



2021 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan





Mayor's Message

The Town of Amherstburg is a welcoming, inclusive community that values diversity, accessibility and the essential dignity of all people. The people of Amherstburg deserve the credit for building a community which champions the values and beliefs of inclusivity and accessibility. The conviction of the community is built upon an understanding that we succeed when everyone in our Municipality can reach their full potential.

As Mayor it has been my privilege to support a number of projects designed to increase the accessibility of Town parks, facilities and services. The work of making a community accessible and inclusive of all is never complete but the Town of Amherstburg has made great strides towards increasing access and promoting inclusion in everything it does.

As we look forward to the next five years, I expect that we will continue to seek ways to improve access to Town services, to ensure everyone is included in Town activities, and that our facilities and events are designed to be open to all. I know that Council, Administration, the Amherstburg Accessibility Advisory Committee and people with disabilities in the community will continue to work together towards the shared goal of identifying, removing and preventing barriers.

We stand committed to building on past success and launching new endeavours to better the lives of people with disabilities who live, work or visit our Town. Through collaboration, partnership and shared vision, we can achieve great things. I am confident that we will continue to build upon our successes to be an even more welcoming, accessible and inclusive community in the years to come.

Yours truly,

Mayor Aldo DiCarlo



**Amherstburg Accessibility Advisory Committee
(AAAC)**

Committee Members

Shirley Curson-Prue, Chair

Chris Drew, Vice Chair

Christine Easterbrook

Angela Kelly

Tony Pietrangelo

Councillor Marc Renaud, Council Liaison

Kevin Fox, Committee Coordinator and Staff Liaison

Message from the Amherstburg Accessibility Advisory Committee

In the 2017 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan it was reported that 15.5 % of Ontarians or 1.86 million persons were persons with a disability. The more recent data reported in 2020 indicates this has increased to 2.6 million persons. This means one in four persons in Ontario is living with a disability.

This shocking statistic is expected to increase as people become older as many disabilities occur in older adults.

Our committee enjoys the opportunity to review site plans for new buildings and renovations or repurposing of properties to make recommendations concerning a number of accessibility elements including barrier free routes of access and accessible parking. We also make recommendations concerning assignment of funds from AODA Compliance Reserve Fund.

However, considering the exponential growth in persons with disabilities in the province, we believe it is time to collect more targeted data regarding the citizens of Amherstburg to provide the opportunity to create an enhanced, targeted work plan providing information and identifying existing and available supports for persons with disabilities in our community. Information sharing and collaboration within the Accessibility community will enable us to bring forward the best practices and latest trends to effect change to reduce barriers and increase access to goods and services in the Town of Amherstburg.

Sincerely,

Shirley Curson-Prue,

Chair of the AAAC, on behalf of the Committee

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Mayor's Address.....	1
AAAC Committee Composition and Message.....	2
Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA)...	6
Integrated Accessibility Standards, O.Reg 191/11.....	7
Definition of a Barrier.....	8
Definition of Disability.....	9

Town Strategies and Actions:

Information and Communication Standards

Feedback.....	10
Accessible Formats, Communication Supports.....	10
Emergency Procedure, Plans, Public Safety Info.....	11
Accessible Websites and Web Content.....	11
Person First Language.....	11

Employment Standards

Recruitment.....	13
Notice, Informing of Supports.....	13
Accessible Formats, Communication Supports.....	13
Workplace Emergency Response Information.....	14
Documented Individual Accommodation Plans.....	14
Return to Work Process.....	15
Performance Management.....	15
Career Development and Advancement.....	16
Redeployment.....	16

Transportation Standards

Duty to Consult.....	17
Accessible Bus Stops and Shelters.....	17
On-Demand Accessible Taxicabs.....	17
Taxicab Licensing.....	17

Design of Public Spaces Standards

Duties of IASR.....	18
Facility Accessibility Design Standards.....	19

Customer Service Standards

Accessibility Policies.....	19
Service Animals and Support Persons.....	20
Notice of Temporary Disruptions.....	21
Training for Staff.....	22
Feedback Process.....	22
Format of Documents.....	23

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA)

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, or AODA, recognizes the history of discrimination against persons with disabilities in Ontario and has the stated purpose of benefiting all Ontarians by:

- Developing, implementing and enforcing 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; and,
- Providing for the involvement of persons with disabilities, of the Government of Ontario and of representatives of industries and of various sectors of the economy in the development of accessibility standards.

