

Township of North Dumfries 2027 to 2031: Multi-Year Accessibility Plan



The TOWNSHIP of
NORTH DUMFRIES

Adopted by Council: July 13, 2026

Accessible formats are available upon request.



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Background

There are currently two active pieces of legislation in Ontario that specifically address accessibility: The Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001 (ODA) and the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, (AODA).

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 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. Through the AODA and the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR) (Ontario Regulation 191/11), the Government of Ontario 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. Key areas identified under the AODA are Customer Service, Information and Communications, Employment, Transportation and the Design of Public Spaces.

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.

Statement of Organizational Commitment

The Township of North Dumfries is committed to ensuring equal access and participation for people with disabilities. We are committed to treating people with disabilities in a way that allows them to maintain their dignity



and independence. We believe in integration and we are committed to meeting the needs of people with disabilities in a timely manner. We will do so by removing and preventing barriers to accessibility and meeting our accessibility requirements under the AODA and Ontario's accessibility laws.

About the Plan

The Township of North Dumfries 2027 – 2031 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan outlines how the Township intends to reach its goal of meeting the needs of people with disabilities in a timely manner by preventing and removing barriers to accessibility and meeting accessibility requirements under the AODA. This plan includes an overview of the Township's strategy to prevent and remove barriers and to meet the requirements of the AODA and the IASR.

The Township is committed to providing an accessible environment for its employees, residents and all other individuals who utilize its services. The Township is dedicated to creating an inclusive community that promotes the possibility of active public participation and civic engagement of all individuals, including persons with disabilities.

This plan sets new goals and actions to be completed over the next five years. Many of these goals and actions may be ongoing throughout the length of the plan and beyond.

Accessibility Advisory Committee

Ontario municipalities with populations of 10,000 or more are mandated to set up accessibility advisory committees and at least 50% of the members must be persons with disabilities.

In accordance with the AODA, the Councils of the City of Kitchener and the Townships of Waterloo Region are moving forward with becoming an "affiliated municipality" under the City's Terms of Reference to form a newly constituted Accessibility Advisory Committee. This newly established Accessibility Advisory Committee takes effect November 15, 2026.



Prior to this, the Township participated in the Grand River Accessibility Advisory Committee (GRAAC), which was a joint Committee with the Councils of the Cities of Kitchener and Waterloo and the Townships of North Dumfries, Wellesley, Wilmot and Woolwich and the Region of Waterloo.

The role of the Accessibility Advisory Committee is to assist in fulfilling the purpose of the ODA and the AODA by providing vision and advice in regards to the identification, prevention and removal of barriers.

Accessibility Requirements

Ontario Human Rights Code

The Ontario Human Rights Code 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, 2001

The Ontarians with Disabilities Act received Royal Assent on December 14, 2001. The purpose of the ODA is to implement accessibility practices, allowing all individuals to fully participate within their community. The ODA requires all municipalities to prepare annual accessibility plans, which outline their commitment for accessible communities.

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act became law on June 13, 2005. The AODA is applied to private and public sector organizations across Ontario. The AODA represents collaboration between various representatives of the private and public sectors and persons with disabilities to develop accessibility standards. The AODA consists of standards that were developed to achieve results in stages during a fixed period of time. The AODA creates mandatory accessibility standards that will identify, prevent and remove barriers for persons with disabilities in key areas of daily living.

O. Reg. 191/11: Integrated Accessibility Standards

- Information and Communications Standards



These standards ensure that all communication and information distributed by the Township is available in alternative format or with communication supports.

- **Employment Standards**
These standards provide accessible employment opportunities for persons with disabilities during the recruitment process and throughout the duration of employment at the Township of North Dumfries.
- **Transportation Standards**
These standards enhance the experience of persons with disabilities when traveling on a conventional bus or with Para-Transit.
- **Design of Public Spaces Standards**
These standards are critical for new construction projects and extensive renovations, as they eliminate environmental barriers in buildings and outdoor spaces.
- **Customer Service Standards**
These standards educate all organizations about the needs of persons with disabilities.

