



## **Township of Wollaston 2021- 2026 Commitments**

The Township of Wollaston's Multi-Year Accessibility Plan includes both new and continuing priorities and commitments that will help achieve its goal of being an inclusive multi-generational community by identifying, removing, and preventing barriers to accessibility.

The two (2) primary goals of the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan are as follows:

1. Increase the visibility of accessibility and help integrate accessibility into the full range of Township initiatives and services.
2. Emphasize the importance of universal access for all people throughout the community (through Advocacy and Awareness).

These two goals deal with the development of seven (7) key priorities/commitments for 2021-2026, listed below:

- Commitment 1: Accessible Customer Service
- Commitment 2: Clear and Accessible Communications
- Commitment 3: Accessible Employment & Workplaces
- Commitment 4: Accessible Transportation Services
- Commitment 5: Enhancing Accessible Public Spaces
- Commitment 6: Accessible Procurement
- Commitment 7: Governance & Policies

## **Commitment 1 – Accessible Customer Service and Programming**

The Accessible Customer Service Standard under the Integrated Accessibility Standard Regulation requires the municipality to provide accessible public services for people with disabilities and to ensure that policies and procedures are in place to support this requirement.

### **Proposed Action(s):**

- Work with the corporate customer service leadership to foster excellence in accessible customer service delivery. Share best practices in different service delivery channels and collaboratively develop strategies for continuous improvement in accessible service delivery.
- Review the customer service policy and common service standards to identify opportunities to reinforce and promote requirements that enhance accessible customer service.
- Ensure that in the case of planned or unplanned service disruptions, notice is provided explaining the reason for the disruption, estimated duration, and any alternative facilities or services available.
- Encourage more digital online services that are easily accessible and result in an improved customer experience.
- Ensure that all employees continue to complete mandatory training to support excellence in accessible customer service.
- Work with various departments that provide programs to explore and identify more inclusive and diversified programming opportunities.

### **Expected Outcome(s):**

- An accessible Township that includes ensuring people with disabilities receive quality goods and services in a timely manner, supported by effective policies, procedures, tools and resources that promote accessibility in customer service.

## **Commitment 2 – Clear and Accessible Communications**

The Information and Communications Standard under the Integrated Accessibility Standard Regulation requires the municipality to communicate and provide information in ways that are accessible to people with disabilities.

### **Proposed Action(s):**

- Promote the Accessibility Plan through the Township’s website and relevant accessibility materials in easily accessible formats.
- Continue to monitor and train staff on accessible communication content and design.
- Ensure that digital services are designed with accessibility at its core, striving for all users to have equal access to information and functionality.
- Ensure all forms are accessible by 2022 that meet the highest standards of quality, usability and accessibility.
- Provide consistent notices in public spaces and online notifications to the public regarding accessible formats and communications support, upon request.

### **Outcome(s):**

- Enhanced accessibility as it relates to communication supports, formats, website(s) and web content.
- Ensure staff have the tools and resources to effectively develop information and documents in accessible formats.

## **Commitment 3 – Accessible Employment & Workplaces**

The Employment Standard under the Integrated Accessibility Standard Regulation sets out accessibility requirements that the municipality must

follow to support the recruitment and accommodation of employees. This includes preparing individualized emergency response information for persons with disabilities and making employment practices and workplaces more accessible for new and existing Township of Wollaston employees with disabilities.

### **Proposed Action(s):**

- Review our human resources policies in consultation with other Staff to prevent or remove systemic employment barriers, ensure they are compliant with legislation and reflect best practices.
- Continuing to attract diverse talent by applying all recruitment processes to identify, mitigate, and eliminate potential biases and barriers and be more inclusive in all aspects of the recruitment process.
- Continue to build accessibility awareness through resources for staff and how to respond to the needs of employees with an illness, injury, and/or disability through a Duty to Accommodate.
- Promote principles and practices of respectful workplaces through resources that help address employee responsibilities for contributing to respect in the workplace by eliminating low intensity rude or disrespectful behaviours that erode productivity, engagement, teamwork, diversity and service.
- Promote the Employee Assistance Program to support employees in the areas of mental health and wellness through a wide range of supports and resources.

