

MULTI-YEAR ACCESSIBILITY PLAN



December 21, 2021

Commitment

The Township of Guelph/Eramosa works towards making sure its programmes, services and facilities are barrier-free and demonstrate leadership for the local municipalities. The Township continues to support the goal of an accessible Province by 2025 by implementing the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA).

The Township will meet or exceed the regulations made under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), 2005.

This Multi-year Accessibility Plan outlines our way of making sure we have an inclusive workplace and are an accessible service provider.

Obligations

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) requires public sector organizations to have an Accessibility Advisory Committee and develop an accessibility plan each year. Under the AODA municipalities must:

- Prepare an accessibility plan each year.
- Include people with disabilities in the planning process.
- Remove barriers over time.

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) is the first law of its kind in Canada. Under the AODA, the Province is developing, implementing and enforcing accessibility standards. The goal of the act and the standards is to make the province accessible for all people with disabilities by 2025.

The Multi-year Plan is based upon requirements under the AODA. The AODA sets out the roadmap for an accessible Ontario by 2025. Under the AODA the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR) contains standards in the following five areas:

- Information and Communications
- Employment
- Transportation
- Design of Public Spaces
- Customer Service

The Township of Guelph/Eramosa's Strategy

The Township's Multi-Year Accessibility Plan describes how we will become an accessible organization over the next five years. We will focus on the following areas:

- Policies, processes and practices
- Communications and awareness
- Technology
- Infrastructure
- People

Key Outcomes

- People with disabilities have access to quality goods and services in a timely manner.
- People with disabilities have access to information and communications in alternate formats.
- People with disabilities can participate fully in services and employment with the Township.
- People with disabilities experience greater accessibility in Township-owned facilities

Approach

1. Develop policies and procedures.
2. Incorporate accessibility into planning processes.
3. Train staff.
4. Engage the public in feedback.
5. Work to remove barriers to employment.
6. Continue to make facilities accessible.
7. Ensure there is access to information and communications.

Our Approach (2017- 2018)

1. Develop and implement Accessibility Plan for the 2018 Municipal Election.
2. Train current and new staff.
3. Continue to remove barriers to employment.
4. Continue to make sure that documents uploaded onto the Township website are accessible.
5. Continue to make facilities accessible in accordance with the County's Facility Accessibility Design Manual (FADM).
6. Continue to review feedback processes
7. Continue to provide and improve accessible formats and communication supports
8. Continue to consult with the County's Accessibility Advisory Committee when needed.

Our Approach (2019-2021)

1. Continue to remove barriers to employment.
2. Continue to make sure that documents uploaded onto the Township website are accessible.
3. Continue to make facilities accessible in accordance with the County's Facility Accessibility Design Manual (FADM).
4. Continue to review feedback processes
5. Continue to provide and improve accessible formats and communication supports
6. Continue to consult with the County's Accessibility Advisory Committee when needed.

Our Approach (2021-2023)

1. Develop and implement Accessibility Plan for the 2022 Municipal Election.
2. Livestream and video-record Regular and Special Meetings of Council.
3. Continue to make facilities accessible in accordance with the County's Facility Accessibility Design Manual (FADM).
4. Continue to review feedback processes
5. Continue to provide and improve accessible formats and communication supports
6. Continue to consult with the County's Accessibility Advisory Committee when needed.

Our Approach (2023-2025)

1. Continue to remove barriers to employment.
2. Continue to make sure that documents uploaded onto the Township website are accessible.
3. Continue to make facilities accessible in accordance with the County's Facility Accessibility Design Manual (FADM).
4. Continue to review feedback processes
5. Continue to provide and improve accessible formats and communication supports
6. Continue to consult with the County's Accessibility Advisory Committee when needed.

Regulatory Requirements and Proposed and Completed

Actions Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR)

Part I - General Requirements

The IASR is law. This section of the IASR requires the Township of Guelph/Eramosa to develop accessibility policies, include accessibility in purchasing processes, and train staff and volunteers.

