



The Township of North Dundas Multi-Year Accessibility Plan For 2020 – 2025

Township of North Dundas
636 St. Lawrence Street
Winchester, Ontario K0C 2K0

Prepared December 2021

If this information is required in an alternate format, please contact Nancy Johnston,
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ACCESSIBILITY PLAN UPDATE

TABLE OF CONTENTS

A Message from the Mayor	2
Commitment to Accessibility Planning	3
Definitions	.....	6
Accessibility Committee	.....	7
Summary of Actions 2020	.....	8
Summary of Actions 2021	.....	10
Summary of Proposed Actions 2022	.....	12
Other Proposed Actions 2023 – 2025 (no established date for completion)	.....	13
Appendix A – Photos	.....	14

A Message from the Mayor

The Council of the Township of North Dundas is very pleased to present our most recent Accessibility Plan for our municipality.

The Township is committed to accommodating any person with a disability regardless of whether they are an employee, volunteer, resident or visitor. Ultimately, the accessibility plan is intended to identify, remove and prevent all barriers that may impede a person from accessing and using municipal services within the responsibility of the Township of North Dundas.

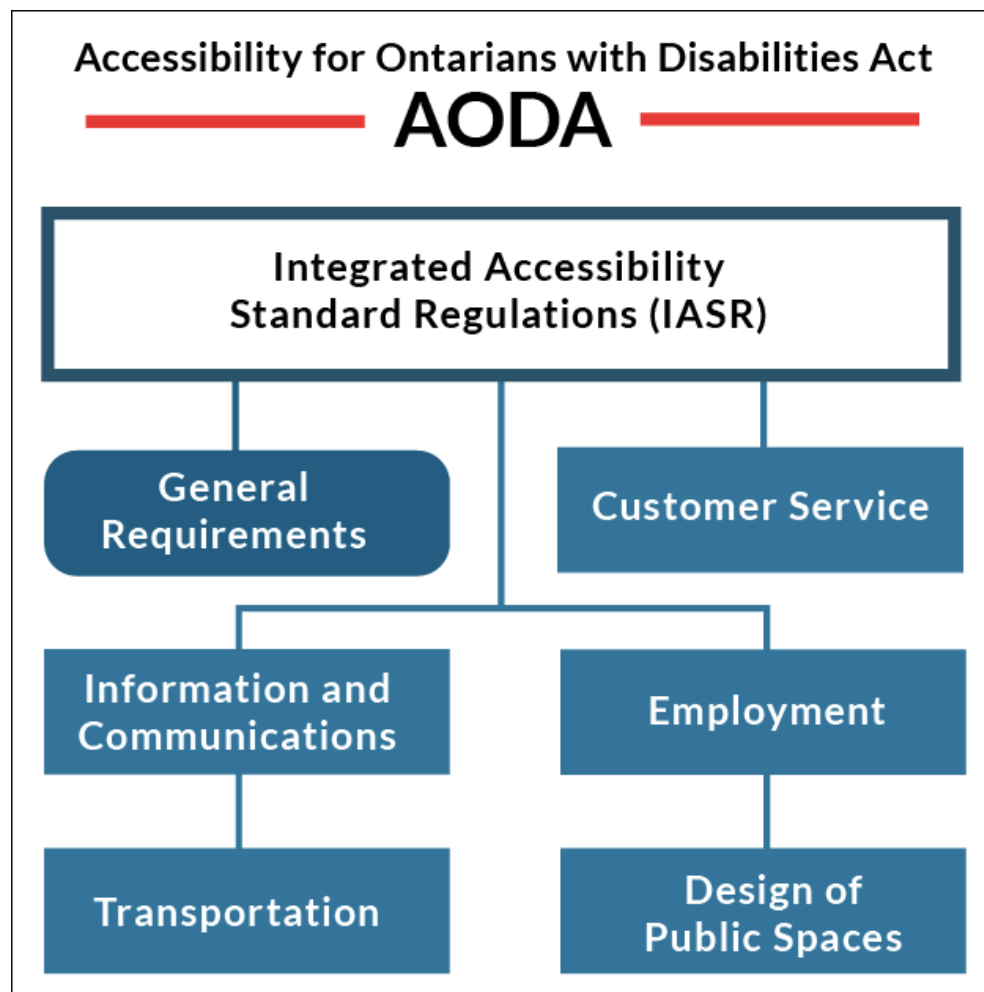
I am particularly proud of some major accomplishments made during the two last years:

