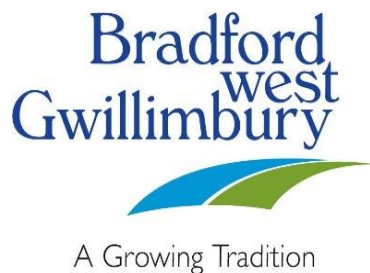


Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury Accessibility Status Report 2022

A status report outlining the achievements and measures taken to implement the
Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury's 2020-2025 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

This document is available in an accessible alternate format by request.



Reviewed by the Accessibility Advisory Committee on September 11, 2023

Table of Contents

- Introduction 3
 - Background 3
 - Ongoing commitment 3
- Accessibility Advisory Committee 3
- Report of Town achievements, initiatives and ongoing goals 5
 - Information and Communications Standards 5
 - Employment Standard 5
 - Transportation and Design of Public Spaces Standards 6
 - Customer Service Standards 7
- Municipal Elections 8
- Priorities for 2023/2024 8
- Conclusion and Feedback 8

Introduction

The Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury (BWG) is dedicated to the continuous improvement of accessibility within the community and as such, continues our pursuit of the prevention and removal of barriers for people with disabilities. The Town has made great strides during 2022 in the implementation of our 2020-2025 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan.

Background

As required under the *Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulations (IASR)* O. Reg. 191/11 of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA)*, section 4(1) states that designated public sector organizations (municipalities) shall establish, implement, maintain and document a multi-year accessibility plan which outlines an organization's strategy to prevent and remove barriers and meet its requirements under the Regulation. Additionally, section 4(3) states that municipalities shall prepare annual status reports on the progress of measures taken to implement the multi-year accessibility plan.

The 2022 Accessibility Status Report is an update that the Town of BWG provides on the measures taken to improve accessibility and implement the requirements set out by the Province of Ontario on accessibility. The annual status report outlines the actions taken to identify, remove and prevent barriers for people with disabilities in our programs, services, facilities and public spaces. It also details the Town's strategy for meeting the requirements of Ontario's accessibility legislation.

Ongoing commitment

The Town of BWG's 2020-2025 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan was approved by Council in February 2020. The 2022 Annual Status Report allows the Town to outline and communicate the past year's achievements and ongoing commitment in achieving accessibility. Town Staff from all service teams are involved in the development and implementation of accessibility planning within the Town. Primary focus is placed on the five standards legislated by AODA; information and communication, employment, transportation, design of public spaces and customer service.

The Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury is dedicated to achieving a barrier-free community and is proud of the accomplishments achieved thus far.

Accessibility Advisory Committee

The Town's Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC) was established in 2002. The AAC is responsible for the provision of advice to Council on specific initiatives to be undertaken by the Town. This consultation assists with the prevention, identification and removal of barriers that restrict people with disabilities from participating in Town programs or accessing services and facilities. The Committee is comprised of dedicated volunteers committed to working towards a barrier-free municipality.

The Town's AAC is made up of citizens and Council representatives. Members are representing and advocating for persons with disabilities in the community. The BWG AAC continues to champion, promote and facilitate a barrier-free BWG and provides valuable advice and feedback to Council and staff. In addition, the AAC participates in various accessibility related activities within the community.

Committee Membership for 2022-2026 Term:

- Councillor Peter Dykie (Chair)
- Councillor Cheraldean Duhaney
- Tracey Doncses
- Meade Helman
- Olivia Khan
- Karla Pilozo
- Lexi Tokhi
- Lynn Woods

The AAC meets at minimum quarterly each year and meetings are open to the public. During meetings, updates are provided to the Committee, which may include presentations or discussions led by staff.

In 2022, the AAC consulted, reviewed, and made recommendations with respect to internal and external programs and initiatives such as:

- Reviewed and endorsed the Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury's 2021 Accessibility Status Report.
- Reviewed and endorsed the 2022 Municipal Election Accessibility Plan.
- Reviewed, identified and assisted in eliminating potential Municipal Election accessibility barriers.
- Reviewed accessible transportation service options and feasibility of instituting a concession fare program.
- Reviewed site plan applications and provided recommendations on accessibility relating to the design of public spaces.
- Provided ongoing public awareness of accessibility within the community.
- Held an annual public consultation meeting encouraging the public to provide feedback with respect to transportation services, on-street parking spaces, recreational trails, outdoor play spaces and rest areas, along with exterior paths of travel.

