

TOWN OF BRADFORD WEST GWILLIMBURY



ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE 2005 REPORT OF ACHIEVEMENTS JANUARY 2005 TO DECEMBER 2005

The Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury is making efforts to its services and facilities to become more accessible to people with disabilities. Initiatives include efforts to meet their own requirements under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (Bill 118) and consulting the public to improve accessibility. Review and analysis of programs and service to implement more accessible programs and services. Consideration for accommodating the accessibility needs of our employees, residents and visitors using our facilities, services and programs.

Under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*, municipal governments are among the key public sector institutions that are mandated to foster change and meet the specific accessibility needs of their own policies, programs and services.

Summary of Legislation:

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (Bill 118) passed on May 10, 2005 and received Royal Assent on June 13, 2005. *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* includes the establishment of accessibility standards by regulation. These standards apply to person and organizations in both the public and private sectors, including the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, that employ other persons, provide goods, services, facilities or accommodation or own or occupy premises that are open to the public. No Regulations have been released under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* to date.

Each accessibility standard will identify the class of persons or organizations to which it applies. The standard will require those persons and organizations to implement measures, policies and practices in the standard order to identify and remove and prevent the erection of barriers for persons with disabilities with respect to goods, services, facilities, employment, accommodations, buildings, structures or premises.

The Act provides for the development, implementation, and enforcement of accessibility standards in order to achieve accessibility for Ontarians with disabilities with respect to goods, services, facilities, accommodation, employment, buildings, structures and premises on or before January 1, 2025.

The new legislation includes a vision of an accessible Ontario to be achieved in stages of five years to 20 years. Standards will be developed in collaboration of efforts with an anticipated open transparent process.

It is the intent that the Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury will plan for making their facilities more accessible to all residents specifically identifying the needs of persons using assistive devices and equipment. It is hoped that this plan will take into account other individuals in our community, including visitors, volunteers and staff who may have a disability.

The following is a summary of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (Bill 118) divided into parts:

Part I of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* , more specifically Sections 1 -3, provides for interpretation provisions for purpose, definitions and legal obligations.

Part II of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* , more specifically Sections 4 and 5 provides for application of the legislation and also binding the province.

Part III of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* , more specifically Sections 6 - 17, provides for Accessibility Standards, establishment of the standards, review and compliance.

The *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* requires the Minister to establish a process for development of accessibility standards which shall include the establishment of several standards development committees. Each committee will be responsible for developing proposed accessibility standards for a specified industry, sector of the economy or class of persons or organization. Representatives will be invited to sit on this provincial committee. The process for the development of proposed accessibility standards are set out in Section 9 of the Act.

Accessibility Reports are required to be filed by the persons and organization to which the standards applied with a director for their review. The reports shall be made available to the public and filed annually. This annual report must be certified in accordance with Section 15 of the Act.

Part IV of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*, more specifically Sections 18 - 20 provides for inspections for the purposes of ensuring compliance.

Part V of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*, more specifically Sections 21 - 25 provides for the Director's Orders and Administrative Penalties.

Part VI of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*, more specifically Sections 26 - 28 provides for appeals to the tribunals and mediation.

Part VII of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*, more specifically Section 29 refers to Municipal Accessibility Advisory Committees and the requirement for municipalities over 10,000 shall establish Accessibility Advisory Committees. This section covers appointment of members, duties of the committee and Council.

Part VIII of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*, more specifically Sections 30 - 32 covers administration issues with the Accessibility Standards Advisory Council, duties, consultation, and highlights the functions of the Directorate.

Part IX of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*, more specifically Section 33 provides for Incentive Agreements.

Part X of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*, more specifically Sections 34 - 41 provides for general provisions, service, offences, penalties, conflict provisions and authority for the Minister and the Lieutenant Governor in Council to make regulations.

Part XI of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*, more specifically Section 42 provides for repeal, commencement, and short title.

Some of the vital components identified within the Town's Accessibility Plan include the deployment of aggressive and assertive actions which include Information, Education and Training, Technical Devices and Programs and Services.

The information component includes the use of access symbols, increased signage throughout the Town and on literature and bulletin boards on the services available to the deaf, deafened, and hard of hearing, investigation of TTY's closed caption decoders) for example and relevant pamphlets and brochures promoting accessibility.

The Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing will be scheduling extensive consultation on the content of the next edition of the Ontario Building Code, expected in 2006/2007. The Ministry conducted an Internet-based consultation on technical changes to the Ontario Building Code that included:

1. increased flexibility in the requirements for universal washrooms in most public buildings to provide for greater access;
2. requirements for visual signal devices for fire alarms in parts of most public buildings to aid people who are hearing impaired; and
3. increasing minimum corridor and door widths in buildings to accommodate wider wheelchairs and scooters;
4. The Ministry of Municipal Affairs Technical Code Committees are currently reviewing proposals resulting from the Spring 2004 consultation. Certain technical changes to the Ontario Building Code, including those that will introduce new requirements related to accessibility for people with disabilities.

The Building Code Act, 1992, as amended by the Building Code Statute Law Amendment Act, 2002, and the Building Code, as amended by Ontario Regulation 305/03, introduce requirements for building practitioners, including building officials and designers, to become qualified. Qualification requires the successful completion of ministry examinations that evaluate knowledge of the technical requirements of the Ontario Building Code, including knowledge of the barrier-free requirements.

Proposed Amendments to the Building Code Act include a provision for the enforcement of standards and requirements, including barrier-free requirements. These were added at the request of the Ministry of Citizenship to strengthen enforcement of the barrier-free requirements of the Ontario Building Code.

The Ministry of Housing's Building Code website has been updated to provide an important tool for communicating with the public and receiving its questions and comments. The Ministry's website has been developed according to accessibility guidelines.

Education and Training component includes the existing and new staff orientation sessions, more intensive programs for front line staff has been recommended which included communication strategies and use and maintenance of assistive devices.

Investigation and reporting on Technical Devices components includes investigation and demonstrations of technical devices, such as, amplifiers for telephones; TTY's signaling devices for fire, baby monitors, door knocks, telephones, personal amplification devices; and closed caption decoders for televisions. Over time services are recommended to include how to book and communicate through sign language interpreters or captionists.

ACHIEVEMENTS AND SUCCESSES:

During the reporting period, January 2005 to December 2005, The Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury has successfully introduced and deployed action for the following items:

- reviewed and made recommendations for amendment, additions and improvements to the Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury 2004 Accessibility Plan;
- consulted with agencies, organizations, support services and departments for recommendations for inclusion within the 2005 Annual Report Plan;
- recommended that the 2004 Accessibility Plan be updated to include the references to the new legislation and written comments received;
- circulated the Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury Accessibility Plan to various Ministries, organizations, agencies, support services for comment;
- conducted ongoing consultation with agencies and organizations;
- posted their 2004 Accessibility Plan, Appendices, Report on Achievements 2004, to the Town's website;
- updated the Agencies and Organizations Resource List in 2005, now there are over 200 links to support agencies and organizations;
- The Accessibility Advisory Committee in 2005 was circulated with and reviewed six (6) site plan applications;
- 2005 actual budget for Public Works projects was \$3,165,287;
- The approved 2005 Public Works Budget for curbs and road repairs was \$79,580.00 however the actual spend was \$92,288.00 which does not include the Holland Street West, John Street West, and Simcoe Road projects;
- new sidewalks with were installed along many of the above reconstruction projects;
- new sidewalk ramped at the following intersections:
 - Barrie Street and Scanlon Avenue;
 - John Street West and Barrie Street;

- John Street West and Moore Street;
- John Street West and Toronto Street;
- John Street West and Essa Street;
- John Street West and Church Street;
- Public Works Department have completed the several road construction improvements and sidewalks such as reconstruction on Barrie Street from Scanlon Avenue to Holland Street; Holland Street West from Melbourne Street to West Park; John Street West from Barrie Street to Toronto Street; Simcoe Road from Walker Avenue to Line 6; repairs to Line 13, Line 11, River Road, Professor Day Drive;
- Public Works Department completed the following curb cuts, sidewalk repairs, and/or grading improvements of portions of Mason Street, Orsi Avenue, Colborne Street, James Street, Collings Avenue, Thornton Avenue, Valleyview Crescent, Gordon Court, Essa Street, Bradford District High School Entrance; Toronto Street, John Street West, Walker Avenue, Longview Drive, Davey Street, Agar Street, Kulpin Street, Hulst Drive, Maplegrove Avenue, Cummings Road, Frederick Street, Mills Crescent, Parkwood Avenue, Natalie Court, Jennifer Court, Compton Crescent, Zima Crescent, Townsend Avenue, Lawndale Court, Park Road, Dissette Street, Nelson Street, and Patrician Court;
- The Town's Chief Building Official and two Building Inspectors participated and received training and accreditations;
- the Town implemented a Human Resources Department with the appointment of Manager of Human Resources and Administrative Assistant;
- The Town appointed a full-time Deputy Fire Chief;
- Public Works undertook an internal Road Needs evaluation with a 10 year forecast with over \$50,000,000.00 being projected for needs;
- The Accessibility Advisory Committee provided Public Works with a list of recommendations of upgrades to curb cuts to review and evaluate for repair;
- a review by the Town's Consulting Traffic Engineer was performed of traffic congestion within the Town;
- the Minutes, Agendas and Reports of the Accessibility Advisory Committee were produced and published in large print (Arial 14 pt font);
- The Accessibility Advisory Committee received comments, recommendations and reports from Planning, Public Works, and South Simcoe Police Service regarding accessibility issues;
- The Accessibility Advisory Committee received verbal reports from Members of the Accessibility Advisory Committee;
- staff updated the extensive listing of agencies, organizations and supports with hyperlinks from the Town's website;

