility Plan 2016 – 2018

The Corporation of the Town of Whitby is committed to providing an accessible environment in which residents, visitors and employees have equitable access to municipal programs, services and facilities in a way that respects the dignity and independence of each individual.

The municipality is dedicated to ensuring that all legislated obligations under the Accessibility for Ontarians Disabilities Act are met and that compliance with these standards is maintained.

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## **Executive Summary**

The Town of Whitby Accessibility Plan 2016-2018 outlines the initiatives the Town intends to achieve to ensure compliance with the Province's accessibility legislation. Additionally, the plan outlines the retrofit projects identified through the Accessibility Audits conducted on Town facilities starting in 2006.

Ontario is the first province and one of the first jurisdictions in the world to enact specific legislation establishing a goal and time frame for accessibility. It is also the first jurisdiction to legislate accessibility reporting and to establish standards so people with disabilities can participate more actively in their communities.

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) is a law that sets out a process for developing and enforcing accessibility standards. Accessibility standards are laws that government, businesses, non-profits and public sector organizations must follow to become more accessible.

The Province has enacted a number of accessibility standards, which set out the rules, and deadlines municipalities and all other businesses must follow to meet accessibility standards in Ontario. There are staggered compliance dates to aid organizations in implementing the numerous changes to business practice, services and facilities. The Accessibility Plan is an important part of what Whitby is doing in making its programs, services and facilities accessible for all members of the community, staff and visitors. This plan will aid the Town in achieving and wherever possible, exceeding the minimum requirements outlined in the regulations.

## **Corporate Mission Statement**

The Town's Corporate Mission Statement in the Community Strategic Plan states:

- Council and Staff of the Town of Whitby are dedicated to ensuring accessible, responsive representation and providing innovative, efficient and affordable services that will enhance the quality of life of our growing and diverse community.

# Description of the Town of Whitby

The Town of Whitby is located on the north shore of Lake Ontario, and is the fastest growing municipality in the Region of Durham. It includes the Village of Brooklin and a network of hamlets including Myrtle, Myrtle Station, Ashburn Macedonian Village and Almond Village. The rural settlement supported by the urban areas of Whitby, including Downtown Whitby and the Port Whitby. The residents of the Town share a sense of community and a lifestyle characterized by both small-town and urban environments offering the sophistication and range of amenities of a large urban centre.

# Why accessibility is good for Ontario

**Why Accessibility is good for Ontario**

**ac'ces'si'bil'i'ty** [ak-ses-uh-bihleeteetee] noun  
Accessibility simply means giving people of all abilities opportunities to participate fully in everyday life.

**now** **soon**

**1 in 7** people in Ontario have a disability, that's **1.85 million Ontarians**.

By 2036, that number will rise to **1 in 5** as the population ages.

**Customers with disabilities are a growing market no business can afford to overlook.**

**360,000** Ontario businesses and organizations affected by Ontario's accessibility law. It helps them meet the needs of people with disabilities and **attract their growing spending power.**

In the next 20 years, an aging population and people with disabilities will represent **40% of total income in Ontario** — that's **\$536 Billion**.

**A more accessible Ontario is good for our economy and our communities.**

Improved accessibility in Ontario can help generate up to: **\$9.6 Billion** in new retail spending & **\$1.6 Billion** in new tourism spending

## Objectives of the Accessibility Plan

This plan describes the measures that the Town will use to continue to identify, remove and prevent barriers for persons with disabilities who use the facilities, programs and services of the Town of Whitby.

The 2016 - 2018 Accessibility Plan includes:

- Highlight of accomplishments from the 2013 – 2015 Accessibility Plan;
- Actions to be taken to implement the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation, Ontario Regulation 191/11;
- Measures the Town will be taking in 2016 – 2018 to identify, remove and prevent barriers to persons with disabilities;
- The monitoring process for the Accessibility Plan; and,
- The actions planned to communicate the Whitby Accessibility Plan to the public.