- We hired a firm to completely redesign our website. Not only is it now fully compliant with level AA of the WCAG 2.0 web content accessibility guidelines which meets the requirements in the AODA, it also won a gold award for design.
- Due to COVID-19 restrictions on in-person meetings, we upgraded the audio/visual equipment in the Council chambers and are broadcasting all of our Council meetings live on YouTube. Closed captioning for these meetings is available. Delegations and other participants are able to join the meeting via Zoom.
- We also received government funding allowing us to upgrade many of our parks with AODA compliant play features.

In closing, on behalf of the members of Council, I would like to thank the members of the North Dundas Plan Development Working Group and the United Counties of Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry Committee Members, for their time and dedication in helping make our community accessible to everyone.

Commitment to Accessibility Planning

The *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* (AODA) requires private and not-for-profit organizations with 50 or more employees, to create a multi-year accessibility plan and develop accessibility policies according to established standards in five areas. The AODA has several standards governed by different legislations (see chart below) with varying dates for mandatory compliance.



Source: <https://accessibilitycanada.ca>

1. **General Requirements** – In addition to the five standards that all non-profits, private and public sector businesses must comply with, there are also general requirements that include:
 - Training – Ensuring employees have the basic knowledge about accessibility and how it impacts people with disabilities, and keeping records about the training received.
 - An accessibility policy – A written policy that is available to the public that guides an organization and helps with achieving accessibility goals.

- An accessibility plan – A plan that works with the above-mentioned policy that outlines steps to prevent and remove barriers faced by persons with disabilities and the timeline for implementing these steps.
 - Self-service kiosks – Electronic terminals must include accessibility features when they are designed, procured or acquired.
2. **Standard One - Customer Service Standards (CSS)** – The standard for customer service has been in effect since 2008, and requires organizations to develop policies and a plan on how to provide services to persons with a disability. Under CSS only the information about services needs to be accessible, not the services themselves. Additionally, contact information in multiple formats (phone number, email, address) must be available to collect feedback on accessibility practices. This standard applies to all organizations in Ontario that provide goods, services or facilities to the public or other third parties that has at least one employee in Ontario.
 3. **Standard Two - Information and Communications** – All emergency and public safety information must be provided in an accessible format when asked, including websites which must comply with Web Content Accessibility Standards (WCAG).
 4. **Standard Three - Employment Standards** – All internal communications and workplace information must be accessible to all employees. Employees with disabilities must have individualized workplace emergency response information. Recruitment must be accessible to everyone and accommodations must be made to meet the needs of employees throughout their career, including individual accommodation plans and return-to-work plans for employees absent due to a disability.
 5. **Standard Four - Transportation** – Organizations providing transportation services must have accessible options for people with disabilities. The Township of North Dundas is not responsible for any form of public transportation; therefore, this standard will not be addressed in this plan.
 6. **Standard Five - Design of Public Spaces** – These standards are still being developed. Since 2015, The Ontario Building Code (OBC) requires that minimum accessibility standards be met for most new construction and extensive renovations to existing buildings. There is a baseline for level of accessibility for service counters, waiting areas with fixed seating and outdoor spaces, such as sidewalks and parking lots; however, like the OBC, these standards only apply to new construction and planned redevelopment of public spaces.