The Corporation of the Town of Amherstburg is committed to fulfilling the requirements set out in the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, and all regulations under that Act which require the Town of Amherstburg to establish policies, procedures and practices governing the provision of its goods and services to persons with disabilities.

To meet the goal of a fully accessible Town of Amherstburg on or before January 1, 2025, the establishment, implementation, maintenance and documentation of a Multi-Year Accessibility Plan outlines the Town of Amherstburg's strategy to prevent and remove barriers.

Integrated Accessibility Standards, O.Reg 191/11

The Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation, or IASR, is a provincial regulation governed by the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act. It establishes the accessibility standards for each of the identified areas: information and communication, employment, transportation, the design of public spaces and customer service.

The requirements set out in the IASR are not a replacement or a substitution for the requirements established under the Human Rights Code nor do the standards limit any obligations owed to persons with disabilities under any other legislation.

The Corporation of the Town of Amherstburg is committed to upholding the standards and guidance provided within the compliance framework of the IASR.

This commitment is guided by four core principles – dignity, equal opportunity, integration and full inclusion. These principles support the needs of persons as set out in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, and the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005.

Definition of a Barrier

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act defines barrier as anything that prevents a person with a disability from fully participating in all aspects of society because of their disability, including a physical barrier, an architectural barrier, an information or communication barrier, an attitudinal barrier, a technological barrier, a policy or a practice.

Barrier Type	Example
Physical	A door knob cannot be operated by a person with limited upper-body mobility and strength or manual dexterity.
Architectural	A hallway or door that is too narrow for a wheelchair or scooter.
Informational	Information printed in font too small to be read by a person with low vision.
Communicational	A person who talks too loudly when addressing a person with a hearing impairment.
Attitudinal	A receptionist who ignores a customer in a wheelchair.
Technological	A sound system which amplifies background noise.
Policy/Practice	A practice of announcing important messages over an intercom that people with hearing impairments cannot hear clearly.

Definition of a Disability

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act states that a disability means:

- (a) Any degree of physical disability, infirmity, malformation or disfigurement that is caused by bodily injury, birth defect or illness and, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, includes diabetes mellitus, epilepsy, a brain injury, any degree of paralysis, amputation, lack of physical co-ordination, blindness or visual impediment, deafness or hearing impairment, muteness or speech impediment, or physical reliance on a guide dog or other animal or on a wheelchair or other remedial appliance or device;
- (b) A condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability;
- (c) A learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language;
- (d) A mental disorder; or,
- (e) An injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997.

Town Strategies and Actions

Information and Communication Standards

The municipality will create, provide and receive information and communications in ways that are accessible to people with disabilities, where practicable.

If the municipality determine that it is not technically feasible to convert the information/communications, or does not have the technology available to convert the information/communication, the municipality will be obligated to provide the person that requires the information with:

- An explanation as to why the information/communications are unconvertable; and,
- A summary of the unconvertible information/communication.

Feedback

The municipality has a process in place for receiving and responding to feedback and will ensure that those processes are provided in an accessible format and with communication supports, upon request. The Town will notify the public about the availability of accessible formats and communication supports.

Accessible Formats and Communication Supports

The municipality shall be obligated to provide or arrange for accessible formats and communication supports for persons with disabilities:

- Upon request in a timely manner that takes into account the person's accessibility needs due to disability.
- At a cost that is no more than the regular cost that is charged to others.
- Consult with the person making the request and determine suitability of an accessible format or communication supports.

- Notify the public about the availability of accessible formats and communication supports, where available.

Emergency Procedure, Plans, and Public Safety Information

When the municipality prepares emergency procedures, plans or public safety information, Administration will make the information available to the public, as soon as practicable. The municipality shall provide information in an accessible format or with the appropriate communication supports, as soon as practicable, upon request.

Accessible Websites and Web Content

The municipality shall ensure that all municipal internet websites and web content comply with WCAG 2.0 Level AA within legislated timelines in accordance with Ministry guidance.

The municipality will endeavour to integrate assistive technologies into municipal internet websites where possible, feasible and where it will provide enhancements to access for persons with disabilities.

Person First Language

Person First Language is a linguistic prescription that recommends that people place the emphasis on the person before the diagnosis, describing what a person has, rather than what a person is. By carefully constructing language to avoid marginalization or dehumanization, language becomes more egalitarian and treats everyone with the dignity and respect they deserve as a person. A pilot project of the Person First Language was adopted in accordance with Council resolution # 20191209-533 for use by the Amherstburg Accessibility Advisory Committee, reinforcing the need to expand this usage into other areas of municipal operations.

