



TOWNSHIP OF WILMOT

MULTI-YEAR MUNICIPAL ACCESSIBILITY PLAN 2016-2020

Accessible formats and communication supports are available, upon request.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Township of Wilmot would like to thank the Grand River Accessibility Advisory Committee for its guidance and advice in the development of the Township's 2016-2020 Municipal Accessibility Plan.

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BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

The Township of Wilmot is pleased to present its multi-year municipal accessibility plan (2016-2020) in accordance with the requirements of the Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001 (ODA, 2001) and the Integrated Standards. The purpose of the Plan is to identify, remove and prevent barriers to people with disabilities, to make the public aware of the Township's ongoing initiatives regarding accessibility matters, to establish goals and objectives, and to comply with provincial accessibility legislation.

The Township of Wilmot is dedicated to promoting a barrier-free Township for employees, citizens and all who live, work, visit and invest in Wilmot.

PROVINCIAL LEGISLATION

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) was passed in 2005. Its goal is to make Ontario accessible for people with disabilities by 2025. The Act applies to private and public sector organizations across Ontario. The purpose of the ODA and the Integrated Standards: (Information and Communication Standard, Customer Service Standard, Built Environment Standard, Transportation Standard, Employment Standard) is to create a province where everyone who lives or visits can participate fully. Under the Act, all municipalities are required to prepare accessibility plans for the public. The Township of Wilmot's Plan may be found on our website: www.wilmot.ca. The purpose of this plan is to make the public aware of The Township of Wilmot's initiatives in regard to accessibility and improving opportunities for persons with disabilities. The plan establishes goals and objectives for the next five (5) years.

POPULATION AND OVERVIEW OF THE TOWNSHIP OF WILMOT

Formed in 1850, The Township of Wilmot is located in the Region of Waterloo and is a lower tier rural/urban mix municipality with a history deeply rooted in its rural past. It includes the Settlement Areas of New Hamburg, Baden, New Dundee, St. Agatha, Mannheim, Lisbon, Petersburg, Foxboro Green, Morningside, Philipsburg, Haysville, Wilmot Centre, Shingletown, Sunfish Lake and Luxemburg. Wilmot has grown to a population of approximately 21,000 residents while retaining its strong sense of community.

GRAND RIVER ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Grand River Accessibility Advisory Committee (GRAAC) was created following the ODA, 2001 and is a committee that provides advice to local municipal councils about the identification, prevention and removal of municipal barriers to full citizenship for persons with disabilities. GRAAC advises the Council of the Region of Waterloo, the City of Kitchener, the City of Waterloo, the Township of North Dumfries, the Townships of Wellesley, Wilmot and Woolwich. The Township of Wilmot formally joined GRAAC in 2015. The Committee currently consists of 15 voting members.

The Committee has reviewed the multi-year Wilmot Accessibility Plan and provided their input into its development prior to the presentation to Council for final adoption.

COMPLIANCE WITH AODA: CUSTOMER SERVICE STANDARD

The Township of Wilmot Customer Service Policy has been practiced since 2010. The Township:

- Established policies, practices and procedures on how the Township provides goods and services to people with disabilities;
- Set a policy on allowing people to use their own personal assistive devices to access the Township's goods and services and about any other measures the organization offers to enable access to goods and services;

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- Used reasonable efforts to ensure that the policies, practices and procedures are consistent with the core principles of independence, dignity, integration and equality of opportunity;
- Established a process for people to provide feedback on how the Township provides goods or services to people with disabilities and how the Township will respond to any feedback and take action on any complaints. The information about the feedback process is made readily available to the public;
- Communicates with persons with disabilities in a manner that takes into account their disability;
- Trains staff, volunteers, and informs any other people who interact with the public or other third parties on our behalf on a number of topics as outlined in the customer service standard,
- Trains staff, volunteers, and informs any other people who are involved in developing our policies, practices and procedures on the provision of goods or services on a number of topics as outlined in the customer service standard;
- Allows people with disabilities to be accompanied by their guide dog or service animal in those areas of the premises the Township owns or operates that are open to the public, unless the animal is excluded by another law. If a service animal is excluded by law, other measures are used to provide services to the person with a disability;
- Permits people with disabilities who use a support person to bring that person with them while accessing goods or services in premises open to the public or third parties;
- Where admission fees are charged, provides notice ahead of time on what admission, if any, would be charged for a support person of a person with a disability; and
- Provides notice when facilities or services that people with disabilities rely on to access or use the Township's good or services are temporarily disrupted.

