

2024 Town of Wasaga Beach Accessibility Plan Annual Status Report

The Town of Wasaga Beach has established a multi-year accessibility plan to prevent and remove barriers to accessibility and to meet requirements under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act and the Integrated Accessibility Standards.

This Annual Status Report details the required annual update for 2024 on the progress of measures taken to improve accessibility. The purpose of this report is to track our organization's progress and make the public aware of our initiatives.

This report is available online at: <https://www.wasagabeach.com/en/services-and-payments/accessibility-services.aspx?mid=54252>.

To request an alternate format of this annual status report, please contact:

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2024 Accessibility Accomplishments

Legislative Services

Legislative Services provides assistance to the Accessibility Advisory Committee and staff with respect to the legislative requirements of the AODA.

Accessibility Advisory Committee

- Multi Year Accessibility Plan & Progress Report review
- Hosted Easter and Thanksgiving Food Drives for the Wasaga Beach Food Bank in collaboration with the Fire Department
- Attended the Seniors Information and Active Living Expo providing information to members of the public on the Committee and various services available for those with disabilities
- Provided consultation to departments with respect to various initiatives as outlined within the individual department updates
- Installed new mobi-mat wings to existing mobi-mat locations to enhance accessibility
- Recommended and obtained approval to purchase and install mobi-decks at Beach Areas 1 and 2
- Provided consultation to the Simcoe County District Public School Board on a site plan for a new public school
- Created a Site Plan checklist to use as a guide for the Committee when reviewing site plans identified for review under Section 42 of the Planning Act

Clerk's Department

- Oversaw the use of four mobi-chairs for residents and tourists. These floating wheelchairs allow users to easily transition from the beach to the water. They are available on a first-come basis at the Wasaga Beach Provincial Park Office.
- Worked with the Provincial Parks, to oversee the mobi-mats, wings and platforms located on Provincial Park lands
- Communications began with Ontario Parks to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding for the installation and maintenance of mobi-mats, wings, platforms and chairs within provincial parks including the installation of signage
- New Agenda Management Software was implemented at the end of 2023 allowing for more accessible access to past, current and upcoming Council and Committee meetings.

Human Resources and Training Accomplishments

- Continued to provide online AODA training with Systems 24/7 as part of employee orientation
- Human Resource continued to update policies and procedures to address standards outlined within the Employment Standard which included Individual Accommodation Plans when requested
- Employees received MSD & ME (Ergonomics) training with Systems 24/7
- An accommodation statement is now included within all job postings for the Town of Wasaga Beach and each candidate is asked if they require any accommodation to participate in the recruitment process
- "In an emergency...Would you require assistance to evacuate the building" form is now included with each employee's "New Hire Package"

Information Technology Accomplishments

- To enhance accessibility on our website, the Town has successfully integrated Monsido tools on the current website. We have begun working with a website developer to launch a new AODA compliant website with anticipation of going live in Q1 of 2025.
- " Worked in conjunction with the Treasury Department to launch "My Wasaga" site in 2024. This initiative provides the public with a central platform for conveniently handling tax and water bill payments
- Continues to offer support to the AAC members by providing technical accommodations

Communications Accomplishments

- Three (3) in person “Town Hall Meetings” were held providing members of the public an in-person opportunity to ask Council and staff questions pertaining to Town matters
- The CAO’s office was opened on Monday mornings to provide members of the public with an opportunity to meet one on one with the CAO to ask questions pertaining to Town matters
- Implemented “Engage Wasaga” providing members of the public the opportunity to participate in surveys and review municipal priorities, programs, services and projects