Examples of Person First Language include:

Person First Language

Person with a disability

Person without a disability

Person with an intellectual, cognitive, developmental disability

Person with an emotional or behavioural disability, person with a mental health or psychiatric disability

Person who is blind/visually impaired

Person who has a communication disorder, is unable to speak, or uses a device to speak

Person who uses a wheelchair

Person with a physical disability

Person with epilepsy or seizure disorder

Person with multiple sclerosis

Person with cerebral palsy

Accessible parking or accessible bathroom

Competing Models or Alternative Views to Person First Language:

It should be noted that there are alternative views such as the Identity-first language where some individuals and groups prefer an approach which places the identifying condition before the personal term. Similarly, in deaf culture it has long been the case that deaf-first language is preferred since being culturally deaf is a source of positivity and pride. For example, suggested terms would be deaf person, or hard of hearing person, and this approach would prefer not to utilize terms like hearing impaired, as it focuses a negative connotation on what a person cannot do.

Employment Standards

The Employment Standard builds upon the existing requirements under the Ontario Human Rights Code in relation to how to accommodate individuals with disabilities throughout the job application process and the

employment relationship. It applies to employees and does not apply to volunteers and other non-paid individuals.

Recruitment and Retention

The municipality shall notify employees and the public about the availability of accommodations for applicants with disabilities:

- During the recruitment process when job applicants are individually selected to participate in an assessment or selection process;
- If a selected applicant requests an accommodation, the municipality shall consult with the applicant and provide or arrange for provisions of a suitable accommodation that takes into account the applicant's disability; and,
- Notify successful applicants of the policies for accommodating employees with disabilities.

Notice, Informing of Supports

The municipality shall inform employees of the policies used to support its employees with disabilities, including, but not limited to, policies on the provision of job accommodations that take into account an employee's accessibility needs due to a disability;

- As required to new employees as soon as practicable after they begin their employment;
- Whenever there is a change in policies on the provision of job accommodations that take into account an employee's accessibility needs due to a disability.

Accessible Formats, Communication Supports

Where an employee with a disability requests an accessible format, the municipality will consult with the employee to provide or arrange for the provision of accessible formats and communication supports for:

- Information that is needed in order to perform the employee's job
- Information that is generally available to employees in the workplace; and,
- Consult with the employee making the request in determining the suitability of an accessible format or communication support.

Workplace Emergency Response Information

The municipality provides individualized workplace emergency response information to employees who have a disability;

- If the disability is such that individualized information is necessary and the employer is aware of needs for accommodations due to the employee's disability;
- If the employee that received individual workplace emergency response information requires assistance, the municipality shall provide, with the employee's consent, information to a person designated by the municipality to provide assistance to the employee;
- As soon as practicable after becoming aware of the need for accommodation due to the employee's disability; and,
- A review of the individualized workplace emergency response information when the employee moves into a different location in the organization, when overall accommodation needs or plans are reviewed and when the employer reviews its general emergency response policies.

Documented Individual Accommodation Plans

The municipality has a written process for the development of a documented individual accommodation plan for employees with a disability. The process shall include:

- The employee's participation in the development of the IAP;
- Assessment on an individual basis;
- Identification of accommodations to be provided;
- Timelines for the provision of accommodations;

- The municipality may request an evaluation by a medical or other expert at the municipalities' expense to assist with determining the required accommodations and how to achieve the accommodation.
- The employee may request the participation of a representative from their bargaining agent where represented, or otherwise a representative from the workplace where the employee is not represented by a bargaining agent;
- Steps taken to protect the privacy of the employee's personal information;
- Frequency with which the IAP will be reviewed and updated and the manner in which it will be done;
- If denied, the reason(s) for denial are to be provided to the employee;
- A format that takes into account the employee's disability;
- If requested, any information regarding accessible formats and communication supports will be provided;
- Identification of any other accommodations that are to be provided.

Return to Work Process

The municipality has in place a return to work process for employees who have been absent from work due to a disability and require disability-related accommodation in order to return to work. Such processes must be documented and must outline steps that the municipality will take to facilitate the return to work and include an IAP plan.

Performance Management

The municipality takes into account the accessibility needs and/or individual accommodation plans of employees when:

- Using performance management processes;
- Providing career development and advancement information; and,
- Using redeployment procedures.

Career Development and Advancement

The Town of Amherstburg provides career development and advancement to its employees that takes into account the accessibility needs of its employees with disabilities as well as any individual accommodation plans needed when providing career development and advancement to employees with disabilities.