It also requires the Township to create a multi- year accessibility plan and consult with the public on the multi-year accessibility plan.

Develop accessibility policies

- Develop accessibility policies, including a statement of organizational commitment and make the policies publicly available.

What we have done:

- Developed an Accessibility Policy
- Posted the above-mentioned policy on the Township's website and in alternative formats upon request.
- Continue to update the Accessibility Policy as the legislation changes.

Develop multi-year accessibility plans

- Develop multi-year accessibility plan that outlines what will be done to implement the requirements of the IASR.
- Post the multi-year accessibility plan on the Township's website and provide in an accessible format, upon request.

What we have done:

- The Township's multi-year accessibility plan sets out how the Township will comply with requirements of IASR.
- The draft plan has been posted to the Township's website for feedback and is available in alternative formats upon request.

Report annually on multi-year accessibility plan

- Prepare annual status report on the progress of measures set out in the multiyear plan.
- Post the plan on the Township's website and provide it in an accessible format, upon request.

What we are working on:

- Developing Accessible Communications Policy, Diversity and Inclusion Policy, Workplace Accommodations for People with Disabilities Policy and Accessibility Policy.
- Annual status report on the progress of multi-year accessibility plan will be developed and posted to the Township's website.
- Incorporate accessibility in procuring goods, services or facilities, except where it is not practicable to do so.

Training

- Make sure that training on the IASR and the Human Rights Code as it is provided to employees, volunteers, persons who participate in developing policies and others who provide goods, services or facilities on behalf of the organization.

What we are working on:

- Accessibility Training in New Hire Orientation includes information related to the IASR. Training is provided to all employees at the New Hire Orientation quarterly.
- A training document for volunteers has been created and is shared with all new volunteers.

Part II - Information and Communications

Information and communications are a large part of Township of Guelph/Eramosa's daily business. It is because of this that it so important to make sure that information and communications are created in a way that considers accessibility. The Township will follow universal design principles and best practices when developing, implementing and maintaining information and communications strategies and products. This includes websites, intranet sites, print communications materials as well as face-to-face interactions.

The Township is committed to making sure information and communications are available and accessible to people with disabilities. We will do this by:

- Achieving compliance with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines to make sure that both internal and external websites are accessible to people with disabilities.
- Developing resource materials for creating accessible documents for common software programmes such as MS Word, Excel and PowerPoint.
- Making sure that emergency information, procedures, plans and public safety information is available in alternate formats, when requested.

- Developing a training strategy to make sure that staff has the knowledge, tools and technical advice to create accessible materials.

Feedback processes

- Make sure that processes for receiving and responding to feedback are accessible to persons with disabilities by providing/arranging for accessible formats and communications supports, upon request.
- Notify the public about the availability of accessible formats and communication supports.

What we have done:

- Township advertisements currently include wording that encourages people to let us know if they require accommodations or alternative formats.
- Township website directs people to call or email the Clerk for alternative formats and communication supports.
- The Township's website is 'Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0, Level AA' compliant.

Accessible formats and communication supports

- Upon request, provide accessible formats and communications supports for persons with disabilities.
- Let the public know about the availability of accessible formats and communication supports.

What we have done:

- Let the public know about the availability of accessible formats and communication supports on the Township website and Township publications.
- Requests for accessible documents are directed to the Clerk.
- The Township provides accessible formats when requested.

What we are working on:

- For time-based media, pre-recorded audio/video formats will be made available and closed captions will be added for persons with hearing impairment.

Part III - Employment

The Township of Guelph/Eramosa is committed to making sure the process of finding, obtaining and keeping a job is as inclusive as possible in order to build an effective workforce. Human Resources staff will receive training in order to comply with the Integrated Accessibility Regulation. It is expected that training will cover a variety of topics, including:

- Understanding employer obligations to provide employment accommodations.
- How to identify and remove barriers in the workplace.
- Enhancing workplace emergency responses through individualized emergency response information and assistance as required.
- Revising individual work plans and developing tools and templates to remove barriers from the recruitment process.

