



2020-2025 Accessibility Plan





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Intent of this Document

This 2020 to 2025 Accessibility Plan outlines the policies and actions that Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville will put in place to improve opportunities for people with disabilities in accordance with the requirements communicated under the Integrated Accessibility Standards, Ontario Regulation 191/11.

Statement of Commitment

The Accessibility for Ontario's with Disability Act, 2005 (AODA) set our accessibility standard for organization to implement with the goal of making Ontario accessible by 2025. The Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville is committed to removing and preventing barriers through sound and effective accessibility planning.

Ontario accessibility laws require the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville to have an Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC) to advise Council about the preparation of an accessibility plan and the completion of action outlined within the plan.

The AAC is committed to ensuring residents of all ages and abilities can enjoy the same opportunities as they live, work, play and invest in our Town.

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The Town Of Whitchurch-Stouffville

Accessibility Advisory Committee

The Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville is committed to improving access to its citizens through the requirements of the Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001 as well as the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005. The Accessibility Advisory Committee was established in 2005 to provide advice to Council on specific initiatives to be undertaken by the Town in order to prevent, identify and remove barriers that restrict people with disabilities from fully participating in Town programs services and/or facilities, while cultivating inclusion within the Whitchurch-Stouffville community.

The Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville Accessibility Advisory Committee (“AAC”) is a statutory volunteer committee that acts as an advisory body for Council.

The Accessibility Advisory Committee shall:

- Advise Council on accessibility planning and related standards to prevent and reduce barriers experienced by persons with disabilities;
- Advise Council about the preparation of accessibility reports and matters relating to the accessibility for persons with disabilities to a building, structure or premises, or part of a building, structure or premises, prescribed under section 29(5) of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act;

- Make recommendations to Council on the development and implementation of the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville Multi-year Accessibility Plan;
- Select and review in a timely manner the site plan application drawings described in section 41 of the Planning Act;
- Make recommendations to Council on issues relating to customer feedback, Town programs, services, policies and procedures from an accessibility and inclusion lens;
- Monitor the development of legislative accessibility requirements and offer feedback to Council on the Town’s compliance with Ontario Regulation 191/11 Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation;
- Promote accessibility and inclusion in the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville through public outreach, education and special events.
- Perform all other functions that are specified in the enabling legislation.

The Accessibility Advisory Committee is scheduled to meet on a monthly basis and meetings are open to the public. During meetings, updates are provided to the Committee which may include presentations or discussions regarding accessibility-related matters, led by staff or an external guest.

Committee Members

Members of the external Accessibility Advisory Committee include:

- **Norman Bresser**
- **Amanda Dimlta**
- **Wilf Morley**
- **Rich Munro**
- **Ramy Mustafa**
- **Rose Pizzulo**
- **Councillor Maurice Smith**
Committee Chair

Members of the internal Accessibility Advisory Committee include:

- **Rob Raycroft**
Corporate Services & Committee Chair
- **Vince Arcuri**
Information Technology and Finance
- **Ashley Arruda**
Leisure and Community Services
- **Claudette Banks**
Human Resources
- **Casandra Bagin**
Development Planning
- **Thu-Thuy Fok**
Health and Safety
- **Marcia Friginette**
Whitchurch-Stouffville Public Library
- **Glenn Jackson**
Communications
- **Hena Kabir**
Development Planning
- **Bujar Mulla**
Building Services
- **Janet Ruhl**
Leisure and Community Services
- **Micole Rubinoff**
Leisure and Community Services
- **Brian Slater**
Parks and Facilities
- **Stacey Stevens**
Customer Services

Committee Accomplishments Up To And Including 2019

- Advised Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville on our multi-year accessibility plan and status reports;
- Offered feedback on Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (OADA) compliance activities and report;
- Reviewed IASR Regulations and updated the multi-year plans;
- Updated employment policies, practices and procedures;
- Provided ongoing on-boarding and training programs to staff and volunteers;
- Established a feedback process;
- Created accessible formats and communication supports for employees;
- Completed a workplace emergency response plan; and
- Incorporated a return to work process with individual accommodation plans.

The Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

Review & Update

Creating communities where every person can participate is important for people, business and community life. Our work plan will continue to develop strategies to meet the requirements of the integrated Accessibility Standards Regulations of the Accessibility for Ontarians Disabilities Act, 2005.

The information outlined below, highlights the details and planned actions to comply with the individual standards within the regulation to 2021, with the date the action must be achieved. Behind each requirement are detailed work plans to make the requirement operational.

Information & Communications

Corporate standards were established by providing accessible formats of information or communication supports upon request by:

- Developing guidelines and training to help employees in creating accessible documents (ongoing).
- Informing the public about the options of accessible information and communication supports available to them.
- Creating emergency procedures plans or public safety information offered in an accessible format upon request (ongoing).
- Conversion of Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 from Level A to Level AA.

By January 1, 2021, all information and communications are required to be provided in an accessible format. The Town will:

1. Develop a strategy to ensure that all existing Internet websites and web content conforms to WCAG Guidelines 2.0 Level AA.
2. When requested, will provide an accessible document for material on our website that was created prior to 2014.