Career development and advancement includes providing additional responsibilities within an employee's current position and the movement of an employee from one job to another in the organization that may be higher in pay, provide greater responsibility or be at a higher level in the organization or any combination of them, and, for both additional responsibilities and employee movement, is usually based on merit or seniority or a combination of them, and any collective bargain agreements, as necessary.

Redeployment

Where the Town makes use of redeployment it shall take into account the accessibility needs of its employees with disabilities, as well as individual accommodation plans, when redeploying employees with disabilities.

Transportation Standards

The Transportation Standard is predominantly focused on requiring transportation companies to inform the public about accessible equipment and features on their vehicles, routes and services and to make the features and equipment on routes and vehicles accessible to passengers with disabilities. Should the Town of Amherstburg engage a transportation company to provide services to the residents of the Town of Amherstburg, it will require that the provider comply with all legislated responsibilities as a contractual obligation. In addition to those responsibilities identified to transportation providers, the Town of Amherstburg has additional responsibilities under this section of the IASR that apply to its role as a municipality.

Duty to Consult

Conventional transportation service providers providing service to the municipality shall annually hold at least one public meeting involving persons with disabilities from the municipality to ensure that they have an opportunity to participate in a review of the accessibility plan and that they are given the opportunity to provide feedback on the accessibility plan.

Accessible Bus Stops and Shelters

The municipality shall consult with its accessibility advisory committee, the public and persons with disabilities in the development of accessible design criteria to be considered in the construction, renovation or replacement of bus stops and shelters.

Any further steps required to meet the goal of accessible bus stops and shelters shall be indicated in this accessibility plan.

Where a municipality has entered into arrangements with a person respecting the construction of bus stops and shelters in its jurisdiction, the municipality shall ensure that the person participates in the consultation and planning process.

On-Demand Accessible Taxicabs

The municipality shall consult with the accessibility advisory committee, the public and persons with disabilities to determine the proportion of on-demand accessible taxicabs required in the community.

Any further steps required to meet the stated proportion of on-demand accessible taxicabs in the community shall be indicated in this accessibility plan.

Taxicab Licensing

The municipality shall ensure that any taxicab licensed by the municipality is prohibited:

- From charging a higher fare or an additional fee for persons with disabilities than for persons without disabilities for the same trip; and,
- From charging a fee for the storage of mobility aids or mobility assistive devices.

The municipality shall ensure that the owners and operations of any taxicab licensed by the municipality place vehicle registration and identification information on the rear bumper of the taxicab. The Town requires licensed taxicabs to ensure that owners and operators of taxicabs make available vehicle registration and identification information in an accessible format to persons with disabilities who are passengers.

Design of Public Spaces Standards

The design of public spaces standard of the AODA outlines the need for newly constructed or redeveloped public spaces to be accessible for people with disabilities. This standard describes ways to make communal spaces more accessible, with a focus predominantly on outdoor environments. The standard applies to new spaces and buildings. It also applies to existing spaces undergoing major renovations. However, existing spaces that do not need major reconstruction do not need to comply.

Duties of the IASR

The IASR provides the requirements to abide by with regards to the creation of:

- Recreational trails and beach access routes;
- Outdoor public use eating areas;
- Outdoor play spaces;
- Exterior paths of travel;
- Accessible on-street and off-street parking;
- Obtaining services (such as service counters and waiting areas); and,

- Maintenance

The Town follows the direction of the IASR in implementing these standards for the design of public spaces.

Facility Accessibility Design Standards

The Town of Amherstburg is currently adapting Facility Accessibility Design Standards to act as an informational guide to assist in the development, redevelopment and reconstruction of Town owned and operated facilities and properties in accordance with Council direction.

Customer Service Standards

The Town of Amherstburg is committed to providing accessible customer service to people with disabilities. This means that we will provide goods and services to people with disabilities with the same high quality and timeliness as others.

Customer Service Initiatives

- Sensitivity training program as part of employee orientation – ongoing for new employees.
- Provide training to all Town staff and Committees on providing Accessible Customer Service – ongoing for new employees.
- Provide additional in depth training to employees of the Libro Credit Union Centre – ongoing for new employees.

Accessibility Policies

The Town maintains both an Accessible Customer Service Standards Policy and an Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation Policy which provide Council adopted policy support to ensure the protection and provision of accessible goods and services in accordance with provincial legislation and the Town's overall commitment to accessibility.