### **Expected Outcome(s):**

- Ensure that qualified people with disabilities are provided equal opportunity for employment, engagement, and advancement within the Township.

- Accommodation practices will be reviewed to ensure people with disabilities are able to participate fully and meaningfully as Township employees.

#### **Commitment 4 – Accessible Transportation Services & Systems**

The Transportation Standard under the Integrated Accessibility Standard Regulation sets out the requirements to prevent and remove barriers to public transportation, sidewalks and trails so that everyone can easily travel in Wollaston Township. Although the Township does not have public transportation, it does have some sidewalks and trails.

#### **Proposed Action(s):**

- Review opportunities and challenges and provide input and guidance with an accessibility view.
- Provide input and support staff in acquisitions for services.
- Work with the Public Works Department to understand opportunities and challenges with respect to winter and regular maintenance to determine how best to create a safe and accessible environment for all individuals including those with mobility challenges.

#### **Expected Outcome(s):**

- Wollaston Township continues to support and promote transportation services for the people that are barrier-free.

#### **Commitment 5 – Enhancing Accessibility of Public Spaces**

The Design of Public Spaces Standard under the Integrated Accessibility Standard Regulation requires the municipality to ensure that newly constructed, or significantly renovated public spaces (e.g., parks, accessible parking) are accessible. The municipality also complies with the

Ontario Building Code's requirements for accessibility in the built environment.

**Proposed Action(s):**

- Provide guidance to Council and Staff to improve accessibility design requirements with the goal to move to universal design principles that comply with the Ontario Human Rights Code, Ontario Building Code and Design of Public Spaces standard.
- When constructing or renovating municipal facilities including parks and playgrounds, ensure all features, such as doors, washrooms, parking, and furnishings, will be fully accessible or appropriate accommodations available that preserves individual's dignity and independence.
- Continuously improve the physical accessibility of our service areas removing barriers and providing accessible alternatives, so that all customers may be served in a manner that respects their dignity and independence.

**Expected Outcome(s):**

- Greater accessibility into, out of and around municipal facilities and public spaces. This includes incorporating accessibility retrofits where possible during renovations.

**Commitment 6 – Accessible Procurement**

Under the Integrated Accessibility Standard Regulation, the municipality is required to incorporate accessibility design, criteria and features when procuring or acquiring goods, services, or facilities, except where it is not practicable to do so.

### **Proposed Action(s):**

- Continue to communicate and define to vendors their obligations to meet accessibility requirements, including repercussions of non-compliance.
- Support and promote accessible and electronic bidding processes.
- Promote ongoing mandatory procurement training that includes accessibility requirements. Training will be provided for new and existing employees, as appropriate to their job duties, to educate them on common understanding of obligations under the AODA.

### **Expected Outcome(s):**

- A procurement program that considers the needs of people with disabilities at all stages of the procurement process to help ensure that goods and services at government facilities are accessible.
- Becoming barrier-free will also improve the opportunity of doing business with the municipality for all suppliers, including those with disabilities.

### **Commitment 7 – Governance and Policies**

In addition to the Standards under the Integrated Accessibility Standard Regulation, the municipality is committed to going beyond to ensure that barriers to accessibility are identified and addressed across the organization.

### **Proposed Action(s):**

- Invite Council and Staff to promote accessibility policies both internally and externally and to identify and eliminate accessibility barriers.
- Determine the best solution regarding accessibility advice and guidance in the site development process including opportunities to encourage accessible affordable residential design.

- Annually review capital projects, programs & services.

**Expected Outcomes:**

- Clear roles and accountability at all levels of the organization.
- Employees are supported to identify barriers to accessibility and actively seek solutions to prevent and remove them.
- Accessibility incorporated into the site development process.