Multi-Year Accessibility Initiatives 2027-2031

The Township's primary focus moving forward will be to ensure that the municipality is achieving the requirements of the AODA and the IASR. This multi-year plan represents the Township's response to the requirements of the legislation and the corporate commitment to providing public service in an accessible manner. The multi-year plan was completed in consultation with the former Grand River Accessibility Advisory Committee (GRAAC), as well as input from Township Senior Management.

Goals and Actions: Customer Service Standard

- ✓ Accessible Customer Service training for staff, Council and volunteers – provide updated training for staff, Council and Township volunteers on the requirements of the AODA, IASR, the Human Rights Code



- ✓ Incorporate accessibility and the need of people with disabilities when procuring or acquiring goods, services and facilities
- ✓ 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
- ✓ Provide notice of any temporary disruptions to accessible features/facilities
- ✓ Permit service animals in Township facilities unless prohibited by law
- ✓ Accessible Elections (the Clerk is required to plan for the identification, removal and prevention of barriers that affect electors and candidates during Municipal Elections)

Goals/Actions: Information and Communication Standard

- ✓ Provide information that is produced and controlled by the Township in alternate formats, upon request – develop a list of providers that may be contacted to create/produce alternate formats for documents (ex. Braille, read aloud, translator services), provide ongoing training to staff with respect to the use of plain language in writing, whenever possible
- ✓ Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG 2.0)
- ✓ Create accessible resources and documents for use online – provide training to staff that prepare documents for use online; create quick reference materials/resources for staff with respect to creating accessible documents, create accessible document templates for staff
- ✓ Provide emergency plans and other emergency alert information in an alternate format, upon request – develop a list of providers that may be contacted to create/produce alternate formats for documents (ex. Braille, read aloud, translator services)

Goals/Actions: Employment Standard

- ✓ Ensure that recruitment, hiring, promotion and retention processes are inclusive and accommodation – develop standard guidelines for performance management, career advancement, workplace accommodation and safe return to work



- ✓ Accommodate current employees who have, or acquire a disability – review and update current guidelines for individual accommodation plans

Goals/Actions: Design of Public Spaces

- ✓ Recreational trails and beach access routes – ensure that persons with disabilities are consulted when new trails are developed; and ensure that any new trail signage includes information about the technical aspects of the trail (length, slope, rest areas)
- ✓ Outdoor Public Use Eating Areas
- ✓ Outdoor Play Spaces – ensure that all new and redeveloped outdoor play spaces consist of an area that includes play equipment that enhances the play opportunities and experiences for children and caregivers with various disabilities; ensure that persons with disabilities are consulted with regards to features of the park
- ✓ Exterior Paths of Travel; ensure that the technical aspects are followed (ex. width, surface, slope, height of overhead obstacles, tactile walking)
- ✓ Accessible Parking
- ✓ Maintenance to ensure that existing public spaces are in good working order and condition – continue to conduct regular health and safety inspections to identify any need for repair/improvement
- ✓ Identify and plan for the removal of barriers in Township owned spaces – the Township must have procedures for dealing with preventative and emergency maintenance of accessible elements in public spaces – to meet this requirement, the Township shall apply best practices in the preventative maintenance of accessible elements with periodic checks such as: annual inspections, or more frequently; after storms or events that might affect accessible elements; as part of any reports of vandalism or complaints; shall apply best practices in the emergency maintenance of accessible elements with active response when notified, as well as monthly health and safety inspections will identify and report any issues
- ✓ 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 include 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 such other method as is reasonable

- ✓ Compliance with the *Ontario Building Code Act* – the Township's Chief Building Official ensures compliance with accessibility requirements of the Building Code

Goals/Actions: 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
- ✓ Compliance Reports to be filed with the Accessibility Directorate of Ontario – Township staff will complete compliance reports for the Province, as required
- ✓ Accessibility Plan Status Report – Township staff will report to Council annually of each year on the status of this Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

Other Planned Accessibility Initiatives

2027 Planned Action Items:

- Meet all accessibility reporting requirements following completion of the 2026 Municipal Election.
- Provide refresher training to staff who are responsible for updating and posting information to the Township website to ensure Township website continues to meet required accessibility guidelines.
- With the commencement of the new Term of Council [2026 – 2030], provide on-boarding and training to support the Mayor and Councillors in the discharge of their duties and, to raise awareness of the Provincial legislation and the alignment of the Township with respect to legislation.