These policies provide for the assurance that persons with disabilities shall be given an opportunity equal to that given to others to obtain, use

and benefit from the goods, services or facilities of the Town of Amherstburg. Further, the policies establish that when communicating with a person with a disability, the Town shall do so in a manner that takes into account the person's disability. The Town's accessibility policies address those utilizing assistive devices to obtain, use or benefit from the goods, services or facilities or with the availability of other measures, if any, which enable them to do so.

Service Animals and Support Persons

People with disabilities who are accompanied by a guide dog or service animal shall be permitted access to enter premises of the Town of Amherstburg and to keep the animal with the person with a disability unless the animal is otherwise excluded by law from the premises. If the service animal is excluded by law from the premises, the Town of Amherstburg shall ensure that other measures are available to enable a person with a disability to obtain, use or benefit from the provider's goods, services or facilities.

An animal is a service animal for a person with a disability if:

1. The animal can be readily identified as one that is being used by the person for reasons relating to the person's disability, as a result of visual indicators such as the vest or harness worn by the animal; or,
2. The person provides documentation from one of the following regulated health professionals confirming that the person requires the animal for reasons relating to the disability;
 - a. A member of the College of Audiologists and Speech-Language Pathologists of Ontario;
 - b. A member of the College of Chiropractors of Ontario;
 - c. A member of the College of Nurses of Ontario;
 - d. A member of the College of Occupational Therapists of Ontario;
 - e. A member of the College of Optometrists of Ontario;
 - f. A member of the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario;
 - g. A member of the College of Physiotherapists of Ontario;
 - h. A member of the College of Psychologists of Ontario;

- i. A member of the College of registered Psychotherapists and Registered Mental Health Therapists of Ontario.

It is the responsibility of the person with a disability to ensure that the service animal is kept in control at all times.

People with disabilities who are accompanied by a support person shall be permitted entry into the premises together and the Town of Amherstburg shall ensure that the person with a disability is not prevented from having access to the support person while on the premises. The Town may require a person with a disability to be accompanied by a support person while on Town premises in situations where it is necessary to protect the health or safety of the person with a disability or the health and safety of others on the premises.

Where fees for goods and services are advertised or promoted by the Town of Amherstburg, it will provide advance notice of the amount payable, if any in respect of the support person.

The Town will endeavour to provide goods, services and programming to support persons accompanying a person with a disability at either a reduced rate or free of charge where possible.

Notice of Temporary Disruptions

If there is a disruption in a particular facility or service used to allow a person with a disability to access goods or services, the Town will give notice of the disruption to the public by posting the reason for the disruption, the anticipated duration of the disruption, and alternative facilities or services that may be available. This posting will be in a conspicuous place on the premises of the Town of Amherstburg, or by other reasonable methods in the circumstances.

If the Town anticipates a disruption, the Town will provide a reasonable amount of advance notice of the disruption. If the disruption is unexpected, notice will be provided as soon as possible.

Training for Staff

The Town will ensure that staff receive accessibility training as required. The amount and format of training given will be tailored to suit each person's interactions with the public and his or her involvement in the development of policies, procedures and practices pertaining to the provision of goods and services.

The content of the training will include:

- A review of the purposes of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005;
- The requirements of the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation, O.Reg 191/11, under the Act;
- Responsibilities under the Human Rights Code, 1990;
- Instruction on the Town's policies, procedures and practices pertaining to the provision of goods and services to persons with disabilities;
- How to interact and communicate with persons with various types of disabilities;
- What to do if a person with a particular type of disability is having difficulty accessing the Town's goods or services;
- How to interact with persons with disabilities who use assistive devices or who require the assistance of a support person or service animal; and,
- Information about the equipment or devices available on the Town's premises that may help with the provision of goods or services to persons with disabilities.

The Town shall ensure that it abides by the dictates of the Accessible Customer Service Standards Policy with regards to the timeline and associated records regarding training of staff.

Feedback Process

The Town of Amherstburg is committed to providing high quality goods and services to all members of the public. Feedback from the public

is welcomed as it assists the Town in identifying any areas that may require change.

The public can provide feedback on the accessibility of the provision of goods and services by the Town of Amherstburg by phone or in writing through the Clerk's Office and through the accessibility feedback process on the Town webpage.

Format of Documents

The Town shall be obligated to provide or arrange for accessible formats and communication supports for persons with disabilities:

1. Upon request in a timely manner that takes into account the person's accessibility needs due to the disability.
2. At a cost that is no more than the regular cost that is charged to others.
3. Consult with the person making the request and determine suitability of an accessible format or communication supports.
4. Notify the public about the availability of accessible formats and communication supports, where available.