Recreation and Facilities Accomplishments

- A tour of the new Twinpad Arena and Library was held for the AAC in the Spring of 2024. Facilities received feedback from the committee and additional accessibility improvements were made to the Twinpad which included rails along penalty boxes to protect walkers and wheelchairs, delineation of uprights in the Community Rinks, contrasting stair railings, cement drains correct to remove tripping hazard
- Annually painting sidewalk ramps blue so they are easily recognizable
- Rec Guide both spring/summer and fall/winter issues are formatted for text to audio (TTA) in the digital format with the anticipation of blending the guide with the Town website
- Planning underway for accessible washroom upgrades on both floors of the town hall as well as utilizing grant funding to upgrade the elevator to be far more user friendly by the end of 2024. This initiation was placed on hold on the anticipation that the Town will be building a new Town hall.
- The washroom at the Youth Centre was renovated to include an AODA washroom
- Signage at the Twinpad is now AOD compliant and includes Brail with more directional signage added for the elevator
- The Municipal Law Enforcement and Licensing Office has been moved to the first floor to provide for a more accessible location
- Upgrade/renovations at Old Fire Hall Station (Special Events Department/Transit). Renovations at the Old Fire Hall Station have been cancelled in preparation for the revitalization of the Beachfront.
- Visible fire/emergency alarms in all public buildings ongoing
- Levered faucets ongoing. The majority of the faucets have been converted to touchless.
- Youth Centre pathway upgrades. Further upgrades to the Youth Centre pathway are anticipated for 2025. An accessible fire pit was installed at the Youth Centre
- Accessible parking space signs
- Exterior paths of travel (e.g. sidewalks, walkways, ramps, stairs, etc.)
- Spruce Street Public Washroom southern ramp has been completed

- A directional sign was installed at the Youth Center providing direction to the accessible ramp located at the back of the facility

Public Works, Engineering, Roads and Parks Accomplishments

Roads

- Undertook sidewalk improvements and replacement/repairs throughout Town to eliminate vertical sidewalk discontinuities (trip hazards >2cm)
- Installed an accessible concrete sidewalk ramp at the end of the sidewalk on Jenetta Street
- Completed select intersection pedestrian pushbutton upgrades
- Addition of AODA parking stalls and signage at Third Street Parking lot, Nancy Island Parking lot and at the Archives Building
- Completed new streetlight installations, at select locations, throughout the Town

Parks

- Initiated a plan for expanding trail Wayfinding signage
- Completed the Oakview Woods Playground Redevelopment project, with accessibility enhancements
- Completed the William Arnill Park Playground Redevelopment project, with accessibility enhancements
- Completed the new River Road East Playground project on, with accessibility features
- Installation of accessible swings at Red Oak, Wasaga Village, and Wasaga Sports Park playgrounds.

Engineering

- Continued construction of the River Road West Urbanization project; including bike lanes, sidewalks on both sides of the roadway, new and upgraded traffic signals, bus stop improvements, and additional street lighting, and improved pedestrian & vehicle signage.
- Continued with the detail design for road improvements of Mosley Street, between 45th Street and Beachwood Road; including an off-road multi-use trail on the south side for cyclists and pedestrians, new sidewalks, new and upgraded traffic signals, bus stop improvements, and additional street lighting.
- Continued with the detail design for Beach Area One Roadways project, including barrier free streetscaping, designated bike lanes/cycle track and boardwalk
- Updating Town Engineering Standards with AODA requirements and specifications.

Transit

- Strengthened fully accessible specialized transit system, in partnership with the Town of Collingwood and Clearview Township. Implemented mobile app and online booking to help riders and transit service provider with trip planning and tracking.
- Acquired an additional accessible van for TransitPLUS door-to-door specialized transit service.
- Continued with the pilot of on-demand transit service, to expand service to unserved areas, on the east side of Town.
- Utilized mobile app and online booking with on-demand transit service for riders to book their rides. Mobile app and online booking to help riders and transit service provider with trip planning and tracking. On-demand transit service aligns with Simcoe County LINX and neighbouring (municipal) transit systems.
- Completed the installation of four (4) new transit shelters
- Consulted with the Accessibility Advisory Committee, regarding the construction, renovation or replacement of transit stops and shelters or alterations/additions to routes
- Initiated review of proposed locations for 2 new transit shelters to be installed in 2025, which will be presented to the Accessibility Advisory Committee

Planning

- The Planning Department was relocated to 120 Glenwood Drive across from the Town Hall which now provides accessible access
- Planning Department provided training to the AAC with respect to requirements for Site Plans under the Planning Act and circulated site plans to the AAC for review and comments
- “MyWasaga” CityView portal was rolled out in 2024 providing residents the ability to apply, pay, request and check the status of a planning applications eliminating the need to attend Town hall.

Building Accomplishments

- Administration and interpretation of the ongoing enhancements to the accessibility requirements of the Ontario Building Code so they are more understandable and accessible to our residents.
- Building Department was relocated to 120 Glenwood Drive across from the Town Hall which now provides accessible access
- “MyWasaga” CityView portal was rolled out in 2024 providing residents the ability to apply, pay, request and check the status of a permit application and inspections, thus eliminating the need to attend Town Hall.

