

Schedule "A"
to By-Law No. 1995



The Corporation of the Township of Hornepayne

Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

2023 – 2027

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Introduction

It is known that everyone is likely to be affected by disability at some point in their lives – whether personally or indirectly through the experiences of family, friends, or coworkers. Better access helps everyone. It improves the quality of life for our entire community.

This plan outlines strategies and actions to be implemented by the Township of Hornepayne for a five-year period, commencing in 2023, in order to improve access and opportunities for people of all abilities, and help Ontario become an accessible province for all.

Accessibility Requirements

Ontario Human Rights Code

The Ontario Human Rights Code (OHRC) ensures that all individuals have access to equal opportunities and rights. It prevents discrimination and unequal treatment against persons with disabilities.

Ontarians with Disabilities Act

The Ontarians with Disabilities Act (ODA) received Royal Assent on December 14, 2001. The purpose of the ODA is to improve the quality of life and experiences of persons with disabilities by identifying, preventing, and removing any barriers that may limit opportunities for individuals with disabilities to fully participate in society. The ODA requires all municipalities to prepare annual accessibility plans, which outline their commitment for accessible communities.

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) became law on June 13th, 2005. The AODA advances the goals of the ODA by requiring public, private, and non-profit organizations to identify, remove, and prevent barriers to accessibility in order to make the Province of Ontario fully accessible for all persons with disabilities by 2025. The AODA represents collaboration between various representatives of the private and public sectors and persons with disabilities to develop accessibility standards. The AODA creates mandatory accessibility standards that will identify, prevent, and remove barriers for persons with disabilities in key areas of daily living.

Integrated Accessibility Standards (O. Reg. 191/11)

The Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR) has identified key areas for the development of common accessibility standards that are intended to ensure all sectors and organizations can provide fully accessible services and environments for Ontarians. The goal of these standards is to facilitate the full participation of persons with disabilities in society.

The standards are:

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

Township of Hornepayne – Commitment to Accessibility

The Township of Hornepayne is committed to ensuring equal access and participation for persons of all abilities. We are committed to treating people with disabilities in a way that allows them to maintain their dignity and independence. We will do so by removing (where possible) and preventing barriers to accessibility and meeting our accessibility requirements under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act and Ontario's accessibility laws.

The Township is committed to meeting its current and ongoing obligations under the Ontario Human Rights Code with respect to non-discrimination. We are committed to excellence in serving and providing goods, services, or facilities to persons of all abilities.

Barrier Identification

The goal of the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan is to prevent, identify, and remove barriers or obstacles that limit or prevent people with disabilities from engaging in day-to-day activities that are taken for granted by people without disabilities.

A barrier may be defined as anything that inhibits or prevents a person with a disability from full participation in all aspects of society due to his or her disability.

There are several types of barriers to be considered:

- **Environmental Barriers:** features, buildings or spaces that restrict or impede physical access.
- **Communication Barriers:** obstacles that restrict or impede the processing, transmission, and interpretation of information.
- **Attitudinal Barriers:** prejudgments or assumptions that directly or indirectly discriminate against a person with a disability.
- **Technological Barriers:** when technology cannot be or is not modified to support various assistive devices and/or software.
- **Systemic Barriers:** policies, practices and procedures within an organization that do not take accessibility into consideration.

Recent Achievements

The Township of Hornepayne's most recent and notable accessibility achievements:

- Implementation of iCompass Meeting Management Software, which enables the entire Council/Committee agenda to be posted on the webpage in HTML and PDF format for residents to view.
- Implementation of online bill (property tax and water/sewer) payment options.
- Implementation of online fitness facility booking.
- Implementation of HRdownloads online training, providing up-to-date accessibility training.

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- Implementation of Virtual and Hybrid Council Meeting options – additionally, Meetings are livestreamed and available on YouTube.
- Launch of a new WCAG 2.0 Level AA compliant municipal website in 2022, which was designed to promote a user-friendly experience with a fresh and modern layout.
- Addition of accessible picnic tables at Pavilion.
- Council approved alternative voting methods for the 2022 Municipal Election, allowing all electors to vote safely and comfortably from their homes. Help centre(s) were to be available for people who require assistance casting their ballot, however the Election was acclaimed.
- Addition of computer at entrance of Municipal Office – to help guide community members through online forms, navigating the website, etc.

Accessibility Initiatives and Priorities 2023-2027

The Township of Hornepayne's primary focus is to ensure that we are meeting the requirements of the AODA and the IASR. This multi-year plan represents the Township's response to the requirements of the legislation and our commitment to providing public service in an accessible manner.

General

- Ensure that the Township is compliant with Provincial Accessibility Legislation – Township staff will continue to monitor and follow amendments to accessibility legislation and report to Council as necessary.
- Complete Compliance Reports for the Province, as required.
- Accessibility Plan Status Report – Township staff will report to Council annually on the status of this Multi-Year Accessibility Plan.