The 2016 - 2018 Accessibility Plan has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the ODA, 2001, the AODA, 2005 and the Integrated Accessibility Standards, Ontario Regulation 191/11.



**Accessible Path installed to Heydenshore Park picnic shelter**

## Highlights from Accessibility Plan 2013-2015

- Staff responsible for creating documents trained on accessible documents; templates developed and implemented for common corporate documents;
- Staff trained on the Integrated Accessibility Standard and Ontario Human Rights Code;
- Developed purchasing checklist and provided training to staff on the responsibilities of taking accessibility into account before spending public dollars;
- Added voice annunciation to Town elevators;
- Added fold-down grab bars in all accessible washrooms;
- Re-graded and enlarged access to Heydenshore public washroom facilities;
- Modified accessible parking and entrance at Iroquois Park Sports Centre;
- Upgraded entry to members change rooms and health club at Civic Recreation Complex;
- Added fold-down grab-bars to all Town accessible washroom facilities;
- Provided additional inclusion services training to recreation staff;
- Improved accessibility of registration process for Access Program recipients by providing online registration for these programs;
- Securing of listening devices for participants at Committee of Council meetings as requested;
- Expanded Inclusion Services Camp program for individuals requiring additional support to participate in summer camp programs;
- Continued the removal and replacement of curb, gutter and sidewalk ramp program throughout the Town of Whitby, trip ledges and dangerous sidewalk for numerous areas prioritized by Public Works staff;
- Reviewed all election manuals, technology and software for the 2014 Municipal Election; provided fully accessible voting options at all polling stations;
- Continued the playground repair and replacement at parks identified in the Accessible Playground Distribution Strategy to improve accessible play elements and integrated wood-fiber surface; and

- Worked with the Canadian Hearing Society to identify appropriate assisted listening devices for Town facilities, to improve access to programs and services for individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing.

### **Whitby Public Library:**

- The downloadable collections expanded significantly with 6,726 new e-book titles for a collection of 13,641 titles and a downloadable audiobook collection was developed in 2015 with 791 titles available. These items are downloadable to computers and mobile devices.
- New website was launched in October 2015 which meets WCAG 2.0 (Level AAA).
- All staff responsible for creating documents were trained in developing accessible documents. Also, trained staff on accessible procurement procedures.
- Staff and the Library Board were given training on the IASR.
- Staff received training on autism and employment issues and hosted two job shadowing shifts for young adults with autism through the Abilities Centre and the EmploymentWorks program.
- Developed a partnership with Ontario Shores to give patients in the forensics units' access to library materials.
- Partnered with the Abilities Centre and Ontario Shores to present an Imagine Art Festival that had activities accessible to all.
- Worked with Participation House to deliver computer training to its members.
- Partnered with the Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital to deliver Storytime programs to children with augmentative and alternative communication needs.



**Whitby Public Library**

# Action Plan

## Accessible Customer Service Standard

### 2016

- Renovate the customer service counters at the Municipal building to provide improved customer service to persons with disabilities;
- Develop partnership with Ethno-cultural and Diversity Committee to provide a public education forum to mark the International Day of Persons with Disabilities; and
- Review and update corporate feedback; identify improved ways customers can access and provide feedback to the Town.

### 2017

- Provide assisted listening devices at service counters, in meeting rooms and other identified Town facilities; work with the Canadian Hearing Society to promote the availability of these devices to the deaf and hard of hearing community;
- Review and develop standards using Provincial planning tools to ensure all Town of Whitby events are fully accessible to all community members;
- Promotion of Town of Whitby Access program to financially disadvantaged individuals to ensure accessible recreation program opportunities for all residents;
- Streamline inclusion services program delivery and application process;
- Implement new recreation program registration system to improve accessibility and ease of online registration and bookings;
- Create a partnership with the Accessibility Advisory Committee and the Seniors Committee of Council to develop and implement Age-Friendly Accessible initiatives within Whitby; and
- Provide improvements to means of egress from Town facilities during emergency situations.