Treasury Accomplishments

- Continue to budget capital funding for all facilities, trails and parks which includes accessibility upgrades.
- Treasurer to ensure continuous training will be provided by purchasing to ensure that new suppliers understand and comply with the Accessibility standards for Customer Service
- Treasurer to ensure wording to be incorporated into billings and correspondence (i.e. newsletter) that alternative formatting is available upon request.
- Treasurer to ensure that all Department Heads/staff are aware of the accessibility guidelines when creating their specifications for purchase.
- Future change to billing to allow for more e-billing.
- Move sale of Yard Sales from By-law Department to Treasury for easier accessibility. This item has not yet been completed
- Assist Roll Book users by finding the information they are looking for.
- Continue providing notices and bills printed on white paper only.
- Assist customers by coming out from behind the counter or meeting with them at the seating area if easier for them.
- " Worked in conjunction with the Treasury Department to launch "My Wasaga" site in 2024. This initiative provides the public with a central platform for conveniently handling tax and water bill payments.

Bylaw Enforcement Accomplishments

- Installation of new parking lot name/identification signs have been installed
- New taxi company licensing are to provide requirement of accessible cabs subject to direction from AAC and Council

Library Accomplishments

- Expanded large print collection in order to offer more reading options for people with visual impairment
- Replaced Junior Fiction collection blue item labels with clear, white labels to make it easier to read for everyone
- Made available a multilingual collection that was donated by Simcoe County to support language barriers
- Provided tablets at the front desk for staff to communicate with patrons who do not speak English
- New service desks and workstations for the public that are wheelchair accessible
- Provided more computers and some have large, lettered keyboards for vision impairments
- Achieved a grant from the International Dyslexia Association to add decodable books, which assist people with dyslexia with reading
- CNIB Smart Life in Barrie donated a desktop magnifier for public use

Fire Department Accomplishments

- Upon request, assist individuals with installation of smoke and carbon monoxide alarms in their homes
- Implement online version of the inquiry and citizen complaint form available on the Town website
- Ensure that all forms meet current accessibility standards
- Provide accessible station tours for community members
- Maintain communication assistance cards available on trucks and in the office
- Partnered with Accessibility Advisory Committee to complete an Easter and Thanksgiving food drive in support of the Wasaga Beach Food Bank
- Fire Administration Assistant completed American Sign Language and is not able to assist various departments in communicating with members of the public
- Renovation of Station 2 has been completed, meeting AODA compliance as outlined within the Ontario Building Code. Upgrades include an accessible washroom, powered entry doors and barrier free access.

SCHEDULE “D”

2025 Accessibility Goals/Identified Improvements

Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC)

- Consult with the Municipality in the future development of accessible design criteria to be considered in the construction, renovation or replacement of bus stops and shelters
- Redesign logo for Accessibility Advisory Committee
- Attend Seniors Information and Active Living Expo
- Create Videos promoting accessible features within the Town
- Spring and Fall Food Drives in support of the Wasaga Beach Food Bank
- Continue to provide accessible devices at Provincial Beaches by installing mobi mats, wings and decks
- Work with Communications to create pamphlets identifying accessible features at Provincial Beaches
- Work with Bylaw Enforcement to finalize Bicycle By-law
- Investigate Access, Awareness and Inclusion programs during local government week

Overall Accessibility

- Ongoing training in Accessible Customer Service for all new employees, members of Council, volunteers and those who provide services on behalf of the Town of Wasaga Beach

Clerks/Administration/Cemetery

- Incorporate a “Refresher” Accessibility training course for all staff (Re: AODA/IASR)
- Increase awareness of the availability of hearing assistive devices for meetings of Council and Committees
- Work in partnership with the Human Resources Department to provide volunteer onboarding online

Recreation, Events & Facilities

- Inclusion of a Business Accessibility Package with new Business Licensing Packages is being investigated for 2025

Public Works/Parks/Engineering/Transit

- Complete the Multi-Modal Transportation Master Plan, including Master Transit Study; evaluate and implement recommendations made therein, subject to Council approval.
- Continue to monitor policies and procedures for the various requirements relating to conventional and specialized transit services to comply with the Standards
- Continue to receive feedback from our customers, act on it when possible and ensure that we provide an equitable service to our customers.
- Acquire a new conventional transit bus, compliant with AODA technical requirements
- Initiate the construction of accessible playground facilities at Sunnidale Trails – Pacific Homes Development (NEW) and Blueberry Trails Park (Replacement)
- Finalize the construction of River Road West, between Blueberry Trails and Veterans Way, including new sidewalks and designated bike lanes.
- Initiate the construction of Beach Area One road improvements, including streetscaping, improved sidewalks and multi-use pathways

Human Resources

- Draft and update policies to incorporate changes to Human Resources policies to address standards outlined in the Employment Standard.
- Work in partnership with the Clerk's Department to provide volunteer onboarding online

Treasury/Information Technology

- Including availability of alternate formats on invoices issued to members of the public.