Customer Service

The Town met all the requirements of the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service Regulation including:

- Created an Accessible Customer Service Policy.
- Trained all employees, volunteers and those providing service to the public on our behalf (ongoing).
- Established an accessibility feedback process.
- Notice of service disruption(s) are posted, where planned or scheduled service disruptions occur.

Design of Public Spaces

The Town will incorporate accessibility into public spaces that are newly constructed or redeveloped that are within our jurisdiction. The Town will:

1. Review and update current processes to make sure the accessibility requirements of the Design of Public Spaces Standards are applied, where applicable, to new or redeveloped projects in the following areas: recreational trails, beach access routes, outdoor public use eating areas, outdoor play spaces, exterior paths of travel, accessible parking and service related elements.
2. Consult the public and persons with disabilities when developing the public spaces under this standard.
3. Update procurement procedures and guidelines, where needed, to reflect the requirements for public spaces.
4. Inform staff about the public space requirements.
5. Provide maintenance and restoration of public spaces, where applicable.

Employment

The requirement for accessible employment has been implemented within recruitment, assessment and selection processes. Accessibility has been included in practices with present employees with disabilities and there are job accommodation procedures in place.

Legislation & Resources

Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001

In 2001, the Government of Ontario created the Ontarians with Disabilities Act. The Act requires public sector organizations (the provincial government, municipalities, hospitals, educational institutions and public transportation service providers) to undertake activities aimed at reducing and eliminating barriers for people with disabilities. It also requires municipalities with a population over 10,000 to appoint an Accessibility Advisory Committee, develop accessibility plans and seek the advice of the Accessibility Advisory Committee on certain matters.

On December 1, 2015 the Government of Ontario rescinded the sections of the Ontarians with Disabilities Act that applied to Municipalities. This was undertaken to streamline accessibility requirements and remove duplicate requirements.

Ontario Building Code

The Ontario Building Code regulates the minimum building standards for the construction of all new buildings and buildings that undergo significant renovation. The Code includes requirements for minimum accessibility within buildings.

The Ontario Building Code was amended to include enhancements to accessibility in buildings. As of January 1, 2015, most new construction and extensive renovations are subject to updated accessibility requirements. Existing buildings, where no work is planned, are not affected by these new requirements.

Accessibility For Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2015

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act sets out the road map for an accessible Ontario by 2025 with mandatory and enforceable compliance standards, currently in five key areas:

- Customer Service
- Information & Communications
- Employment
- Transportation
- Public spaces

The Customer Service Standard became law (Ontario Regulation 429/07) on January 1, 2008. On July 1, 2016, the Government of Ontario made several changes to the Customer Service Standard, which required the Municipality to update its Accessible Customer Service Policy. One important change that occurred during this update was that the Customer Service Standard was moved into the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (Ontario Regulation 191/11). As a result of this change, all five standards now reside under one regulation.

The Integrated Accessibility Standard Regulation also includes standards for Information and Communications, Employment, Transportation and the Design of Public Spaces.

Employment and Transportation

The Design of Public Spaces Standard focuses on removing barriers in areas not covered by the Ontario Building Code, such as playgrounds, on and off-street parking, recreational trails, and service counters. It applies to new construction or re-construction of existing spaces. It does not require organizations to retrofit in order to be compliant.

Accessibility Planning

The Whitechurch-Stouffville Multi-Year Accessibility in Action Plan provides the opportunity to demonstrate current achievements and establish an implementation framework and future priority initiatives. Objectives and initiatives identified within the plan are both long and short-term; many are ongoing actions or could require implementation over several years. Regular monitoring is necessary to ensure that relevant initiatives are included in the Plan and that progress is identified. The focus of the Accessibility in Action Plan is dedicated to implementing the requirements of the Integrated Accessibility Standards, Ontario Regulation 191/11. Target areas reflect the five core standards of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act: Customer Service, Information & Communications, Transportation, Employment and Public Spaces.

This document contains details relative to objectives and action items identified over the next five years and solidifies the Town of Whitechurch-Stouffville approach to accessibility planning. This plan is a living document; its progress and implementation will be reviewed and reported on annually. Implementation of identified action items and initiatives are dependent on financial allocation through the Town's budgeting process and will be reflected in departmental budgets and the long-range capital forecast where applicable.



2020-2025

Priorities & Commitment

INFORMATION & COMMUNICATIONS STANDARDS

- Continue to educate staff on the need for accessible documents.
- Develop a strategy of how to ensure existing documents are accessible or available upon request.
- Staff to ensure that “accessible formats available upon request” logo or written text is on all printed documents.
- Review websites to determine next steps for website and web content.
- Continue to monitor accessible website and web content compliance.
- Ensure all websites and web content conforms with the Information and Communications Standard / WCAG 2.0 Level AA by 2021.
- Continue to receive and respond to feedback and ensure processes are accessible for persons with disabilities.
- Continue to consult with persons who make requests for accessible formats and

communication supports to determine the suitability of the request.

