

TOWNSHIP OF HAMILTON

ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

Prepared by:

**Township of Hamilton
Accessibility Advisory Committee**

**Approved by Council:
November 19, 2013
Updated: June 16, 2015**

**“This document is available in accessible
format upon request”**

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.

This document is the Township of Hamilton's Accessibility Plan (reviewed annually and updated where required). It describes the Township's consultation activities in addition to the measures the Township has taken in the past year and will take in the coming year to identify, remove, and prevent barriers to people with disabilities.

Definition of Disability:

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

Disability

- 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")

Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001

Aim of Plan:

This plan describes:

- (1) measures that the Township of Hamilton has taken in the past; and
- (2) measures that the Township will take in the coming year 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 does the following (please also see attached schedules):

1. Describes the role and function of the Accessibility Advisory Committee in the preparation of this plan and in the decision-making processes of the Municipality.
2. Reviews past efforts and recent initiatives to identify, remove, and prevent barriers to people with disabilities.
3. Describes the measures the Township will take in the coming year to identify, remove, and prevent barriers to people with disabilities.
4. Provides a timeline for additional barrier identification initiatives –citing the facilities, programs, policies, practices, and services that the Township will review in the coming year.
5. Describes the process by which the Township will monitor the plan's progress to ensure that targets are being met and work is being done in accordance with the plan.
6. Describes how the Township will make the plan available to the public.

Hamilton Township Profile:

The Township of Hamilton is a rural/urban community located in south central Ontario, nestled between Lake Ontario and Rice Lake. The township consists of several rural settlement areas, farms, and other residential areas that are home to a population of 11,000 residents. Those thriving hamlets including Baltimore, Bewdley, Camborne, Cold Springs, Gores Landing, Harwood and Precious Corners. There are three municipal community centres, two arenas, three fire halls and a variety of parks. The Township Office is located at 8285 Majestic Hills Drive, Camborne.

The Township of Hamilton enjoys the benefits of quality lifestyles, natural and heritage amenities, essential services and positive growth. It continues to be a vibrant and exciting place to live, work and visit. The Township's vision is to be a self-reliant, fiscally sound municipality striving for positive growth, a sustainable infrastructure with socially responsible and accessible services that promote a safe, healthy and family friendly lifestyle.

The township will be the location of choice for many retirees seeking an alternative to urban living. Primary factors influencing the anticipated migration of retirees include

access to modern health care facilities as well as the township's natural beauty and rural lifestyle.

This quality of life will prevail through a combination of preserving the Township's natural heritage features and new economic opportunities. Home based businesses, agriculture and tourism will continue to be distinct and important components to the Township.

For more information on the Township of Hamilton or its Accessibility Plan, please contact Beth Thompson, Human Resources and Administrative Project Manager at (905) 342-2810 Ext. 116 or by e-mail at bthompson@hamiltontownship.ca

The Accessibility Advisory Committee:

Establishment of 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 was established in accordance with the Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001 (ODA) and has cited the following objectives in its mandate:

- To prepare and implement annual Accessibility Plans as specified by the ODA
- To advocate on behalf of persons with disabilities
- To review and advise Council on the following matters as they relate to accessibility:
 - site plans of new and existing Municipal buildings
 - new and existing Municipal By-Laws
 - policies
 - purchases
 - significant renovations
 - leased facilities or any other facility used as a Municipal building
 - Municipal capital facilities under the Municipal Act
 - goods and services provided by the Municipality or agents providing services under contract with the Municipality
- To promote public awareness and understanding of the needs of disabled persons
- To encourage improved services which will enable disabled persons to live a full and productive life
- To provide advice to Council on other issues of importance to persons with disabilities
- Upon request, the plan can also be made available electronically. If required, the municipality will attempt to make the plan available by audiocassette and in Braille.

The Chairperson

A chairperson will be appointed annually.

Composition of the Committee

The Accessibility Advisory Committee is currently composed of 7 Members and, by the conditions 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
- one appointed member of Council

Committee Support:

The Committee's Terms of Reference also specify that the Committee will be supported by the Chief Administrative Officer or a designated Administrative Official who will provide access to all facets of the organization and provide administrative support. However, this person will not be considered a Committee Member and will not have voting privileges. The Municipal Clerk of the Township of Hamilton, will occupy this role and is formally recognized as the Committee Secretary.

The Township of Hamilton's Commitment to Accessibility Planning:

The Township of Hamilton is committed to:

- The enhancement of the ability of persons with disabilities to have equal access to opportunities within the community.
- The participation of persons with disabilities in all the various facets of annual accessibility planning and in the provision of advice to Council on any municipal matter deemed important by the Accessibility Committee.
- The development of a more inclusive community – i.e.: one that values and accommodates the various perspectives and needs of a diverse population.

The Council authorized the Accessibility Advisory Committee to prepare an accessibility plan that will enable the Township of Hamilton to meet these commitments. This Plan is updated annually and Council approved the original Plan in the form of a By-law.

Past 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:

- 1.) It installed elevators at Cold Springs Memorial Hall and the former Baltimore Community Centre to improve the accessibility of these areas.
- 2.) 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.
- 3.) 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.

Accomplishments 2003 and 2004

There are many other activities the Committee has been involved in which were not specified in the Plan, however, they will have a very positive impact on the residents of Hamilton Township. Most notably was involvement at the County level with assistance and participation in the formation of liaison with other Accessibility Committees in the County, the formation of the Barrier Free Northumberland Committee to address County wide issues and the County-wide adoption of the London Accessibility Guidelines.