### 2018

- Continue to enhance the partnerships with the Accessibility Advisory Committee, the Seniors Committee of Council and the Ethno-cultural and Diversity Committee to implement inclusivity initiatives within Whitby.

## **General Requirements**

### **2016**

- Develop the 2016-2018 Accessibility Plan for Council approval;
- Review and update corporate Accessibility policies and procedures, to ensure compliance with changes to Accessibility legislation;
- Accessibility Coordinator to train all staff on the Accessibility Standards and Ontario Human Rights Code, including corporate policies and procedures; and
- Continue to monitor the accessible purchasing requirements, by completing bi-annual random audits of files and re-train where necessary.

### **2017**

- Develop and implement a three-year training cycle to ensure all staff are informed of all relevant changes to the Accessibility legislation and corporate policies;
- Review and update the Corporate Statement of Commitment to ensure it continues to outline the Town's priority and commitment to accessibility;
- Provide a status report to Council on the Accessibility Plan and post to the Town's website; and
- Re-establish the Accessibility Staff Working Group to rejuvenate the commitment to accessibility throughout the corporation.

### **2018**

- Continue to implement training cycle to ensure all staff are informed of all relevant changes to the Accessibility legislation and corporate policies;
- Provide a status report to Council on the Accessibility Plan and post to the Town's website; and
- Work with Accessibility Staff Working Group to develop the Town's Accessibility Plan for 2019 – 2022.

## **Information and Communications Standard**

### **2016**

- Continue to develop corporate templates for documents to ensure information and communications materials are created in an accessible

format, as per Town policy;

- Municipal Information Systems staff provides regular training opportunities for staff on how to use corporate templates;
- Develop Terms of Reference for a Signage and Wayfinding study, working with appropriate Departments to develop a Town standard for all signage and wayfinding; and
- Website Steering Committee to identify appropriate processes, software and direction to move the Town website towards the legislated accessibility requirements.

## **2017**

- Website Steering Committee to work with staff in the re-development or re-launch of the Town's website to improve usability and meet accessibility requirements;
- Website Steering Committee to develop a website policy, procedures and standard to ensure all information and communications material posted to the Town website is fully accessible in compliance with the WCAG requirements;
- Review and develop template or standard for all Town of Whitby forms, ensuring they are fully accessible and fillable on-line;
- Complete the Signage and Wayfinding study; develop design standards for the Town and an implementation plan;
- Develop a monitoring tool for ensuring all Town documents, information and communications materials are fully accessible; and
- Continue to provide Town of Whitby information, communications and public safety information in accessible formats or with communication supports, upon request.

## **2018**

- Continue to monitor information and communications on Town website to ensure compliance with accessibility requirements;
- Implement the signage plan, replacing and installing new signage throughout the Town;

### **Whitby Public Library 2016-2018:**

- Provide access to or arrange for access to accessible materials where they exist
- Make information about availability of accessible materials publicly

available & provide in accessible format, upon request

- May provide accessible formats for archival materials, special collections, rare books and donations
- Make new or designed public spaces accessible
- Further develop audiobook and large print collections, including downloadable e-books. Where available, ensure an accessible format is purchased for titles selected from bestseller lists; and
- Develop and deliver an audiobook club for adults with cognitive disabilities

## **Employment Standard**

### **2016**

- Develop and implement a plan to ensure all staff are aware of the availability of individual emergency response plans;
- Continue to ensure employment practices including, job postings, interviews and selection processes are fully accessible; and
- Continue to improve the workplace accommodation awareness and availability among all staff.

### **2017**

- Partner with Abilities Centre for camp staff inclusion services training;
- Implement a learning management system to ensure staff have access to training modules and increase efficiencies for training.

### **2018**

- Investigate opportunities to update job descriptions for Town positions.