- Review requirements under the Information and Communications Standard pending update in 2018/2019.
- Continue to provide access to or arrange for accessible materials at the Town of Whitechurch-Stouffville’s Library.
- Continue to prepare emergency procedures, plans and public safety information and make the information available to the public as well as provide accessible formats and communication supports.

DESIGN OF PUBLIC SPACES STANDARD/BUILT ENVIRONMENT

- Continue to consult the Accessibility Advisory Committee, the public and people with disabilities in the following areas:
 - Recreational Trails
 - Outdoor Play Spaces

- Exterior Paths of Travel – Rest Areas
- On-Street Parking
- Continue to implement maintenance of accessible elements as outlined in our Multi-Year Accessibility Plan
- Incorporate accessibility retrofits during renovation project and new constructions for the Town of Whitechurch-Stouffville facilities and public spaces
- Engage/consult during project planning, design and implementation stages.
- Continue to comply with the legislated requirements for:
 - Recreational Trails and Beach Access
 - Outdoor Public Eating Areas
 - Outdoor Play Spaces
 - Exterior Paths of Travel – Ramps, Stairs, Curb Ramps, Depressed Curbs, Accessible Pedestrian Control Signals, Rest Areas
 - Accessible Parking
- Obtaining Services – Service Counters, Fixed Queuing Guides, Waiting Areas
- Continue to review/update and meet

The five-year accessibility plan includes both new and continuing priorities and commitments that will assist with the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville's commitment towards identifying removing and preventing barriers to accessibility.

General Requirements

- Continue to review and update policies/procedures/forms to reflect legislation changes.
- File Accessibility Compliance Report to the Ministry bi-annually.
- Prepare Accessibility Status Reports.
- Establish a 2020-2025 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan.
- Continue to consult the Accessibility Advisory Committees, the public and people with disabilities for Accessibility Plans.
- Continue to implement accessibility design, criteria and features when

procuring or acquiring goods, services or facilities. Document where it is not possible to do so. Develop accessible procurement training for staff.

- Ensure that all employees continue to complete mandatory accessibility training.
- Continue to ensure all Volunteers and Contractors complete AODA training and complete and submit the AODA Compliance Form.
- Update Staff, Contractor and Volunteer training resources / develop e-learnings
- Review requirements under the General Requirements pending update in 2019/2020
- Annually hold at least one public meeting involving people with disabilities to ensure that they have the opportunity to participate in a review of the accessibility plan and that they are given the opportunity to provide feedback on the accessibility plan.

Review & Monitoring

The Multi-Year Accessibility Plan will be reviewed and updated at least once every five years. An status report will be completed to document the progress and measures taken to implement the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville's strategy and meet the requirements of the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation.

the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville's Accessibility Design Guidelines.

- Continue to comply with the Barrier-Free Design of the Ontario Building Code for new construction and major renovations.
- Review requirements under the Design of Public Spaces Standard pending update in 2019/2020
- Review requirements under the Ontario Building Code pending updates for 2019

EMPLOYMENT STANDARD

- Continue to regularly review our human resources policies to prevent or remove systemic employment barriers, ensure they are compliant with legislation and reflect best practices.
- Continue to offer mental health training and services for all staff.
- Continue to notify about the availability of accommodation for persons with disabilities.

- Continue consult with employees to provide or arrange for accessible formats and communications supports.
- Continue to comply with the legislated requirements for:
 - Recruitment
 - Workplace Emergency Response Information
 - Return to Work Process
 - Performance Management
 - Career Development and Advancement
 - Redeployment

TRANSPORTATION STANDARDS

- Continue to follow the intent and spirit of the AODA legislation.
- Continue to monitor tariff fees and ensure that licensed owners and operators of taxicabs are prohibited from charging a higher fare or additional fees for persons with disabilities, from charging a fee for storage of mobility

aids or assistive devices, ensure that vehicle registration and identification information is on the rear bumper of taxicabs, owners and operators make available vehicle registration and identification information in accessible formats.

- Continue to encourage taxicab owners to add accessible taxicabs to the community.

CUSTOMER SERVICE STANDARD

- Continue to fulfill the needs of residents and customers under the Accessible Customer Service Standard.
- Continue to receive and respond to feedback and ensure processes are accessible for persons with disabilities.
- Continue to post service disruptions on site and online.



Conclusion & Feedback

The Town makes every effort to update this 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 and accessibility matters in general. Please contact the Town to express your accessibility related comments.

Feedback

Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville welcomes public input as feedback helps to identify areas where changes need to be considered and ways in which we can improve facilities, goods and services. Should a member of the public wish to provide general feedback, comments or suggestion on how to improve accessibility in our facilities, goods or services please provide your feedback by completing the form at townofws.ca/en/residents/accessibility-and-inclusion.aspx

Availability of the Plan

Website: The Plan can be accessed through the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville's townofws.ca/en/residents/accessibility-plan.aspx

Hard Copy: Municipal Office 111 Sandiford Drive, Stouffville, Ontario L4A 0Z8

For More Information

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