- staff ensured that Council, Town employees and the Accessibility Advisory Committee are kept informed of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* legislation and requirements for municipalities;
- ensured that a hyperlink from the Town's website was provided to assist the general public in being informed of the the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (Bill 118);
- Facilities and Parks installed park identification signs at the following Park locations: Al Kuzmich Park, Taylor Park, Harmon Park and Bud Brown Memorial Park;
- staff circulated to our Accessibility Advisory Committee proposed legislation Bill 103; An act to amend the Blind Person's Right Act;
- staff circulated to our Accessibility Advisory Committee proposed legislation Bill 118; An Act respecting the development, implementation and enforcement of standards relating to accessibility with respect to services, facilities, employment, accommodation, buildings and all other things specified in the Act for persons with disabilities;
- staff circulated a copy of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 to Council, staff and Members of the Accessibility Advisory Committee;
- staff circulated correspondence and publications from the Ministry of Citizenship, Accessibility Directorate, Simcoe County Association for the Physically Disabled (SCAPD) to AAC members;
- Facilities and Parks installed accessible playground equipment at Joe Magani Park;
- Facilities continued to install walking paths and playground equipment in Alan Kuzmich Memorial Park;
- the Town officially recognized the opening and dedication of "Bud Brown Memorial Park";
- a new bandstand / gazebo was constructed at the Gord Compton Park with accessible ramps to the structure;
- an accessible ramp was build for access to the portables at the Administration Centre for the Building and By-Law Department;
- no new automatic doors were installed;
- the Accessibility Advisory Committee reviewed the inventory of Town owned facilities and made recommendations for improvements;
- the Accessibility Advisory Committee recommended implementing a category and priority matrix for barriers identified together with establishing realistic timelines;
- The Accessibility Advisory Committee reviewed our Barrier Tracker listing and updated same;

- staff developed a detailed inventory of public and private disabled parking spaces within our community;
- The Committee continued to identify barriers that currently exist within the Town's organization and community;
- The Accessibility Advisory Committee continued to recommend and development strategies for ways to eliminate and remove existing barriers within our community;
- recommended improvements to public access to private properties were identified;
- The Accessibility Advisory Committee continued to review new projects to ensure that no future barriers are put in place with any new services provided;
- letters were forwarded to all banking institutions within Bradford West Gwillimbury for consideration of drive-thru banking facilities within our community;
- The Accessibility Advisory Committee reviewed and updated the written procedures and processes for "Assisting Persons with Disabilities on Voting Day" in preparation of the 2006 Municipal Election;
- the Town obtained a number of large print books for the public library;
- all reconstruction projects included sidewalk curb cuts within their standards;
- the Town installed audible lights at the intersection of Holland Street West / Melbourne Drive and Professor Day Drive;
- consultation was undertaken with residents, CNIB and Public Works were undertaken with regard to the time set for crossings at the audible lights at Professor Day Drive and Melbourne Drive;
- Public Works prepared a report scheduling installation of audible lights for traffic signals and pedestrian crossings;
- recommendations were presented by the Accessibility Advisory Committee to Council for consideration a pedestrian crossing on Simcoe Road;
- Recreation Department offered 'Sign Language' Programs to the public through Recreation Programming;
- Town Recreation Program Guides included accessibility symbols within their publication;
- updated the ongoing inventory list of recommendations for improvements to streets, sidewalks, and curb cuts;
- increased public awareness and sensitivities for individuals with disabilities;
- received some media exposure through the Bradford West Gwillimbury Times in increasing public awareness of the Committee and their activities;
- held three Accessibility Committee Meetings in 2005;
- increased signage for disabled parking at the Court House and Harman Park;
- Urban Design Guidelines were adopted;