## **Transportation Standard**

### **2017**

- Clerks Department to consult on the number of accessible taxis needed in your community. Consultation to include the Town's AAC and the public, including persons with disabilities;
- Clerks Department to develop a feedback process for residents and visitors who would like to report taxi service concerns or issues;
- Any recommended changes to be reported on in the status update for 2017, with plans and the progress you are making toward meeting your community's needs for accessible taxis to take place in 2018; and

- Continue to monitor through annual reviews that owners and operators are:
  - charging the same rate to persons with and without disabilities (no higher fares or additional fees allowed, including fees to stow mobility aids or assistive devices);
  - placing vehicle registration and identification information on the rear bumper of the taxi; and
  - providing vehicle registration and identification information in an accessible format to persons with disabilities who are passengers.

## **2018**

- Provide status update to Council through the annual Accessibility Status report on meeting on-demand taxi needs for Whitby and feedback received.

## **Design of Public Spaces Standard**

### **2016**

- Update Town of Whitby Accessibility standards documents to meet Design of Public Spaces legislated requirements; present to Council for adoption; provide training to appropriate staff;
- Develop and implement public consultation policy and procedures to ensure the Town is meeting the requirements to consult with the public identified in the AODA;
- Continue to retro-fit facilities as identified through the Accessibility Audit Implementation plan;
- Implement accessibility initiatives through the Town's parks operations and at Town events, such as accessible picnic tables, barrier-free porta-potties, etc.;
- Annual projects (sidewalk maintenance, road resurfacing, road reconstruction, new installations) that include sidewalk reconstruction to be completed as per Town standards with tactile plates at intersections and concrete modifications to meet the AODA requirements;
- Continue to develop and retro-fit parks and playgrounds as identified through the Accessible Playground Distribution Strategy, projects include:
  - Minthollow Parkette (Promenade);

- Calais Playground;
- Glen Hill Playground; and
- Portage Playground.
- Continue to develop and retrofit trails as identified and prioritized through the Town's cycling and leisure trails plan, projects include:
  - Ash Creek Channel Trail;
  - Hydro Electric Power Corridor Trail - Lofthouse south to Existing Paved Area;
  - Hydro Electric Power Corridor Trail Darren Ave. to Butterfly Crt.;
  - Manning Trail Rehab;
  - Pringle Creek Trail - Glen Dhu to Skipton Bridge;
  - Scott Trail (North Side of Manning);
  - Wynfield Park - Pathway Construction; and
  - Trails Wayfinding Signage Design.

## **2017**

- Review and update Accessibility Audit data; update audit tools to meet new legislated standards and look beyond the physical environment to include other disabilities;
- Schedule and complete facility audits with new audit tool;
- Continue to retro-fit projects identified through the Accessibility Audit Implementation plan;
- Continue to develop and retro-fit parks and playgrounds as identified through the Accessible Playground Distribution Strategy, projects include:
  - Baldwin South Parkette (Upperview);
  - Country Lane Park tennis courts;
  - Cullen Park (Bocce & Pickleball);
  - Forest Heights Park Playground;
  - Jeffery Park Playground and splash pad;
  - Kelloryn Park - Redevelopment;
  - Kirby Park Playground;
  - Myrtle Park Playground;