Priorities moving forward:

- Prepare and promote a public survey regarding accessible transit and accessible taxicab services within BWG.
- Complete facility accessibility audits of the Town's Leisure Centre, Library, and customer service locations at 100 Dissette Street, 305 Barrie Street, 61 Holland Street East and local community parks.

Report of Town achievements, initiatives and ongoing goals

The following items represent the recent achievements and initiatives, which have improved accessibility or removed barriers in the Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury. The list is formatted to reflect the commitment of the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan and core standards of the AODA.

Information and Communications Standards

This standard outlines the requirement for organizations to create, provide, and receive information and communications that are accessible for people with disabilities. This standard gives all people an equal chance to be active and learn within their communities.

While the Town continues to support the community by offering accessible information in alternate formats and promote accessible feedback processes within all customer service locations, some of the 2022 achievements include:

- Social media campaigns endorsing an awareness of Easter Seals Red Shirt Day™, AccessAbility Awareness Week, Multiple Sclerosis (MS) Awareness Month, World Autism Day, Epilepsy Awareness (Purple Day), and an Accessible Parking Space campaign were created and promoted adhering to accessibility guidelines.
- Redevelopment of the Town's website. Once completed, the new site will adhere to the *Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1 AA* standards and the 4 principles of being perceivable, operable, understandable and robust. The new site is anticipated to launch in March of 2023.
- The Town continues to report and continually ensure compliance with the *Ministry for Seniors and Accessibility*.
- When designing publications and documents for the website and for public distribution, the Town of BWG's "Creating Accessible Document Guidelines" have been followed to ensure that font size, colour and graphics are designed with accessibility in mind and created in a way that allows them to be viewed by assistive devices.
- Updated various templates and notices to an accessible format, such as facility booking applications, proclamation and flag raising requests, road occupancy permit applications, and the Community Improvement Plan Program application process.

Employment Standard

The employment standard under the IASR requires organizations like municipalities to support the recruitment and accommodation of employees with disabilities. The Town considers the accessibility needs of its employees and provides individual accommodation plans when required.

The Town continues to attract diverse talent by applying an inclusion clause into all recruitment opportunities and processes, while also remaining an active Employer Partner of the Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion (CCDI).

The Town is committed to equity in employment and in establishing a qualified workforce that is reflective of the diverse population we serve. We encourage applications from Indigenous peoples, racialized people, persons with disabilities, and those who identify as LGBTQ2S+.

The Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury is committed to providing accommodations based on any human rights protected grounds and in accordance with the AODA, throughout the recruitment and selection process.

Transportation and Design of Public Spaces Standards

The design of public spaces standard outlines the need for newly constructed or redeveloped public spaces to be accessible for people with disabilities. For transportation, the standard sets out the requirements for transportation services provided. Particularly, features and equipment on vehicles, routes, and services offered must be accessible to people with disabilities.

As per IASR O. Reg 191/11 s. 41 (2), the Accessibility Advisory Committee held a public consultation meeting on August 25, 2022 to seek public feedback for the building and redevelopment of public spaces. This public driven meeting was advertised on the Town's social media platforms and within the local newspaper.

Some of the 2022 achievements include:

- The Town's Leisure Centre replaced one of their AODA compliant pool lifts allowing for safer access for higher weight capacities and installed additional metal handrails in the washrooms to assist those with mobility challenges.
- The Leisure Centre completed pavement crack sealing throughout the entire parking lot, assisting in the reduction of potential trip hazards and allowing for a smoother surface for wheeled mobility aids.
- BWG Transit continues to provide conventional bus service with AODA compliant accessible features to ensure all riders have fair and safe access to services within the community and "easyPASS" fares were reduced to \$1.00 per ride.
- The Town's Transportation Division continues to implement programs for specific roadway improvements such as maintenance, minor reconstruction and surface treatment to ensure the quality, longevity and safety of our roadways. Centre Street, Back Street, Bingham Street, William Street and Edward Street were rehabilitated during 2022.
- The Town continues to incorporate accessible features into playgrounds, parks and trail systems. An accessible natural playground area was incorporated into Taylor Park and the Lions Park received new sports courts and a new access ramp.
- The Town's Economic Development Division continues to promote the Commercial Property Accessibility Enhancements Program and the Employment Areas Accessibility Enhancements Program, offered through the Downtown Community Improvement Plan (CIP) and the Industrial Areas CIP Program.
- The Clerks Division, in support of the Accessibility Advisory Committee,

continues to review site plans for the Community Planning Division. Town Staff continue to provide updates to the AAC as required. The Clerks Division endeavours to ensure that all site plans comply with the Design of Public Spaces Standards, the Town of BWG's Accessible Parking By-law 2019, IASR O. Reg 191/11, and The Global Alliance on Accessible Technologies and Environments (GAATES).

