



Accessibility

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA)

Progress Report 2020

Accessible formats and communications support available upon request.

Town of The Blue Mountains Commitment to Accessibility

The Town of The Blue Mountains (Town) is committed to providing programming and services that consider the diverse needs and abilities of the people it serves. This 2020 Progress Report is the annual update on the progress of the measures taken to improve accessibility and implement the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) and the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (Ontario Regulation 191/11).

This Progress Report includes the accessibility initiatives that were completed in 2020 to implement the strategies outlined in the Town's Multi-Year Accessibility Plan, as adopted by Town of The Blue Mountains Council on September 30, 2019.

Reporting Requirements

The Town successfully submitted the 2019 Compliance Report as required by the Ministry for Seniors and Accessibility. The next Compliance Report is due by December 31, 2021.

Progress on the AODA Regulations

The following pages outline the Town's 2020 accomplishments in **Customer Service, Information and Communication, Employment, Transportation and Design of Public Spaces**.

There are also general requirements that apply across all accessibility standards.

General Requirements

Procurement:

- Accessibility and ergonomics are considered when purchasing new equipment or office furniture.

Training:

- All employees hired in 2020 have received comprehensive AODA Training.
- Job specific training is provided in accordance with the needs of each position (i.e. accessible document training).
- Staff completed Workplace Diversity and Inclusion online training. Managers also completed Creating a Respectful Workplace online training during 2020.
- The Town's Communications Strategy has identified additional AODA and diversity training opportunities for staff in 2021.

Feedback:

The Town is committed to ensuring its goods or services are provided in an accessible manner. Feedback is welcomed as it may identify areas requiring change and encourage continuous service improvements. Feedback may be provided in person, in writing or electronically using our [Accessible Customer Service Feedback Form](#).

Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR)

Accessible Customer Service Standard

- Resources including “A Guide for Making Small Businesses Accessible” and the Government of Ontario’s Guide to Accessible Festivals and Events have been posted on the Town’s Accessibility page.
- An Evacuation Chair has been purchased and installed at Town Hall to assist persons with a mobility disability in evacuating the second floor in the event of an emergency. Staff have been trained on how to use the chair to assist in an emergency.
- All staff receive accessible customer service training as part of their new employee orientation.
- The Accessible Customer Service Policy includes feedback provisions. As well, several departments have their own process for responding to and documenting feedback.

Information and Communications Standard

- Council and Committee of the Whole meetings are livestreamed, recorded and the video is posted to the Town website. Committees of Council Meetings are recorded, and the videos are posted to the website. All livestreaming and video recordings have closed captioning available.
- Website development staff continue to stay informed of WCAG regulations and attend training opportunities.
- Site Improve – In 2020, the Town procured and started to use Site Improve, which is an online tool used to review and evaluate the accessibility of the municipal website. The Town’s website team has worked diligently throughout the year to correct and improve upon the identified issues.
- The Town continuously strives to produce all digital media in a fully accessible format.
- Website Development – The Town is in the process of developing a new municipal website that is scheduled for launch in 2021. As part of the development process, the website will be designed and built according to WCAG and AODA specifications.

Employment Standard

- Human Resources continues to create individual emergency response plans for employees who have permanent or temporary accessibility needs.
- Each job posting includes, “In accordance with the Ontario Human Rights Code and the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) please advise the Human Resources Department to ensure your accessibility needs are accommodated throughout this process. Personal information provided by the applicants is collected under the authority of the Municipal Act, 2001 and will be used for the purpose of candidate selection.”
- All offers of employment include, “The Town has an accommodation process in place and provides accommodations for employees with disabilities. If you require a specific accommodation because of a disability or a medical need, please contact Human Resources so that arrangements can be made for the appropriate accommodations to be in place before you begin your employment.”
- Human Resources is continuing to review all job descriptions to ensure they are free of systemic barriers.
- Human Resources is reviewing the Early and Safe Return to Work Program to ensure both physical and psychological restrictions or impairments or any functional limitations that affect an employee’s ability to do their job are considered.
- Refresher training on the Duty to Accommodate and Return to Work for staff is planned for 2021.

Transportation Standard

- The Grey Transit Route (GTR) offers extended service from Owen Sound to Craigeleith. The GTR also provides accessible services upon request.
- The Blue Mountains and Collingwood Transit Link provides service from Collingwood to Craigeleith. Accessible service is available upon request
- Accessibility will be considered through the Town’s Transportation Master Plan process.

Design of Public Spaces

- The Grey County Joint Municipal Accessibility Advisory Committee reviewed and provided comment on the following Town projects in 2019:
 - Moreau Park Pavilion
 - Multi-Use Beach Northwinds
 - 229 Bruce Street Park

2020- progress

- Multi-Use path at Northwinds Beach was completed and is in use. This trail meets AODA requirements.

- Moreau Park Pavilion – This project was not completed in 2020. It is being re-tendered in 2021 and will include all AODA requirements and recommendations from the Grey County Joint Municipal Accessibility Advisory Committee including appropriate parking and trail conditions to support access.
- Outdoor Pickleball Courts are being constructed at the Tomahawk Recreation property – This project will meet all AODA requirements and will include accessible parking and pathways to access the courts.
- The Thornbury Pier is being re-surfaced and will incorporate AODA requirements – This project has not been reviewed by the Joint Municipal Accessibility Advisory Committee but will meet all AODA requirements including parking and transition areas between the parking lot and the pier. The pier will also include a curb rail around the perimeter to restrict carriages, wheelchairs, scooters, etc. from going over the edge.

Joint Municipal Accessibility Advisory Committee

The Town of The Blue Mountains is a member of the Grey County Joint Municipal Accessibility Advisory Committee. Grey County's Joint Municipal Accessibility Advisory Committee advises Grey County Council and staff members, as well as participating municipalities, on ways to identify, prevent, and remove barriers from municipal services, by-laws, policies, programs and facilities.

Ongoing Review of the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

Ongoing review and feedback are important for the Town's Multi-Year Accessibility Plan to stay effective. The Town will continue to collect feedback and implement changes that will enhance the accessibility of its services. Members of the public are encouraged to make comments on this plan and accessibility matters in general.

The Town's Accessibility Coordinator will continue to review the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan annually and prepare annual Progress Reports for review by the Grey County Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee and Town of The Blue Mountains Council.