- Robmar Park Playground;
- Vanier Park (Phase 2); and
- Watson Park Playground and Splash pad.
- Continue to develop and retro-fit trails as identified and prioritized through the Town's cycling and leisure trails plan, projects include:
  - Cullen Central Park trail connections;
  - Cullen to Heber Down (East Field Route) w/ Bridge;
  - Hydro Electric Power Corridor (Glen Dhu to Will. Stephenson Dr.);
  - Hydro Electric Power Corridor Trail (Crawforth to Manning);
  - Hydro Electric Power Corridor Trail (Ashburn to St. Thomas);
  - Hydro Electric Power Corridor Trail (Heber Down to Spencers);
  - Heber Down to Hydro Electric Power Corridor Trail;
  - Lynde Trail to Cullen Heber Down;
  - Lynde Creek Trail (Henry to Brock);
  - Waterfront Trail LCBO Boardwalk; and
  - Waterfront Trail (Gordon to South Blair).
- Annual projects (sidewalk maintenance, road resurfacing, road reconstruction, new installations) that include sidewalk reconstruction to be completed as per Town standards with tactile plates at intersections and concrete modifications to meet the AODA requirements;
- Update Accessible Playground Distribution Strategy to meet current legislative requirements and include promotional program to advise the community of the availability of accessible playgrounds in Whitby; and
- Continue to implement accessibility initiatives through the Town's parks operations, such as accessible picnic tables, barrier-free porta-potties, etc.

## **2018**

- Continue to complete facility audits, including parks and playgrounds;
- Update prioritized list of retro-fit projects found on the Accessibility Audit Implementation plan;
- Continue to develop and retro-fit parks and playgrounds as identified through the Accessible Playground Distribution Strategy, projects

include:

- Heathwood District Park;
- Prince of Wales - Soccer or Baseball Field Addition; and
- Whitby Optimist Park - Soccer Field / Parking Lot Addition.
- Continue to develop and retro-fit trails as identified and prioritized through the Town's cycling and leisure trails plan;
  - Brooklin Lions Pathway;
  - Hydro Electric Power Corridor Trail (Dundas Street to Nichol Ave);
  - Heber Down to Country Lane;
  - Lynde Creek Trail (Burns Street West to Michael Blvd Opening);
  - Lynde Creek Trail (Henry Street to Brock Street);
  - Lynde Creek Trail (Twin Streams to Rossland);
  - McClintock Trail;
  - Pringle Creek Open Space (Bradley Drive to Pringle Creek Park); and
  - Pringle Creek Open Space (Wynfield Park to Garden.)
- Annual projects (sidewalk maintenance, road resurfacing, road reconstruction, new installations) that include sidewalk reconstruction to be completed as per Town standards with tactile plates at intersections and concrete modifications to meet the AODA requirements.



**Kids playing in the accessible splash pad at Heydenshore Playground**

# The Town of Whitby Accessibility Advisory Committee

## **Mandate:**

The role of the Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC) is to advise and help council carry out its responsibilities under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA). Section 29 of the AODA describes three main activities for the AAC:

1. Advising municipal council about the requirements and implementation of accessibility standards and the preparation of accessibility reports and other matters for which the council may seek its advice.
2. Review site plans and drawings described in section 41 of the Planning Act that the committee selects, including all municipal projects.
3. Perform all other functions specified in the regulations.

## **Responsibilities:**

The Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC) is responsible to provide advice to municipal Council to plan for accessibility on a wide range of municipal processes.

1. Provide input to staff reports on the following issues;
  - Reviewing official plans
  - Reviewing zoning by-laws
  - Reviewing site plans; and
  - Reviewing plans of subdivision and condominium
2. Participate in consultations with municipal departments on the requirements outlined in the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR):
  - When establishing and updating the Town's multi-year accessibility plan;
  - When developing design criteria related to the construction, renovation or placement of elements contained within the Design of Public Spaces regulation;
  - When determining the proportion of on-demand accessible taxicabs required in the community;

- On the need, location and design of on-street parking when building new or making major changes to existing on-street parking;
  - Before building new or making major changes to existing recreational trails to help determine particular trail features;
  - On the needs of children and caregivers with various disabilities in their community when building new or making major changes to existing outdoor play spaces;
  - On the design and placement of rest areas along exterior path of travel when building new or making changes to existing exterior paths of travel.
3. Provide advice on budget for accessibility; and
  4. Provide advice to help plan for and promote accessible voting for municipal elections.

