



## **Town of Hanover Multi-Year Accessibility Plan**

**2019-2021**

This document has been prepared in compliance with the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR) under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), 2005.

This publication is available on the Town of Hanover website at <http://hanover.ca/accessibility> and may be provided in alternative formats upon request.

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## Intent

This 2019 to 2021 accessibility plan outlines the policies and actions that the Town of Hanover 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](#) (IASR).

## Statement of Commitment

The Town of Hanover (The Town) is enriched with a population of varying talents, abilities, and experiences and values the contributions that all staff, residents and visitors make to enhance our community. The Town believes in equal opportunity and is committed to providing a barrier-free environment that allows all people to maintain their independence and dignity in accessing programs and services. The Town aims to prevent barriers by designing inclusively and supporting positive approaches and attitudes toward accessibility. policy.

As an organization, we respect and uphold the requirements set forth under the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* and the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA)* and its associated Regulations, and strive to meet the needs of individuals with disabilities in a timely and effective manner.

The Town will establish and maintain policies, practices, and procedures which are consistent with the accessibility standards established under the AODA, including accessible customer service, information and communication, employment, transportation and the built environment, and that is consistent with the four core principles as outlined in the AODA:

- **Dignity** - Service is provided in a way that allows persons with disabilities to maintain self respect and the respect of others.
- **Full Inclusion (Independence)** - All people are allowed to do things on their own without unnecessary help or interference from others.
- **Integration** - Service is provided in a way that all persons with disabilities can benefit from the same services, in the same place, and in the same or similar way as other customers unless an alternate measure is necessary to enable persons with disabilities to access those services.
- **Equal Opportunity** - Service is provided to persons with disabilities in such a way that they have an opportunity to access goods and services equal to that given to others.

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## Accessibility Plan

### Part I - General Requirements

#### **Establishment of Accessibility Policies**

The Town has established accessibility policies and will continue to review and revise these according to regular review schedules, legislative changes and requirements.

#### **Procuring or Acquiring Goods, Services, Facilities, or Self-service kiosks**

The Town works to continually incorporate accessibility features, criteria, and designs as it relates to accessing goods, services, and facilities.

The Civic Centre is planning to relocate a service counter in the main reception area of the building in 2020. Universal design is being considered to ensure the counter is accessible to staff, as well as patrons accessing services of the facility.

An electronic device has been made readily available to assist persons with or without disabilities in voting electronically during municipal elections and accessing municipal information at other times at the Civic Centre.

#### **Training on the IASR and Human Rights Code**

All Town of Hanover staff and volunteers are required to complete training in accordance with accessibility regulations.

In 2019 the Town of Hanover began investigating and assessing onboarding and training capabilities available within other modules of the current Human Resources and Payroll system. Investigation will continue into 2020 and beyond, as required. Consideration will be given to streamlining access to training programs, maintaining a central database where all training is tracked, and setting up notifications for any incomplete training.

### Part II – Information and Communication

#### **Feedback Process**

Mechanisms are in place and are publicly available to allow staff, patrons, and community members to provide feedback to the Town related to accessibility. All feedback received will be

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reviewed, considered, and shared with the applicable Town facilities throughout the duration of this plan.

## **Accessible Formats and Communication Supports**

The Town strives to provide efficient and effective service to customers through the provision of information in alternative formats, or through the use of communication supports.

Throughout 2020 and 2021, the Town aims to develop and provide resources to staff to aid in creating accessible documents, and how to effectively provide supports to persons with disabilities. The Town recognizes that this is an area which could require training for staff and incorporating certain accessibility features within standard Town print and electronic materials.

## **Emergency Procedures Plans, or Public Safety Information**

Emergency plans are established for all Town facilities. Individual plans may be developed or incorporated within existing plans as required for the individual needs of staff with disabilities. Emergency procedures are shared and will be made available in alternative formats as required and upon request.

Emergency evacuations are practiced in the form of Fire Drills, often with various members of the public present within Town facilities. The Town will continue to monitor effectiveness of emergency evacuation plans throughout 2019 to 2021 and address any barriers as may present themselves.

The Hanover Fire Department provides exemplary rescue efforts to all within their service area. Fire Department staff are thoroughly trained and make rescue of all persons a top priority in emergency situations. The Fire Department provides continuous education to the public to prevent and address fires and emergency situations.

## **Accessible Websites and Web Content**

Improvements for ease of access and availability of information on the Town's website has been occurring in 2019 and will continue to occur as required. Accessibility and Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 Level AA requirements will be considered within updates to the website and content as required and in accordance with implementation deadlines under the Standard.

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## **Public Library**

In accordance with the requirements of the Accessibility of Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, and Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation, the Hanover Public Library will consider accessibility criteria and features when procuring goods, services or facilities for the Hanover Public Library, except where it is not practicable to do so.