COMMUNICATION OF THE WILMOT PLAN

Once the Accessibility Plan is approved by Wilmot Township Council, it will be made available on the Township's website. www.wilmot.ca Copies of the Plan will be printed by Clerk's Services and alternative formats provided upon request. As policies, procedures and technical guidelines develop, they too will be placed on the website.

MAIN CONTACTS

The main contact for inquiries regarding the municipality's accessibility plan, or issues related to access for persons with disabilities is:

Barbara McLeod, Director of Clerk's Services
60 Snyder's Rd. W. Baden, ON, N3A 1A1
519-634-8444 Ext 228
519-634-5037 - TTY

Carrie Spears and Sharon Giles Co-Chairs,
Grand River Accessibility Advisory Committee

CONCLUSION

Accessibility legislation has municipalities across the province working to improve access for persons with disabilities. In compliance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act and its impact on municipalities, the Township of Wilmot is committed to identifying, addressing and removing barriers, ensuring full access to our community. Wilmot Township will continue to develop plans and support initiatives, taking a leadership role in achieving and setting an example for the private sector in terms of access and integration, in accordance with provincial legislation.

REVIEW OF 2011-2015 GOALS AND ACTIONS

1. INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION BARRIERS

a) ACCOMODATIONS FOR PERSONS WHO ARE DEAF, DEAFENED OR HARD OF HEARING IN MUNICIPAL SERVICES

Goals:

- to proactively investigate and establish formal practices to accommodate persons who are deaf, deafened or hard of hearing in municipal services

Actions:

- Clerk's office will engage ASL interpreters through the Waterloo Branch of the Canadian Hearing Society on an as needed basis for public meetings of Township-wide interest. (No requests have been made to-date for this service.)
- Assisted Hearing Devices have been included with the Council Chambers sound system purchase and are available on demand for meetings in the Council Chambers.
- TTY: The TTY component of the new telephone system with computer-based technology was installed in June of 2014. The TTY number is 519-634-5037

b) CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS – ALTERNATE FORMATS

Goals:

- To provide municipal information in 'alternate formats' to residents with disabilities.

Actions:

- The Township developed a policy in 2010 for responding to requests for information in alternate formats. The policy is attached as Schedule "A". Upon request, information in alternative formats will be provided as per the Township policy.

2. TECHNOLOGICAL BARRIERS

Goals:

- To improve the Township's website accessibility.

Actions:

- A Website Steering Committee was established to work in conjunction with eSolutions to design a new website for the Township that meets accessibility standards to 2021. The new website was live as of December 7, 2015. It includes a 'Feedback' button for comments about the website and Accessibility Feedback relative to the website, municipal facilities, municipal services and by-law enforcement that impedes mobility.

3. POLICY/PRACTICE BARRIERS

Services:

Recreation Initiatives:

Wilmot Township offers a Personal Attendant for Leisure (PAL) Card program. The program is offered at Wilmot Aquatic Centre and is administered by aquatics staff. The program allows free admission to PAL card holders when accompanying a person in need of assistance. In 2012, the program was expanded to include public skating at the new recreation complex as well. The availability of a PAL Card is on the municipal website, and will be advertised in the municipal information pages of the Wilmot Recreation Guide in 2016.

Facility Design The Township of Wilmot provides accessible facilities for all residents to enjoy. The Grand River Accessibility Advisory Committee will be consulted on facility design features prior to new construction or renovations to existing facilities as per legislated requirements.

Snow Clearance: Property owners/occupants in Settlement Areas of the Township are required under By-law No. 84-72 to clear the sidewalk that is adjacent to their property of snow and ice.

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Enforcement staff respond to public commentary and complaints as received. Municipally-owned properties are maintained by Township staff.

Accessible Parking: Wilmot Township established By-law No. 2003-56 regarding accessible off street parking. A minimum provincial fine of \$300 has been approved by the Attorney General for any violators found parking, setting or standing in a space marked for disabled parking.

Building Design: Township of Wilmot plans for new municipal buildings or building additions are reviewed by the Grand River Accessibility Advisory Committee as per legislated requirements.

Emergency Evacuation:
The Red Cross audited emergency evacuation centres for accessibility in 2006. The facilities that were audited were: Waterloo Oxford & District Secondary School, St. Agatha Community Centre, New Dundee Public School, New Hamburg Community Centre and Arena. The Wilmot Recreation Complex was also audited recently.