Standard five requires municipalities to consult with people with disabilities in certain circumstances to develop design solutions that reflect local conditions and meet the needs of all users. Consultation is required when an organization plans to construct or redevelop:

- Recreational trails
- Beach access routes

- Outdoor public use eating areas
- Playgrounds and outdoor play spaces
- Exterior paths of travel
- Service counters
- Waiting areas with fixed seating
- Sidewalks
- Parking lots

Under the standard, municipalities must consult with the public and persons with disabilities in addition to consulting with their municipal Accessibility Advisory Committee. This consultation should occur as early as possible in the construction or redevelopment process so that the Township can weigh all considerations before decisions are made and design plans are finalized.

The standard also allows for consultations to be combined on varying projects to allow for efficient and effective decision-making. As part of the municipality's systemic compliance, accessibility planning has been incorporated into the Official Plan process, and the Township manages a Community Improvement Plan (CIP). Under the CIP program, businesses can apply for grants to modify their premises to improve accessibility.

Definitions

The definition shown below clearly indicates that a “disability” may include physical limitations, mental or developmental limitations and other non-evident limitations.

A “disability” is:

- 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*.

A “barrier” is:

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 informational or communications barrier, an attitudinal barrier, a technological barrier, a policy or a practice.

Source: The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act

Accessibility Committee

The Township of North Dundas works closely with an Accessibility Committee to develop a comprehensive accessibility plan with the goal of identifying, removing and preventing barriers for people with disabilities in the Township of North Dundas. The key contacts for The Township regarding accessibility are:

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Summary of Actions – 2020

Customer Service

- All new employees receive mandatory training on Accessible Customer Service. All employees completed refresher training in the fall of 2019.

Information and Communications

- We began the process to completely redesign the Township's website, with a launch date of Spring 2021.
- Due to COVID-19 restrictions on in-person meetings, we upgraded the audio/visual equipment in the Council chambers and are broadcasting all of our Council meetings live. Closed captioning is available. Delegations and other participants are able to join the meeting via Zoom.
- TTY support continues to be provided with the assistance of Bell operators.

Employment

- Accessibility accommodations are available throughout the recruitment process and included as part of our advertisements.
- Due to restrictions with COVID-19, virtual interviews were held when required.

Design of Public Spaces

- OPP/Library/Medical Building, 547 St. Lawrence Street, Winchester
 - Installed automatic door opener on door to medical clinic.
- Old Town Hall, 478 Main Street, Winchester
 - Resurfaced east parking lot.
- Morewood Community Hall, 17 Russell Street, Morewood
 - Replaced current lighting outside the change room door in the rink house.
- Nelson LaPrade Centre, 9 William Street, Chesterville
 - Installed accessible toilets.
 - Replaced stairs to entrance.
- The Township of North Dundas Municipal Office, 636 St. Lawrence Street, Winchester
 - Installed automatic door opener on door to women's bathroom.
 - Installed a baby change table in the visitor's washroom.
- Joel Steele Community Centre, 577 Winchester Main Street, Winchester
 - Resurfaced stairs to upper-level Community Hall with tactile vinyl.
 - Installed accessible height toilet.
- Chesterville and District Arena, 153 Queen Street, Chesterville
 - Widened change room door frames.

- Chesterville Community Hall, 1 Mill Street, Chesterville
 - Replaced sections of concrete walkway and installed tactile surfaces.
 - Removed curb from walkway to accessible parking space.
 - Relayed interlock landing by library.
 - Parking spaces repainted to AODA standards.
- Chesterville Public Pool, 1 William Street, Chesterville
 - Replaced washroom dividers.
- Rick Cauvier Memorial Park, 10543 South Mountain Main Street, South Mountain
 - Old rink shed torn down and replaced with an AODA friendly gazebo, complete with one picnic table that has three bench seats instead of four (wheel chair accommodating).
- Other
 - Purchased a portable pool lift to share between Winchester and Chesterville pools.
 - Installed pedestrian crossing lights on York Street at Winchester Public School and two park benches that meet AODA measurements.
 - Installed a crosswalk with lights at the intersection of Wintonia Drive and St. Lawrence Street in Winchester
 - Replaced 10M of the concrete walkway on Mill Street east in Chesterville on the south side of civic number #1 (Chesterville Community Hall), in order to level the path of travel. Tactile warning strips were added.
 - Replaced 25M of concrete walkway on Mill Street east in Chesterville on the west side of civic number #1 (Chesterville Community Hall), in order to level the path of travel. Tactile warning strips were added.