Customer Service Standard

This standard helps remove barriers for people with disabilities so they can access goods, services, or facilities, with the same high quality and timeliness as others.

- Continue to incorporate accessibility and the needs of people with disabilities when procuring or acquiring goods, services, and facilities.
- Continue to provide and maintain records of relevant training for staff, Council, and Township volunteers on the requirements of the AODA, IASR, and OHRC.
- Expand mental health training offerings for all staff, including e-learning (2023 – will be ongoing).
- Provide feedback and complaint process in an alternate format, upon request – provide an electronic option compliant with WCAG 2.0 to provide feedback on accessibility within the Township.

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- Provide notice of any temporary disruptions to accessible features/facilities.
- Permit support persons and service animals in Township facilities, unless prohibited by law.
- Provide accessible Elections (plan for the identification, removal, and prevention of barriers that affect electors and candidates during Municipal Elections – for 2026 Election).

Information and Communication Standard

These standards ensure that all communication and information distributed by the Township of Hornepayne is accessible to persons of all abilities.

- Continue to implement best practices for creating accessible documents and continue to create web-ready, accessible documents for public use.
- Continue to respond to feedback with respect to accessibility at the Township through accessible feedback processes.
- Continue to ensure website accessibility for persons with disabilities – the newly implemented Township of Hornepayne website meets the WCAG 2.0 Level AA Standards, and will be updated to continue meeting accessibility requirements, as needed.
- Provide public emergency information in an accessible format upon request, and strive to create any new public safety information in accessible document formats.

Employment Standards

These standards provide fair and accessible employment practices during the recruitment process and throughout the duration of employment at the Township of Hornepayne.

- Continue to ensure that recruitment, hiring, promotion, and retention processes are inclusive and accommodating.
- Continue to develop, document, and maintain individual accommodation plans for employees with disabilities.

Design of Public Spaces Standards

These standards address accessibility planning in a range of public spaces, including trails/beach access routes; outdoor public eating areas; play spaces; accessible parking; exterior paths of travel including sidewalks; service counters; fixed queuing lines; waiting areas; and the emergency and preventative maintenance of accessible elements in public spaces. These standards only apply to new construction or the redevelopment of existing public spaces and buildings.

- Continue to incorporate public consultations into existing processes wherever possible.
- Acquire updated Accessibility Assessments of municipal buildings (2023).
- Identify and plan for the removal of barriers in Township owned spaces, when possible.
- Adhere to accessibility regulations when designing, implementing, or re-developing spaces.

- Incorporate accessible features and designs in accordance with AODA and Ontario Building Code regulations in the ongoing Arena Rehabilitation and Expansion Project (such as barrier-free washrooms, an accessible library to accommodate patrons of all abilities, etc.).
- Ensure the accessibility of new and redeveloped play spaces, such as including an area with equipment to enhance play opportunities and experiences for children and caregivers of all abilities.
- Ensure best practices in the preventative maintenance of accessible elements of existing public spaces, with periodic checks such as: annual inspections (or more frequently if needed); as part of any reports of vandalism or complaints; etc. and ensure best practices in the emergency maintenance of accessible elements with when notified.
- Identify and plan for temporary disruptions when accessible elements required are not in working order. Procedures for when disruptions occur that will impact the accessibility of goods, services, or facilities provided by the Township will involve notice being given to the public indicating:
 - 1) Description of the service disruption;
 - 2) Reason for the disruption;
 - 3) Anticipated duration of the disruption;
 - 4) Alternate routes, facilities, or services, if any, that are available and;
 - 5) Contact information.

Notice will be given by posting the information at public entry points, key locations around the service disruption, posted on the Township's website, or by any other method that is reasonable.

Transportation Standards

The Township of Hornepayne does not currently provide conventional transportation services (bus, taxi-cab services, etc.). Therefore, this section of the IASR does not apply.

Conclusion

Creating communities where every person can participate fully is important for people, businesses, and community life. Accessibility not only helps people with disabilities, it benefits everyone. Creating communities, where every person who lives or visits can participate fully can substantially reduce social isolation and improve mental health for people of all abilities, increase economic gains for local businesses, and improve physical health opportunities and outcomes for all.

The Township of Hornepayne will continue its commitment to the removal of accessibility barriers and to the improvement of overall accessibility in the community. The Multi-Year Accessibility Plan will be updated again in 2027/2028 for another five-year period, as per the AODA and Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR).

Feedback

Members of the public are encouraged to provide comments on the Township of Hornepayne's Multi-Year Accessibility Plan, the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan Status Report, and any other accessibility related matter. To provide feedback, please visit the Township's [website](#) or contact:

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