- Revised right-of-way and standards were approved by Council and awaiting approval by the County of Simcoe;
- Community Plan Area 1 is under review;
- Community Plan Areas 2 and 4 were approved;
- Community Plan Area 3 is under review;
- Economic Development Committee was established and will be meeting on a regular basis;
- Branding and Marketing Strategy review for the Town was undertaken;
- discussions regarding redesign of the Town's website was initiated;
- recommendations for future budget discussions regarding the opportunity for installation of a TTY machine (with a toll free number) to improve public access to the Town so that those who are hard of hearing can call customer assistance. Full budget deliberation and consideration will be necessary. If approved, staff will need to be trained to operate and maintain this equipment;
- encouraged and supported the Communities in Bloom campaign and efforts to help include residents from our community to participate and become more involved.

TOWN AS AN EMPLOYER - EMPLOYMENT ACCOMMODATIONS:

The Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury continued to support and accommodate the needs of our employees with disabilities, by offering:

- the Human Resources Department will provide advice and assistance to managers to help them meet their obligation to provide accessible accommodation;
- the Human Resources Department will consult and provide advice to managers to help solve accommodation issues;
- Human Resources will assist with the assessment and evaluation of workstations;
- Human Resources may provide recommendations on ways to resolve any accommodation issues; and
- Human Resources will provide advice and resource information to offices on accommodation issues and development, administration, and implementation of the Return to Work Policy. Under this policy, managers are offered help, advice and information on how they may accommodate the needs of employees with disabilities who choose to remain on the job or return to work.

TRAINING

Sensitivity training is recommended by the Accessibility Advisory Committee for municipal staff.

FACILITIES ACCOMMODATION:

- The Town undertook limited renovations to our offices to accommodate changing space requirements. Along with previous renovations, construction has met or exceeded Building Code requirements and reflects some industry ergonomic standards;
- ongoing curb cuts throughout the municipality were identified and some completed;
- some steps were identified with yellow paint and markings to help differentiate the levels;
- preparation and review of conceptual drawings for a new Administration Civic Centre, addition to the Court House and Master Plan were undertaken;
- review of conceptual drawings for campus style facilities was undertaken by the Municipal Facilities Committee;
- preparation and review of conceptual drawings for Police Services Building were undertaken;
- preparation and review of conceptual drawings for renovations/or new construction of the court house and court services were undertaken;
- the Town established the Municipal Facilities Committee which met frequently from September through to December;
- updated 16 agencies, organization and service hyperlinks validations from the last review in December 2004;
- confirmed civic addresses, 911 numbering and signage for all municipal parks;
- Within our community, several private sector organizations undertook initiatives to reduce and eliminate the challenges for disabled individuals. An example would be the curbs at Quaker Hill Corporation were painted yellow by the Quaker Hill Corporation to clearly identify the changes in levels, and visibility of entrance for emergency service vehicles to identify their entrances for emergency vehicles;
- barrier free access to the Building and By-Law Department portables by installing a barrier free ramp or path of travel, barrier free parking areas and entrance.

COMMITMENTS AND STRATEGIES FOR 2006 - 2007

The Town will continue to strive to develop and enhance its Accessibility Plan through improved communications, facilities and technology. Annual reports prepared by the Accessibility Advisory Committee will be prepared, presented to Council and published to the Town's website. Focus of the Committee will be concentrated on providing more information, education and training, technical devices to the residents and visitors of Bradford West Gwillimbury through programs and services.

METHODS TO BE TAKEN TO PREVENT NEW BARRIERS

The Town will continue to develop processes to ensure that policies, programs and services are assessed to review their impact on people with disabilities and eliminate barriers. As part of this process, the Town will assess operating proposals included in the 2006/2007 budget submissions; include policy and program development on how to include accessibility in proposals; include provisions for education and training allowances, promote awareness, provide education, review internal processes to ensure that proposals are considered from the perspective of those with disabilities, and include accessibility issues in all new program evaluations committed to.