Summary of Actions – 2021

Customer Service

- All new employees receive mandatory training on Accessible Customer Service. An HR training platform was purchased that enables employees to take extra training courses and ensures the content is up-to-date.

Information and Communications

- We began the process to completely redesign the Township's website, with a launch date of Spring 2021. Not only is it now fully compliant with level AA of the WCAG 2.0 web content accessibility guidelines which meets the requirements in the AODA, it also won a gold award for design.
- We purchased a Zoom licence which allows the Municipality to host public meetings virtually, along with closed captioning.
- TTY support continues to be provided with the assistance of Bell operators.
- Internet and telephone voting has been adopted for the 2022 Municipal and School Board elections.

Employment

- Accessibility accommodations are available throughout the recruitment process and included as part of our advertisements.
- Due to restrictions with COVID-19, virtual interviews were held when required.
- Two ergonomic sit stand work stations were installed.

Design of Public Spaces

- The Township of North Dundas Municipal Office, 636 St. Lawrence Street, Winchester
 - Replaced one tap in the men's washroom with a touchless model.
 - Sections of the parking lot were replaced to make the surface more even for walking and to lower some areas for wheelchair accessibility.
 - Parking lot lines were repainted to current standards, including required AODA parking spaces with wheelchair markings.
- Old Town Hall, 478 Main Street, Winchester
 - Installed automatic door opener on theatre door.
 - Installed automatic door opener on AODA washroom door.
 - Replaced AODA signage at the front door.
 - Renovated access to AODA washroom.
 - Replacing HVAC system in theatre to lower operating noise, which helps the hearing impaired.
- Morewood Community Hall, 17 Russell Street, Morewood
 - Make rink house change room door flush with ice surface.
- Veteran's View Park, Morewood
 - Added a 3-sided picnic table.

- Reset interlocking paving stones pathway for a smoother path of travel.
- Mountain Memorial Park, 10480 Clark Road, Mountain
 - Trails were upgraded with wood chips and AODA signs prohibiting motorized vehicles were added.
 - 3-sided picnic table was added.
- Rick Cauvier Memorial Park, 10543 South Mountain Main Street, South Mountain
 - Installed a new community pavilion and levelled gravel parking lot for smoother access.
 - Resurfaced South Mountain tennis courts.
 - In partnership with the Lions, two benches to AODA measurements and two picnic tables (one with only three sides) were installed.
- Chesterville Public Pool, 1 William Street, Chesterville
 - Purchased a portable pool lift for this pool (previously shared one with Winchester Centennial Pool).
- Chesterville Ball Field, 153 Queen Street, Chesterville
 - Replaced lights.
- Chesterville Tennis Courts, 9 William Street, Chesterville
 - Resurfaced tennis courts.
- Winchester Centennial Pool, 577 Winchester Main Street, Winchester
 - Added grab bars to men's and lady's bathrooms.
- 100 Club Park, 577 Winchester Main Street, Winchester
 - Paved a new pathway that connects a new AODA parking space in the parking lot with the existing paved pathway that runs through the playground.
- Other
 - 6 parks received AODA swings (South Mountain, Chesterville, Winchester, Mountain, Harmony and Thompson).
 - Tactile plates were installed on Clark Road.
 - Began renting AODA compliant portable washroom facilities for the Winchester and Chesterville ball fields. This will continue to take place annually.
 - Installed a crosswalk with lights at the intersection of Christie Lane and Main Street in Winchester.
 - Installed a crosswalk with lights at the intersection of Church Street and Main Street in Winchester.