On a local level the Committee has been involved in the planning of the new Baltimore Arena Upgrade and Expansion Project, proposed to be completed in 2006. The Committee met with the planner and reviewed the plans. The Committee also reviewed Accessibility Guidelines from various cities, and recommended the adoption of the London Guidelines to Hamilton Township Council. Council approved the adoption of the Guidelines as recommended.

The Committee also met with the Harwood Hall Committee and the Town of Cobourg & District Chamber of Commerce to discuss concerns, offer assistance and promote awareness of accessibility.

Accomplishments 2004 – 2005

- Public Awareness
 - publicized new guidelines
 - encouraged business to upgrade premises
 - investigated publication of awareness booklet
 - met with Chairs of Township Boards and Committees and Department Heads to promote awareness and co-ordinate activities and efforts
- Participated with Port Hope in Accessibility Awareness Day.
- Worked with contractor on disability issues for new Township arena.
- Worked with area superintendent of Post Offices to make our rural post offices accessible.
- Attended Accessibility conference in Burlington.
- Participated in new Access Ontario group
- Produced Guidelines book for use in Township for all new building and renovations.

Accomplishments 2005-2006

In 2006, the Committee was focused on its advisory role in the construction of the Baltimore Recreation Centre/Arena Project. The Committee also assisted in the Trillium Grant Application, in which the Township was successful in obtaining a \$75,000.00 grant to pave 1.6 km's of walkway/pathways in 4 Township parks. This project corrected many of the accessibility issues this Committee had regarding the sites.

Accomplishments 2006-2007

- Created Guidelines for
- Hamilton Township Sponsored Events
 - Choose accessible sites
 - Increase DPPP parking with Temporary signs
 - Use principals of design in all signs and publicity
 - Have priority seating available
 - Have extra seating available
- Public Awareness
 - encourage all tourism publications to identify accessible businesses (ongoing)

Accomplishments 2007-2008

- Baltimore Recreation Centre – Park washrooms – eliminated accessibility issue to concrete pad.
- Accessibility Day September 26, 2007 – conducted event using various locations in municipality
- Tourism – ongoing discussions around use of Universal Accessibility Symbols
- Committee passed motion for Council to consider renovations and rehabilitation of the Bewdley Arena so that all services will be accessible to the public.

Accomplishments 2008-2009

- Shelter of Hope (Animal Shelter) – Trillium grant - paved walking trail meeting accessible (2) wheelchair width (72")
- Focus on Public Awareness – developed a Guideline and checklist that addresses accessibility issues (pamphlet form) to be handed out at special events i.e. fishing tournaments and in house to home builders, facility rentals etc.
- Upgrades installed at Bewdley Beach Washroom i.e. grab bars
- Bewdley Arena project - Endorsed by Council for addition/renovation to meet accessibility standards.

Accomplishments 2009-2010

- “No Smoking within 10m of entrance” courtesy signs posted at three municipal buildings – Community rental facilities (Bewdley, Baltimore and Cold Springs)
- Public Awareness Flyer completed and distributed to municipal rental facilities.
- Bewdley facility – designed for barrier free access.
- Barrier free warm viewing area (Bewdley) funding application to Trillium.
- New accessible customer service regulations – training developed and completed by HR Manager.

Accomplishments 2010

- The Bewdley Community Centre is completed and open for business – grand opening September 2010.
- FishAbility Sports Club (Charitable organization) operates from the Bewdley Waterfront Park. The fishing sport club aims to provide an outdoor and recreational activity for any disabled child, youth and adult. The Predators Sledge Hockey Team (ages 15 & up) will be based at Bewdley Arena as it is now fully accessible.
- Rice Lake Drive – Bewdley has been redesigned and resurfaced. Upgrades to waterfront park are ongoing. Access to public dock has been improved for accessibility.

Accomplishments 2011-2012

- Municipal Park tour by members to update requirements
- Fire Hall Audit for accessibility
- Discussion with staff for 2013 Capital Budget
 - ✓ Fire Hall Accessibility (Baltimore/Bewdley/Harwood)
 - ✓ Finger docks accessibility and safety (Bewdley)
 - ✓ Cold Springs building accessible washroom
 - ✓ Camborne School accessibility and accessible washroom
- Discussions with Manager, Parks and Recreation re requirements for parks in particular Bewdley Washroom
- Managing list of to-do items (includes clearing a 9 year old issue in Baltimore Park washroom)
- Grant provided to Community Care for van (to enhance Accessible Service).

Accomplishments 2013-2014

- Election Accessibility Awareness
- Accessible upgrades to Bewdley and Behan Parks
- Review of all policies to be compliant with AODA legislation.

Planning 2015 – 2017

- Create guidelines for accessible open spaces
- Finish replacement of taps and knobs in all municipally owned buildings
- Widen doorway in Cold Springs Hall (accessible washroom)
- Finalize transportation initiative through Community Care
- Continue work on public awareness

The attached Schedules reflect our multi-year plans. The schedules will be reviewed annually and changes will reflect township priorities and provincial legislation requirements.

The Committee, through conversation and consultation with other supporters of persons with disabilities, will continue to identify future needs for consideration by Council.