The library will review and prioritize items on an ongoing basis, taking into consideration urgency of barriers, time constraints and available funds. In cases where it is determined that accessibility criteria and features are not practicable or available, the Hanover Public Library will provide an explanation upon request.

The Hanover Public Library recognizes the need for accessible formats and content within the library. The library maintains a supply of audio books, large print materials, low vocabulary adult interest books, Daisy audiobooks from the Canadian National Institute of the Blind (CNIB) as well as a Daisy Reader available for borrowing. The library houses a few braille items, a magnifying reader, hand-held magnifiers, and a public computer with a large print, high-contrast keyboard and easily found accessibility functions. In addition to this, the library will provide accessible formats upon request, where reasonable.

The Hanover Public Library will continue to supply accessible formats and content where available and will consider accessibility within library initiatives.

## **Part III – Employment**

### **Recruitment, Assessment, and Selection Processes**

In 2019, the Town hired a Human Resources Coordinator who, among other things, is responsible for overseeing recruitment and selection for the Town. The Human Resources function supports an inclusive environment and ensures the Town maintains its status as an inclusive employer.

Persons with disabilities are encouraged to apply to positions which interest them, and are asked to notify the Town when accommodations are required so appropriate and timely action may be taken.

Recruitment guidelines, related policies and forms have been revised throughout the latter part of 2019. Supports have been developed to provide hiring managers or supervisors with the information and tools they will require to ensure accessibility is considered throughout their hiring, assessing, and selecting process.

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## **Informing Employees of Supports**

The Human Resources Coordinator ensures that all employees are informed upon hire that policies are in place for the provision of supports and accommodations related to disability.

In 2019, the Town began taking a proactive approach to the onboarding process to learn whether any new hire required accommodations prior to the start of employment. The Town wishes to ensure that appropriate accommodations, where possible, are in place prior to a new employee beginning their role.

## **Accessible Formats and Communication Supports for Employees**

Employees are welcome to request information pertaining to their work or that is generally available to staff in, an accessible or alternative format.

The Town will make continuous efforts throughout the duration of this plan to consult with those who require supports and/or alternative formats to ensure they are provided with a reasonable format that is suitable for their needs.

## **Workplace Emergency Response Information**

The health and safety of all employees is of the utmost importance to the Town. The Town recognizes that existing Emergency Response Plans may not be suitable for all persons; and where that situation arises, individual emergency plans will be developed and documented in consultation with the employee, Health & Safety Coordinator, and Human Resources Coordinator.

## **Documented Individual Accommodation Plans**

Where an employee identifies as having a disability, the Human Resources Coordinator will work with the employee and their supervisor to determine and implement appropriate and reasonable accommodations and supports. It is understood that not all floor areas or facilities can be made practicably accessible.

The Town will be reviewing and updating its guideline related to Individual Accommodation plans, and incorporating updates into related policies and procedures as required.

## **Return to Work Process**

The Town is committed to supporting employees in their return to work through the provision of effective accommodations. The Town will be reviewing and updating its guideline related to the Return to Work Process in 2020.

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## **Performance Management and Career Development and Advancement**

Performance reviews are conducted on a regular schedule, usually annually or after the completion of any probationary reviews. Individual Accommodations Plans will be considered as part of this review process to ensure appropriate supports are in place to foster the success of the employee in their role.

All Town employees are encouraged to set goals related to career development and advancement. Accessibility needs will be considered within annual performance reviews and development plans on an ongoing basis.

## **Part IV – Transportation**

The Town does not presently provide Town-owned transportation services; however, the Town is still committed to accessibility of transportation services within the municipality and will:

- Consult with the Municipal Accessibilities Act, the public and persons with disabilities in development of accessible design criteria in the construction, renovation, or replacement of bus stops/shelters, including steps to meet the goal of accessible stops/shelters;
- Consult with persons with disabilities and the public to determine the proportion of accessible taxis required in the community, including steps to meet the need;
- Ensure taxicabs do not charge higher or additional fees to persons with disabilities;
- Ensure taxicabs do not charge a fee for storage of assistive devices; and
- Ensure taxicabs have appropriate information displayed on the rear bumper and available in an accessible format to passengers.

## **Part IV.1 – Design of Public Spaces**

### **Recreation Trails and Beach Access Routes**

Where recreational trails owned and maintained by the Town are constructed or redeveloped, consultation will take place regarding the slope of the trail, need for and placement of ramps, rest areas or other amenities. Consultation will take place through discussions at public meetings held by the County of Grey Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee.

Consideration will be given to all technical requirements as indicated within Regulation 80.9 under the IASR for town-owned recreation trails which are redeveloped or constructed. Bridge two and bridge four along the Town Recreation Trail are currently railway bridges which will be replaced in 2020 with a different method which is accessible for pedestrians and small motor vehicles. Additional recreation trail projects that may begin in 2020 and 2021 include a trail to be constructed by Cedar East and Bren Lea Estates as part of their subdivision agreements.