Summary of Proposed Actions – 2022

Customer Service

- All new employees will receive mandatory training on Accessible Customer Service.

Information and Communications

- Municipality will continue to broadcast meetings virtually.

Employment

- Accessibility accommodations will be available throughout the recruitment process and included as part of our advertisements.
- Continued purchase of ergonomic equipment for staff as required.

Design of Public Spaces

- Chesterville Public Pool, 1 William Street, Chesterville
 - Replace washroom taps.
- Winchester Centennial Pool, 577 Winchester Main Street, Winchester
 - Purchase/reconfigure existing bathroom stalls to become AODA compliant.
 - Purchase touch free taps.
 - Replace and lower bathroom counters.
 - Purchase and install AODA bathroom mirrors.
 - Replace main entrance door with a wider door and smaller frame so the opening becomes 38".
 - Convert two parking spaces into one accessible parking space located within close proximity to the paved path leading to the Lions Club Pavilion and pool building.
- Hallville Park, 1650 County Road 1, Mountain
 - Begin development. Will consult with Accessibility Committee prior to installation of components.
- Other
 - Additional accessible play structures and accessible pathways will be installed in various parks.
 - Ten Spins and accessible pathways will be installed based on proximity to parking lot.
 -

Other Proposed Actions – 2023 - 2025 (no established date)

Design of Public Spaces

- Old Town Hall - 478 Main Street, Winchester
 - Install handles in the aisles to assist disabled patrons.
- Hallville Park, 1650 County Road 1, Mountain
 - Continued development of the park and its amenities.
- Sidewalks
 - Replace sections of sidewalk – areas to be determined during budget process.

Appendix A – Photos of Improvements

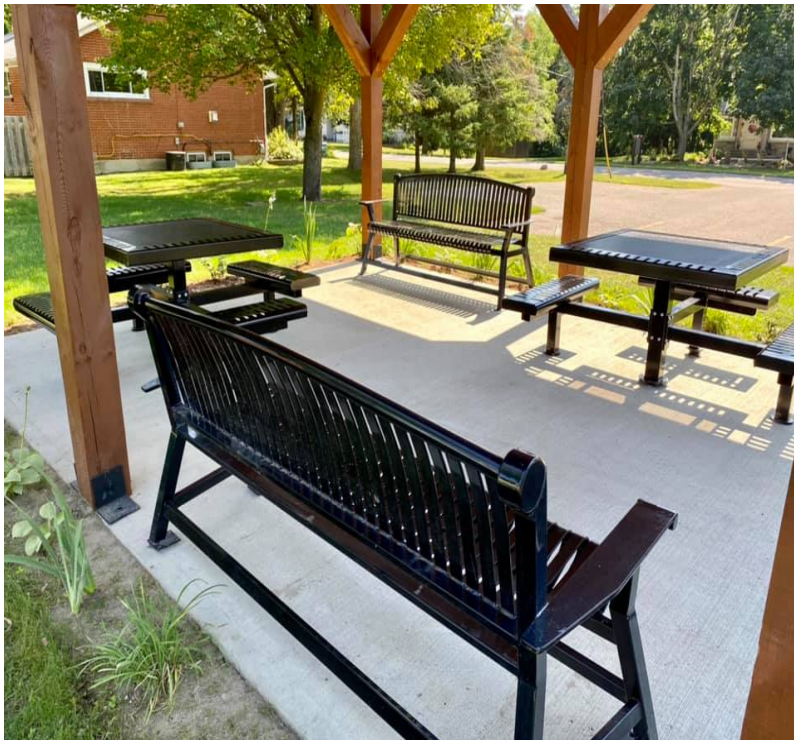


Washroom renovation at Old Town Hall





AODA swing – installed at several parks



Lions Club Pavillion in South Mountain with 3-sided table and AODA benches



**Old stairs at the Nelson
LaPrade Center**



**New stairs at the Nelson
LaPrade Center**



New path constructed at 100 Club Park



1 AODA pool lift now at each Municipal pool