Priorities moving forward:

- The Bob Fallis Sports Centre will be receiving an automatic door opener for the public washrooms in the lobby and the parking lot will be re-paved which will aid in the reduction of potential tripping hazards.
- Community Services will continue to provide updates to parks and trails. Some anticipated projects will be located at Henderson Park, Bradford East Park, Joe Magani Park and the BWG Community Hub.
- Rehabilitation roadway projects for Magani Avenue, Hulst Drive and Gres Court are projected for 2023.

The Town continues to commit to:

- Conducting sidewalk inspections for safety issues pertaining to the *Municipal Maintenance Standards* (MMS).
- Providing a high level of snow removal service; whereas, arterial, collectors and local roads are sanded and plowed within 6 to 24 hours. Sidewalks around community zones are provided a higher priority to facilitate ease of maneuvering with walking problems, wheeled mobility aids, and to ensure ease of access to streets.

Customer Service Standards

The customer service standard under AODA outlines requirements for service providers to make their goods, services, and facilities accessible for customers or patrons with disabilities.

Some of the 2022 achievements include:

- During the 2022 summer day camps, inclusion counselors were available for children and youth who many need additional assistance; pre-registration was required as spaces were limited.
- The Public Library incorporated 4 light therapy lamps into their circulations and 2 light therapy lamps for use within the Library.
- Additional Library features include decodable books to the children's collection and DAISY (Digital Accessible Information System) Players.

Municipal Elections

The 2022 Municipal Election was designed to meet the needs of electors to ensure independence. The internet and telephone voting system, known as Simply Voting, was created to meet the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG-2) and permitted votes to be cast from a telephone or computer with internet connection. This system allowed individuals to use their own assistive devices in a space of their choosing.

Town employees worked to improve the accessibility of election services through the identification, removal and prevention of barriers that may affect electors and candidates. Such services were provided through:

- Developing an Elections Accessibility Plan and consulting with the Town's Accessibility Advisory Committee prior to the election.
- Completed accessibility audits of all Voter Help Centres, prior to the election.
- Provided information regarding accessibility to the candidates during registration.
- Provided accessible customer service training to all election workers.
- Accessible aids were provided at every election site including: magnifying sheets, touch screen voting kiosks, additional seating, adequate signage, and continual monitoring to ensure barrier-free paths of travel.
- Voting locations were set up to ensure sufficient room for mobility devices to maneuver and provided extra seating for electors who may not be able to stand for long periods.
- Provided Mobile Voter Help Centres to accommodate the Town's vulnerable populations and electors who may experience difficulties with leaving their residences.

Priorities for 2023/2024

Moving forward into 2023 and into 2024, the Town of BWG will continue to review projects and community based initiatives/programs to ensure compliance with AODA, its regulations, and all other related pieces of legislation. The continued development of resources and training materials for staff, volunteers, contractors and the public will be reviewed to ensure that accessible formatting is achieved.

The AAC, alongside with Council, Staff and volunteers will continue to champion advocacy and awareness of the inclusion of accessible design and maintaining the focus on removing barriers which may exist in the Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury.

Conclusion and Feedback

The Town makes every effort to update the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan as legislation is created or amended but discrepancies may exist until an update can be completed. Details not contained in this Plan may be captured in the Town's Consolidated AODA Policy – CORP-01-003.

Members of the public are encouraged to make comments on the Town's Multi-Year Accessibility Plan, Annual Accessibility Plan Update, and accessibility matters in general. Please contact the Town to express your accessibility related comments. To request a copy of the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan or Annual Status Report in another format, please contact us:

Contact information

E-mail: accessibility@townofbwg.com

Phone: 905-775-5366

Mail: P.O. Box 100, 100 Dissette Street, Bradford, Ontario L3Z 3G8

Attention: Accessibility Coordinator and Accessibility Advisory Committee c/o Clerks Department.