- Establish and promote online payment options inclusive of cash receipts and mortgage payments on the Township website to allow individuals to make payments in a more accessible manner.
- Play equipment is reviewed and replaced on a yearly basis, as required. Recommendations are made by staff for which play structures are priority for the following year and are reflected in the annual Budget process. Consultation with the Accessibility Advisory Committee will be undertaken prior to the work being completed.
- The Township service standards includes snow clearing and salting of the full municipal sidewalk system (approximately 32 km) within the community. The Township took this service in-house in 2026 and is completing the work with our own forces to ensure a reliable and consistent service. This will continue into 2027.
- Sidewalk improvement project that reduces tripping hazards and improves mobility for those individuals with a disability.
- Reconstruction of Township roads, which will help improve the overall usability of the surface and will incorporate any accessible features.
 - Where sidewalks are proposed as part of road reconstruction project, the applicable barrier free path of travel principles and design parameters will be incorporated into the engineering design and construction phases.
- Roseville Community Centre - Various Building Upgrades to improve accessibility including the construction of barrier free washroom, automatic door openers to enter the building and wider doorways.
- Annually, staff will review policies and procedures as they pertain to accessibility and update and/or make changes if required.

2028 Planned Action Items

- The entire sidewalk system will be assessed and sidewalk improvement project that reduces tripping hazards and improves mobility for those individuals with a disability will be incorporated into the work program.
- Play equipment is reviewed and replaced on a yearly basis, as required.



- Trail construction – the Ayr Naturalized area is to undergo construction. Accessibility will be taken into consideration during this process.
- Reconstruction of Township roads, which will help improve the overall usability of the surface and will incorporate any accessible features
- Ayr Community Centre (ACC) – Adaptive Re-Use and AODA upgrades. The adaptive re-use plans for this facility will include accessibility upgrades, including barrier free washrooms and full integration between the first and second floors of the facility.
- Annually, staff will review policies and procedures as they pertain to accessibility and update and/or make changes if required.

2029 Planned Action Items

- Sidewalk New Construction / Major Rehabilitation – various locations is expected.
- Play equipment is reviewed and replaced on a yearly basis, as required.
- Trail construction - Accessibility will be considered in this process.
- Reconstruction of Township roads, which will help improve the overall usability of the surface and will incorporate any accessible features
- Annually, staff will review policies and procedures as they pertain to accessibility and update and/or make changes if required.

2030 Planned Action Items

- Sidewalk improvement project that reduces tripping hazards and improves mobility for individuals with a disability will be incorporated into the work program.
- Play equipment is reviewed and replaced on a yearly basis, as required.
- Reconstruction of Township roads, which will help improve the overall usability of the surface and will incorporate any accessible features.
- Annually, staff will review policies and procedures as they pertain to accessibility and update and/or make changes if required.



2031 Planned Action Items

- Sidewalk improvement project that reduces tripping hazards and improves mobility for individuals with a disability will be incorporated into the work program.
- Play equipment is reviewed and replaced on a yearly basis, as required.
- Reconstruction of Township roads, which will help improve the overall usability of the surface and will incorporate any accessible feature.
- With the commencement of the new Term of Council [2030 – 2034], provide on-boarding and training to support the Mayor and Councillors in the discharge of their duties and, to raise awareness of the Provincial legislation and the alignment of the Township with respect to accessibility legislation.
- Annually, staff will review policies and procedures as they pertain to accessibility and update and/or make changes if required.

Comments / Feedback

The Township of North Dumfries is committed to ensuring that accessibility is considered throughout our services, facilities and business operations. Your feedback is welcome and helps us to identify other areas for improvement. Please contact us with your questions, ideas or comments.