## **Accessibility Staff Working Group**

Accessibility Staff Working Group members bring their knowledge of the business units that they represent to the table. Accessibility is an integral part of the way we do business in all aspects of the Town. It is this group's responsibility to ensure that accessibility integrates into the day-to-day work within their Departments. Members act as accessibility champions within their work teams and Divisions. The Accessibility Coordinator leads this working group with members representing key standard areas from across the corporation as follows:

**Customer Service** – Corporate Service; Community and Marketing Services; Clerks Department

**Design of Public Spaces and Built Environment** - Planning and Development; Public Works; Community and Marketing Services

**Information and Communications** – Communications Officer; Municipal Information Services

**Employment** – Human Resources

**Legislative Requirements** – Legal Services; Clerks Department

**Procurement** – Corporate Services

**Transportation (Taxis)** – Clerks Department

## **Consultation Activities**

Municipal staff and the Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC) have been consulted throughout the development of this plan, with draft versions circulated for review and comments.

Information will be communicated to Town staff and the public on the progress of accessibility initiatives through reports to the Accessibility Advisory Committee, staff working committee and through annual staff reports presented to Council.

## **Review and Monitoring Process**

With Council's approval of the Accessibility Plan, staff will monitor the progress made on the actions required in the Plan on a monthly basis. The Accessibility Coordinator will advise the AAC on the progress on the implementation of the Plan regularly.

In terms of updating the Accessibility Plan, an annual progress report via a staff report to Council and posted on the Town's website for community information. The Town's Accessibility Plan developed every three years, with the understanding, as legislative requirements change; priorities within the Plan may also change. Any changes or new legislative requirements are to be communicated through the annual progress report.

## **Communication of the Accessibility Plan**

The Accessibility Plan will be posted on the Town's website and copies made available at Town Hall, Public Libraries, Community Centers and Recreation facilities. Alternative Formats and Communication supports are available, upon request.

Key Contact for this Plan:  
Michele Cotton, Accessibility Coordinator  
[accessibility@whitby.ca](mailto:accessibility@whitby.ca)  
905 430-4306 Ext. 2331

## **Provincial Legislation**

(Information provided from the Ministry of Economic Development, Trade and Employment website)

Ontario is the first province and one of the first jurisdictions in the world to enact specific legislation establishing a goal and time frame for accessibility. It is also the first jurisdiction to legislate accessibility reporting and to establish standards so people with disabilities can participate more actively in their communities.

This is how the government is making Ontario more accessible by 2025.

### **Ontarians with Disabilities, 2001 (ODA)**

The Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001 established to improve access and opportunities for people with disabilities. The legislation applies to all provincial and municipal governments, school boards, colleges and universities and hospitals.

**Note:** On a day to be named by proclamation of the Lieutenant Governor, the remainder of this Act is repealed by the Statutes of Ontario, 2005, chapter 11, section 42. See: 2005, c. 11, s. 42.

### **The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA)**

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) is a law that sets out a process for developing and enforcing accessibility standards. Persons with disabilities and industry representatives work together with the government to develop the standards.

Implementing and enforcing these standards will help us reach our goal of an accessible Ontario by 2025.

### **Accessibility Standards**

Accessibility standards are laws that government, businesses, non-profits and public sector organizations must follow to become more accessible. They help organizations identify and remove barriers to improve accessibility for people with disabilities in five areas of daily life:

## **Customer service standard**

To help remove barriers for people with disabilities so they can access goods, services or facilities.

## **Information and communications standard**

To help organizations make their information accessible to people with disabilities.

## **Transportation standard**

To make it easier for everyone to travel in the Province.

## **Employment standard**

To help make hiring and employee support practices more accessible.

## **Design of public spaces standard**

To help organizations make new and redeveloped outdoor public areas accessible.

## **More Information on the Accessibility Laws:**

[Province of Ontario website for accessibility law information](#)

### **Accessibility Directorate of Ontario**

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Toronto, ON M7A 2J4

Toll-free: 1-866-515-2025

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