Information and Communications

- Continuous improvement in Town's webpage design, by reviewing and ensuring the information being conveyed meets customer's requirements.
- Continuous review of Town's corporate social media platforms to ensure that information being conveyed is accurate and factual meeting customer's requirements.
- Develop a corporate policy, on the availability of Town documents in alternate formats
- Develop a public process on the availability of alternate formats and communication supports for public notifications (e.g. website)
- Town Clerk to ensure municipal election is fully accessible and inclusive
- Develop a process for creating and circulating accessible notices of services provided by the Town. Consult with various departments to alter various applications with provision that alternate formats are available upon request.

Municipal Law Enforcement & Licensing Department/Parking

- Continue to enforce and educate members of the public on parking by-laws

Library

- Continue to build accessible collections including audiobooks large print as well as language items

Economic Development & Tourism

- Will be consulting with the AAC when moving forward with the implementation of the Downtown Master Plan.

Building Department

- Continue to enforce the AODA requirements within the Building Code
- Implement new changes AODA changes under the Building Code

Planning

- Updating Zoning By-law which will recognize the AODA
- Creating Urban Design Standards which will recognize the AODA

Fire Department/Emergency Services

- Deliver fire safety programs at local retirement homes, senior events, and throughout the community.
- Provide assistance with home fire safety inspections, including the installation of smoke alarms, carbon monoxide alarms, and guidance on home escape planning as requested.
- Implement barrier-free car seat installation assistance at Station 1.
- Partnering with the County of Simcoe and a local church to open an overnight warming centre with barrier free access for vulnerable community members.

SCHEDULE “E”

Wasaga Beach Transit System Plan

The Town of Wasaga Beach operates a public transportation system (Wasaga Beach Transit System).

1. Transit Buses:

The Wasaga Beach Transit System currently has four (4) transit buses. All buses are accessible, and all buses are equipped with a driver operated wheelchair lift with room for two (2) wheel chairs on board.

2. Features of Wasaga Beach Transit Accessible Buses:

- Automated, audible (interior / exterior) and visual stop announcements - (All Buses equipped since the summer of 2016)
- High visibility (yellow) step tread markings and grab handles
- High visibility (yellow lettering) destination signage (exterior / interior)
- Priority Seating (signage) near the front of the bus
- Bus Stop request button (lower elevation) for wheelchair passengers at the rear of the bus

3. Accessibility Measures taken at the transit level

- Regular meetings with Landmark Bus Lines (Towns Transit contractor) management to discuss service improvements, customer complaints, accessibility issues.
- Semi-Annual Meetings with Transit Drivers (Landmark) to discuss service improvements, customer complaints, etc.
- Logging / Record Keeping of all related transit complaints and/or suggestions.
- Automated, Audible, and visual stop announcements

4. Customer Feedback

- Customer feedback for conventional transit is received through a designated telephone number/email address
- Calls are logged, managed and to evaluate customer feedback
- Feedback is also encouraged through the Town's website by emailing or calling the designated transit contact.

5. Specialized Transportation Demand

- Currently under review by the Town
- The Town does not currently operate a designated Specialized Transit System.

- The Transit Drivers stop along the fixed route(s) at the passenger's request for accessibility reasons.
- Passengers are encouraged to contact the Canadian Red Cross Simcoe Muskoka Branch transit system that will transport passenger's door to door

6. Accessibility Equipment Failures

- Should accessibility equipment failures occur on the Town owned conventional system, the Town's transit contractor (Landmark) is responsible for the immediate replacement of the failed vehicle with another Town –owned accessible vehicle or if not available because of mechanical reasons the contractor will deploy their own accessible vehicle.
- The use of a non-accessible vehicle is not permitted.

7. Consultation with the Accessibility Advisory Committee

- The Town shall consult with the Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC) regarding the construction, renovation or replacement of transit stops and shelters or alterations/additions to routes.
- The Accessibility Advisory Committee, the public and persons with disabilities shall be consulted in the annual public consultation regarding public transportation (See Section 6.3 Transportation).