

Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury Accessibility Status Report 2021

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.



The Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury

Accessibility Status Report 2021

The Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury (BWG) continues our pursuit of the prevention and removal of barriers for people with disabilities within our community. The Town has made great strides during 2021 in the implementation of our 2020-2025 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan.

Report highlights:

- Council approved the 2020-2025 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan in February 2020.
- As per *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)*, annual status reports need to be made publicly available outlining the updates and implementation of the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan.
- Despite the current health situation with COVID-19, during 2021 the Town has had many achievements in relation to the *Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulations (IASR)* and AODA, including designing accessible outdoor spaces, information and communications, and providing more accessible options for the public to access municipal goods and services.

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 2021 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 2021 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 provide valuable advice and feedback to Council and staff, in addition to participating in various accessibility related activities.

Committee Membership for 2018-2022 Term

- Deputy Mayor James Leduc (Chair)
- Councillor Mark Contois
- Tina Morrison (Vice Chair)
- Andrew Belanger
- Daniela Pethick
- Tracey Doncses
- Wendi Williams-Gordon

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

In 2021, the AAC has consulted, reviewed, and made recommendations with respect to internal and external programs/initiatives such as:

- Reviewed and endorsed the Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury's 2021 Accessibility Status Report
- Accessible pathway initiative for Henderson Field (10th Sideroad), the Bradford and District Community Centre (Simcoe Road), and Joe Magani Park (3541 11th Line)
- Service Animal Awareness Campaign
- "We all Benefit from Accessibility" (local business AODA checklist and

- educational handout)
- Social media campaign for creating accessible parking awareness
- StopGap
- Reviewed accessible transportation service options
- Reviewed site plan applications and provided recommendations on accessibility related conditions to staff
- Provided ongoing public awareness of accessibility
- 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.

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.

2021 achievements include:

- The Town continues to report and work on a compliance plan with the *Ministry for Seniors and Accessibility* to increase our website compliance in accordance with *Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG)*.
- Funding was approved for the complete redesign of the Town's website. Upon implementation of the design, the Town's website will adhere to current levels of WCAG 2.0 Level AA.
- Accessibility disclaimers were added to the Town of BWG's website, CivicWeb (iCompass), YouTube channel, and the Leisure Centre and Public Library websites. The disclaimer supports accessible format requests pertaining to information and communication materials.
- When designing publications/documents for the website and public distribution, the accessibility guidelines were followed to ensure that font size, colour and graphics were designed with accessibility in mind.
- Updated various templates and notices to an accessible format, such as marriage license registration and temporary patio program registration, both of which are available in a fillable online template. As well, forms such as Owner Authorization Records Request and Contractor Attestation have been reformatted to adhere to AODA and Adobe Pdf accessibility check standards.
- Social media campaigns creating awareness of accessible parking spaces were created adhering to accessibility guidelines.

- The Bradford Public Library incorporated 10 ReaderPens (tool used to read text aloud) and 16 Wi-Fi Hotspots into their circulation.
- Town procurement incorporated a “Material Disclosures” disclaimer within all requests for proposals to ensure that all received information and documentation, which will be made publically available, is made accessible according to AODA and the WCAG standards.

Upcoming in 2022:

- The Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury is working towards website compliance targeting a deadline of late Q3 for implementation. The tendering request for proposals will be published by the end of the 2021 and awarded in early 2022. There is an estimated 5-month lead time to execute the new site and commence launch.

Employment Standard:

The standard requires that employers must make their employment and workplace practices accessible to potential or current employees with disabilities.

2021 achievements include:

- New employee orientation has been provided in an online format, allowing employees to access the orientation using their own computer. The orientation has been developed to allow new employees to complete their orientation at their own pace.
- Continued to attract diverse talent by applying an inclusion clause into all recruitment opportunities and processes.
- Due to COVID-19 and the restrictions on in-person meetings, Human Resources (HR), with assistance from the IT Department, moved to virtual interviews through zoom. HR works with candidates to accommodate their needs during online interviews. Virtual interviews will continue during 2022.
- HR continues to consider AODA standards with implementation of all new policies and procedures.
- All Town Staff were required to complete an Ontario Human Rights Commission 101 virtual course. The Town is currently working towards achieving full compliance of this online course requirement.

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 October 28, 2021 to seek public feedback for the

building and redevelopment of public spaces. This public driven meeting was advertised on the Town of BWG's social media platforms and local newspaper.

2021 achievements include:

- Town Staff continue to complete sidewalk inspections for safety issues pertaining to *Municipal Maintenance Standards (MMS)*.
- Seven intersections were redeveloped to receive raised and colour contrasting tactile profiles as part of the BWG Engineering projects.
- BWG Transit incorporated three new AODA compliant transit buses into their fleet.
- The Town continues to incorporate accessible features into playgrounds, parks and trail systems. New transfer stations to access units, ground level activities and wood fiber surfacing were incorporated into both Alan Kuzmich Park and Joe Magani Park.
- An accessible pathway initiative was endorsed and financially supported by the Accessibility Advisory Committee for installation at Henderson Field (10th Sideroad), the Bradford and District Community Centre (Simcoe Road), and Joe Magani Park (3541 11th Line). Installation to occur in 2022.
- Angela Parkette located on Angela Street and just South of Miller Park Avenue was created adhering to AODA standards.
- The municipal parking lot located at 24 John Street West was redeveloped to include accessible compliant parking standards: accessible parking spots, line markings, curbs, and wayfinding signage.
- The Clerks Division, in care of the Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC), continue to review site plans for Community Planning Division. Town Staff continue to provide updates to the AAC as needed. 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).

Customer Service Standards:

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

2021 achievements include:

- The Public Library incorporated 4 light therapy lamps into their circulations and 2 light therapy lamps for use within the Library.
- The Library continues to follow appropriate safety protocols per COVID-19 guidelines, ensure the set-up of Library when open to customers for limited services, provided proper customer flow and maintained accessibility requirements.
- The Leisure Centre offered alternative methods to accessing programs such as their March Break craft sessions hosted over zoom and "at home backpack"

activities available via curbside pickup.

- During the 2021 summer day camps, inclusion counselors were available for children and youth who many need additional assistance; pre-registration was required as spaces was limited.

Priorities for 2022:

Moving forward into 2022, 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 Consolidate 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 Status Report in another format, please contact us:

Contact information 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 Division