Recruitment - general, selection process, notification to successful applicants

- Tell employees and the public about the availability of accommodation for applicants with disabilities in recruitment process.
- Inform job applicants when selected to participate in an assessment/selection process that accommodations are available.
- When making an offer of employment, tell the successful applicant of policies for accommodating employees with disabilities.

What we have done:

- Job advertisements inform applicants about the availability of accommodations in the recruitment process.
- Human Resources employees tell applicants of the opportunity to participate in an interview and of the availability of accommodations throughout the process.
- When making an offer of employment, Human Resources verbally.
- Inform the individual of the Township's commitment to providing accommodations in the workplace.
- Handout explaining the procedure for requesting accommodations is given to all new hires on their first day.

Informing employees of supports

- Inform employees of policies to support employees with disabilities.

What we have done:

- Current employees are advised of policies

- New hires attend New Hire Training, where policies to support employees with disabilities are discussed in the Accessibility portion of the training.

Accessible formats and communication supports for employees

- Provide or arrange for accessible formats and communication supports when it is requested by an employee with a disability and the information is needed to perform the employee's job and is generally available to employees in the workplace.

What we have done:

- The Township's Accessibility policy outlines the Township's commitment to providing accommodations to employees when requested.

Workplace emergency response information

Provide individualized workplace emergency response information to employees who have a disability, as required.

What we have done:

- Process in place for employees to self-identify so that an individualized workplace emergency response plan can be developed.
- Handout explaining the procedure for requesting accommodations is given to all new hires on their first day.

Documented individual accommodation plans

- Develop and have in place a written process for development of documented individual accommodation plans for employees with disabilities.

What we have done:

- The Township's Accessibility Policy outlines the Township's process for developing and documenting individual accommodation plans for employees with disabilities.

Return to work process

- Develop a return to work process for employees who have been absent from work due to a disability and require disability-related accommodations to return to work.

What we have done:

- The Township's Health and Safety Policy regarding the Modified Work Program outlines the Township's commitment to providing reasonable accommodations to facilitate an early and safe return to work for employees who have been absent from work due to a disability.

Performance management, career development and advancement, redeployment

- Take into account accessibility needs of employees with disabilities and individual accommodation plans during the performance management process, when providing career development and advancement or when re-deploying an employee.

What we are working on:

- Continue to conduct Performance Appraisals to include IASR requirements for performance management, career development and redeployment.

Part IV - Transportation

The majority of the Transportation standard does not apply to the Township of Guelph/Eramosa with the exception of taxi services, as the Township does not have public transit systems.

Accessible Taxicabs

- Consult with County of Wellington, municipal accessibility advisory committee, the public and persons with disabilities to determine the proportion of on-demand accessible taxicabs needed in the community.
- Identify progress made toward meeting the need for on-demand accessible taxicabs, including any steps that will be taken to meet the need, in its accessibility plan.

What we have done:

- Entered into a reciprocal agreement with the County of Wellington. This agreement delegates the authority of the Township to the County for the licensing and regulation of taxicabs, accessible taxicabs and limousine services.
- Worked with the County of Wellington to amend Taxi By-Law 5266-11 to reflect the requirements in the Integrated Accessibility Regulation.

What we are working on:

- Work with the Public Works & Engineering Department to understand opportunities and challenges with respect to winter and regular maintenance to determine how best to create a safe and accessible environment for all individuals including those with mobility challenges.

Part IV.