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In 2019 efforts have included developing and implementing a process to formally document consultation initiatives related to recreation trail projects.

The Town does not have beach access routes at this time.

## **Outdoor Public Eating Areas**

Outdoor public eating areas which are constructed or redeveloped and are owned and maintained by the Town will comply with Regulations 80.16 and 80.17 under the IASR. A minimum of twenty percent (20%) of seating will be accessible to those using mobility aids by providing a firm, steady path of clearance leading to the seating and around the seating area.

The Parks, Recreation and Culture Advisory Committee (PRC Advisory Committee) has been visiting various Town parks in 2019, including existing outdoor public eating areas to review any improvements to be made. This review process is expected to continue into 2020. Any outdoor eating areas which will be redeveloped or constructed as a part of this review process, or other process, will be done so in accordance with IASR requirements.

## **Outdoor Play Spaces**

The Town of Hanover owns and maintains a number of outdoor play spaces. There are currently two swings in the Hanover Town Park on 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue which provide swing opportunities for those who require additional body support.

Members of the PRC Advisory Committee have been visiting various Town parks in 2019 to review any improvements to be made. This review process is expected to continue into 2020. Should recommendation be made to construct a new play space or redevelop an existing play space, public consultation will take place as well as review of plans by the Grey County Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee. The Town will consider all feedback and incorporate accessibility features and elements within play spaces to support enjoyment of the space by persons of various abilities.

## **Exterior Paths of Travel and Parking**

The Director of Development/Chief Building Officer and Director of Public Works maintain up-to-date knowledge on requirements related to the design and construction or redevelopment of exterior paths of travel and parking spaces.

In 2019, a number of projects took place which impacted exterior paths of travel, and projects are anticipated for 2020 which may impact parking areas.

All building and redevelopment projects from 2019 and those which will occur in 2020 and 2021 will maintain compliance with IASR regulations and other related legislation. Site plans for

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developments, including exterior paths of travel and parking areas, will be reviewed by the Grey County Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee, where possible.

## **Service Counters and Waiting Areas**

Patrons and members of the public visit Town facilities which make use of service counters and waiting areas.

Currently, there are no plans to install new service counters or waiting areas. The service counter in the Civic Centre will be relocated to an area that is more accessible to the public in 2020. The counter currently includes an area for service at standing height, and also at sitting height to accommodate those who require the use of mobility aids.

Projects which arise throughout 2019, 2020 or 2021 will include consideration of IASR requirements.

## **Maintenance**

The Town employs a number of qualified individuals who are responsible for the preventative maintenance of buildings and features, including accessibility features. Where a disruption of service occurs due to an issue related to an accessibility feature, the Town will implement its Temporary Service Disruption protocol as included in ADM-001 Accessible Customer Service Policy.

Information pertaining to service disruptions will be posted in visible locations within the physical facility experiencing the issue, as well as posted on the Town website on an ongoing and as-needed basis.

## **Projects**

Building projects and developments will be completed in accordance with the Ontario Building Code, which includes accessibility provisions.

At this time there are no plans to extensively renovate or build any Town buildings. However, smaller changes take place on an ongoing basis to increase the accessibility of Town facilities where possible.

In 2019 an accessible automatic door was installed leading from the family change room at the P&H Centre out to the pool area. Those using mobile aids are now able to fully access the pool area. By the end of 2019 another accessible automatic door will be installed in the P&H Centre on the second level leading from the corridor to the concourse to access arena seating.

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## **Part IV.2 – Customer Service**

### **Establishment of Policies**

The Town has created, implemented, and maintained policies regarding the provision of goods, services, and facilities to persons with disabilities in the form of ADM-001 Accessible Customer Service Policy and ADM-002 Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation Policy. ADM-001 Accessible Customer Service details the use of support persons and service animals, temporary service disruptions, training, feedback processes, and accessible formats.

ADM-001 and ADM-002 will be reviewed and updated as required in 2020. In 2019, processes for addressing temporary service disruptions and related requirements were reinforced with senior managers, who are responsible for ensuring requirements are carried out within their departments.

### **Additional Initiatives**

In 2019, the Town hired a Human Resources Coordinator who has assumed responsibility for accessibility for the Town. This has created an amplified focus on accessibility throughout the organization.

The Town actively participates in Grey County Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee (GCJAAC) meetings and wishes to provide support to businesses within the community related to accessibility. Throughout 2020 and 2021, the Town will work to provide supports to local business owners either through development of supports through the GCJAAC or through individual Town initiatives. Current ideas to support and promote accessibility include presentations at Chamber of Commerce meetings, resource materials included in a business owner handbook in collaboration with Economic Development, and awards for recognition of accessibility efforts.