AREAS TO BE REVIEWED

- Develop a process and a multi-year schedule to review all by-laws to ensure the appropriate use of language with respect to barriers to people with disabilities. - Estimated to be completed by end of 2008;
- Continue the process of developing policies, procedures, and processes that must be accessible to people with disabilities;
- Develop and publish a "Planning for Barrier Free Development" Guide with standards. This guide will be intended to guide developers in considering accessibility issues and eliminating barriers to accessibility when designing public spaces. Estimated end of 2009, after provincial regulation is introduced as a result of *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (Bill 118);
- Review staff development strategies and identify potential barriers to personnel with disabilities to participate in training opportunities;

- implement the recommendations of the Accessibility Committee to improve facilities to become more accessible to deaf, deafen, and Hard of Hearing people by installing compatible telephones with volume control, teletypewriters (TTY's), implement visual announcements, increase signage within facilities, use printed information, have a listing of sign language interpretators, use FM and Infra-red systems, install smoke and fire alarms with visual alarms, increase lighting, review the amount of electrical interference, use captioning, have staff attend sensitivity training and use International Symbol of ACCESS.

ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN:

Barrier Identification and Prevention

To develop the Town's 2006 Accessibility Plan and Annual Report, the Town will:

- continue to request staff to identify existing barriers to accessibility within the Town;
- develop and implement an information and education strategy for staff prior to conducting research and surveys;
- review and updated the Accessibility Plan, goals, objectives; and
- give consideration to the completion and assessment of a Town Accessibility Quotient survey.

The resulting data will serve as the foundation to identify commitments and strategies in 2006 and future years. The following reports to develop a process and schedule to conduct an accessibility audit in all reception / public areas. This measure is designed to identify communication and architectural barriers and review the "Guidelines for Implementing the Procurement Provisions of the Ontarians with Disabilities Act" publications.

Improved accessibility in communications – ongoing

- post the level of accessibility of venues in advertisements or promotional material for public notice and events;
- ensure that all future Internet content is accessible as recommended by the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*;
- Issue a corporate wide communication encouraging staff that all public meetings must be held at accessible premises. Logistics of meetings, physical and communication requirements, including such aids as sign language interpreters, real-time captioning etc. will be considered upon special request; and
- enhancement of hyperlinks to Organizations, Services and Supports, under Town website, Links.

Improved accessibility of facilities - ongoing

- work with landlords and property management of multi-residential facilities to ensure that all hallways are clearly lit and free of clutter, and that lighting in targeted facilities provides optimal safety and convenience for visitors and employees with visual impairments;
- ensure signage serves all clients, including being written in plain language, clearly posted, readable and at an appropriate height;
- ensure adequate, well placed and well signed designated parking spot for disabled persons is provided at all municipal owned facilities;
- ensure that construction and office redesign continues to be based on good ergonomic design;
- ensure that lease renewals are done in accordance with the anticipated guidelines in *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*; and
- make a commitment to ongoing accessibility for both staff and the public.

Improved accessibility in technology - ongoing

- annual review of the Town's website for providing improvements for the public access to information; and
- continue to include accessible website design principles through ongoing training for web.

Questions, suggestions or comments regarding the Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury's Accessibility Plan and Accessibility Advisory Committee Annual Reports are always welcome.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

For more information, please contact the Town at the following address:

Mailing Address: Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury
 Accessibility Advisory Committee
 P.O. Box 160
 3541 Line 11
 Bradford, ON
 L3Z 2A8

Telephone: (905)775-5366

E-mail: accessibility@townofbwg.com

Town website: www.town.bradfordwestgwillimbury.on.ca

The Accessibility Advisory Committee encourage the public to visit the Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration, Accessibility Ontario Web portal at: www.citizenship.gov.on.ca. This site promotes accessibility and provides information and resources on how to make Ontario a barrier-free society. Alternate formats of documents are available free upon request from: Publications Ontario, 880 Bay Street, Toronto, ON M7A 1N8. (Tel) 416 326-5300, Toll-Free: 1-800-668-9938; TTY Service: 1-800-268-7095.

CERTIFICATION:

That the information required to be provided in this report under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*, has been provided by the Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury and the Accessibility Advisory Committee.

The information included within this report is accurate and a statement has been prepared and certified by the Town Manager as required under Section 15 of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*.

Respectfully submitted,

Accessibility Advisory Committee
Doug White, Chairman

Accessibility Advisory Committee
Karen Marsh-Taziar, Co-Chair

Approved for agenda:

Jay Currier, MBA
Town Manager