1 - Design of Public Spaces

What we have done:

- The Township of Guelph/Eramosa has adopted the County of Wellington Facility Accessibility Design Manual (FADM). The FADM is a manual that addresses accessibility requirements for the design and construction of new facilities, as well as the retrofit, alteration and addition to existing facilities. It incorporates the belief in universal design, which recognizes the broad diversity of people who use Township facilities. Currently, the FADM exceeds the Barrier-Free section of the Ontario Building Code.
- In 2021, the Township of Guelph/Eramosa participated in the Rick Hansen Foundation's Accessibility Audit. Five municipal facilities were audited including the Marden Community Centre, Rockmosa Community Centre, Royal Distributing Athletic Performance Centre, the Brucedale Municipal Office and the Older Adults Centre.
- Accessibility has been increased in several Township buildings and spaces, including:
 1. Rockwood Splash Pad 2008- Fully accessible play area for children
 2. Marden Park and Community Centre 2009 - Fully accessible "Enabling Garden" created at rear of building
 3. Lloyd Dyer Park 2009 – Accessible washroom upgrades
 4. Rockmosa Park 2010 – Rubber surfacing for playground accessibility
 5. Royal Distributing Athletic Performance Centre 2010 – Accessible features included within new construction
 6. Everton James Lynch Park 2010 – Accessibility upgrades
 7. Rockwood Tennis Courts 2011 – Resurfacing for better accessibility
 8. Rockmosa Community Centre 2012 – Accessible washroom upgrades
 9. Rockwood Town Hall 2012 – Installation of accessible doors
 10. Rockwood Cenotaph 2012 – Accessibility upgrades to open space
 11. Municipal Administration Building 2012-2013 – Accessibility upgrades for public and staff areas

12. David Masson Park and Eden Mills Park 2013 – Accessible play features
13. Rockmosa Older Adult Centre 2014 – Built to FADM standards.
14. Rockmosa Enabling Garden 2014- Full accessible garden built at the rear of the Rockwood Library and Older Adult Centre
15. Marden Park 2015 – Fully accessible play structure installed.
16. Rockmosa Master Plan 2015-2016 – Accessible features included within design of future park redevelopment.

What we are working on:

Marden Community Centre:

- Provide easy-to-read wayfinding signage to identify the Function Hall
- Reduce stepped threshold at rear entrance
- Change the door handle lever at the rear door to a lever style handle

Royal Distributing Athletic Performance Centre

- Refresh the signage for the two accessible parking spaces
- Install a visual fire alarm inside washrooms
- Install an L shape grab bar at an accessible location inside accessible stalls
- Replace the turning door lock mechanism to sliding lock for doors inside accessible stalls
- Install a toilet paper dispenser to accessible height and distance from the toilet with open roll dispensers
- Install washroom and change room signage that is high contrast, includes Braille, tactile characters and utilizes the international symbol of accessibility
- Install a pull handle on the inside of the door for accessible stalls
- Provide wayfinding signage for the washrooms and change rooms
- Provide cane detection around the metal post in front of lockers on the ground-floor viewing area and under the stairs
- Adjust the opening force to manual override power door, force to be at 22N (5-lbf)
- Include a tactile warning at the top of stairs landings (internal stairs)
- Install an accessible height coat hook rail in the change room
- Provide clear evacuation signage for the mezzanine corridor
- Paint outdoor stair nosings with a high contrast colour

Rockwood Older Adult Centre

- Paint external stair nosing with contrast colour and apply slip resistant strip
- Slope and eliminate step from the threshold transition

- Paint exterior accessible door swing opening path with contrast colour
- Install wayfinding, overhead signage at the front entrance with blade signage to provide direction to Older Adult Centre (OAC), Library and Community Centre and accessible washrooms
- Install pipe insulation under woman's accessible washroom
- Lower soap dispenser and paper tower
- Install emergency call button inside women's accessible washroom
- Provide colour marker and sticker for glazed power door to outdoor garden
- Relocate emergency switch inside universal washroom closer to toilet
- Provide Power outlet near toilet
- Replace canister toilet paper holder to open paper roll and locate it closer to toilet
- Install visual fire alarm throughout facility
- Relocate fire extinguisher to be accessible
- Install audio and visual alarm inside toilets

Rockmosa Community Centre

- Install tactile warning indicator on top of the stair at the entrance
- Install colour contrasted slip resistance strip at the stair nosing
- Paint door swing path marking on the floor at the front entrance door
- Improve threshold, make it sloped and beveled at the front entrance
- Relocate toilet paper dispenser closer to the toilet
- Move garbage bin away from paper towel to gain access to a soap dispenser
- Install International symbol on accessible washroom doors
- Install audio and visual (strobe lights) fire alarm inside accessible washrooms
- Install emergency call button inside universal washroom close to toilet
- Install divider panel between urinal
- Install missing plumbing protection
- Install International symbol sign on door of accessible stall
- Install sliding lock for accessible stall lock
- Install L-shape grab bar for man's accessible washroom
- Install visual (strobe lights) fire alarm for the facility
- Provide evacuation instructions and plan with large print and map at accessible height and location
- Install power outlet close to toilet inside accessible stalls for men and women washroom

Bruce Administration Office

- Assign additional accessible parking spots

- Provide painted pedestrian crossing from accessible parking space to access path to the facility
- Paint nosing of external stairs and provide tactile warning indicator for ramp and stair approach to traffic way
- Paint basement support column with more visible colour contrast
- Add colour contrast label to glazed doors where missing
- Lower fire extinguisher to accessible where necessary
- Provide room signage for key facilities for identification
- Replace angle grab bar inside the accessible washroom to L-shape grab bar at an accessible height
- Replace canister toilet paper holder to open toilet paper roll at an accessible height close to the toilet
- Install pipe protection for accessible washroom where missing
- Provide signage for accessible washroom with braille and at an accessible height
- Install hand-held shower head for accessible shower room
- Provide shower accessories (soap and shampoo holders) inside shower area at an accessible height
- Lower paper towel mount inside the washroom
- Provide room signage for Council Chamber Room, Committee Room and room signage inside staff area to identify spaces and functions
- Install visual fire alarm (strobe lights) to all areas of the facility including washrooms, meeting rooms, and hallways
- Provide rear mirror inside elevator
- Signage for a large accessible washroom in the basement
- Install tactile warning indicator at the top of the stairs and colour contrast at the nosing of stairs
- Provide evacuation instructions with floor plan and large print at accessible height and locations

All renovation and construction projects moving forward will comply with the FADM where reasonable, special circumstances will be reviewed by the AAC.

Part IV.2 - Customer Service Standards

The Accessibility Standard for Customer Service was the first standard to become law. The Customer Service Standard was placed under the IASR in 2016. The Township of Guelph/Eramosa is committed to making sure all customers receive accessible services in a timely manner. Members of the public will receive a fair customer service experience that meets their needs.

The Township will achieve this by:

- Reviewing and updating policies to make sure high quality, accessible service.
- Including accessibility requirements into staff training and orientation materials.
- Reviewing customer feedback and taking appropriate action.

Develop accessible customer service policies

- Develop and implement accessible customer service policies, procedures and practices.

What we have done:

- Accessible Communications Guidelines and policy implemented.
- Provide accessible customer service training

Provide accessible customer service training to staff and volunteers.

What we have done:

- Current employees were trained on Accessible Communications and Accessible Documents.
- New Hires are trained in Accessible Communications during the New Hire Orientation that is held quarterly.
- New hires are trained on the Customer Service Standard during New Hire Orientation.

What we are working on:

- Encourage more digital online services that are easily accessible and result in an improved customer experience.
- Work with various departments that provide programs to explore and identify more inclusive and diversified programming opportunities.

Conclusion

The Township recognizes that further steps need to be taken to help us become completely barrier-free. Therefore, the Multi-year Plan presented above reflects a commitment to engage in initiatives that will make the Township free of physical, attitudinal and social barriers by the year 2025.

Contact Information

The Township of Guelph/Eramosa is committed to removing barriers for people with disabilities and providing accessible services for our residents. As we strive to be more accessible, we would like your input. Do you have any thoughts or feedback on what we have accomplished so far? Or do you have ideas on how our projects or policies could be improved?

Please contact us with your questions and ideas.

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