Election Accessibility:

Goals

- Define areas noted during 2014 election where accessibility can be improved throughout entire election process

Actions

- Report No CL 2015-01 outlined areas where accessibility can be improved throughout the election process as follows:

Item #	INITIATIVES	ACTIONS/COMMENTS
A	Ensure all voting locations that are proposed to be used and are municipally- owned - have full accessibility.	Clerk/Deputy Clerk completed inspections of township facilities and received written confirmation that all municipally owned facilities intended to

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	<p>Ensure all voting locations that are proposed to be used and are privately owned - have full accessibility.</p>	<p>be voting locations were deemed accessible. The barriers previously identified at the St. Agatha Community Centre relative to washroom accessibility issues for the 2010 election had been addressed through the construction of accessible washroom facilities. This information was observed and noted by the Wilmot Accessibility Advisory Committee.</p> <p>Clerk/Deputy Clerk completed inspections of privately owned facilities and received written confirmation that all privately owned facilities that were intended to be voting locations were fully accessible.</p>
B	<p>Scheduled two advance voting days to provide opportunities for electors and promoted advance voting.</p>	<p>The two advance voting days provided the opportunity to electors to vote from any ward within the municipality.</p>
C	<p>Provide transit service to polls on advance poll days and election day for electors with disabilities.</p>	<p>Wilmot continued with its initiative from 2010, collaborating with Wellesley and Woolwich in providing Kiwanis Transit service to all eligible riders on advance poll days and election day. A donation was made by all 3 townships to the transit provider. The service was used by electors in all 3 townships.</p>
D	<p>Provide voter-assistance devices for electors who are unable to mark their ballots due to physical impairments and language barriers.</p>	<p>The AutoMark Ballot System was included as part of the tabulator equipment lease and was provided at both Advance Polls. Features included zoom/contrast, keypad marked with Braille, sip and puff interface, audio ballot capabilities. Notice of the AutoMark System was placed in the local papers. For 2018, additional advertising is recommended.</p>
E	<p>Monitor electors' concerns to ensure needs are met, record all accessibility issues/concerns during 2014</p>	<p>Any complaints received during election were addressed immediately where possible. More chairs will be provided in 2018 at busier polls to address long line ups and will also be</p>

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	election for 2018 review.	positioned at revision tables.
F	Provide election staff with training to meet accessible customer service standards.	Election staff were provided with training on how to assist electors with disabilities. Staff were encouraged to approach an elector if it appeared they required assistance.
G	Provide voters with visibility needs with tools to assist in voting.	The magnifying screens used at polling facilities to assist in reading ballots were deemed inadequate, therefore more powerful magnifying glasses will be considered for voting booths in 2018. Where a voter was incapable of using a screen, an election official assisted them with voting, if requested.
I	Ensure parking spaces are available for electors with disabilities	Each facility provided accessible parking spaces, however it was noted that the distance from parking lots to the voting location at some facilities was lengthy and posed difficulties for seniors and those with accessibility issues. For 2018 staff will give due consideration to this concern.

Ensuring that the dignity and independence of electors and candidates with disabilities are met and that all electors with disabilities are able to participate in the election process is essential. Significant improvements were made with respect to an accessible election in Wilmot. The principles, practices and procedures that respect the dignity, independence of electors through the election process were achieved for the 2014 election. The Township of Wilmot and associated staff will be vigilant and continue our efforts to review, address and improve the process for the 2018 municipal election.

- The report was approved by Council January 12, 2015.
- Policies relevant to access were included as part of orientation training for election staff.

4. PHYSICAL/ARCHITECTURAL BARRIERS

Municipal Facilities:

The former Wilmot Accessibility Advisory Committee worked with Facilities staff to identify any accessibility concerns / physical barriers. Please refer to Facilities Services staff Report No. PRD 2014-02. (attached). A list of facilities and parks owned by the Township of Wilmot is attached as Appendix "B".

In 2007 the Township of Wilmot constructed Phase I of the Wilmot Recreation Complex, a new state of the art multi purpose facility. The facility was constructed with barrier free provisions for accessibility. The facility design includes barrier free entrance with automated sliding doors at the south entrance, elevator access to the upper level, accessibility ramp to the arena seating areas, access to the seating areas by power operated doors, designated areas for those in wheelchairs to view activities on the arena floors. The facility also includes barrier free washroom facilities on the upper and lower levels which include accessible counters and fixtures, and angled/sloped mirrors. Directional signage includes Braille for the visually impaired. Parking for the current facility includes 8 accessible parking spots.

Phase II of the Wilmot Recreation Complex was constructed in 2010/11, has also been designed to be barrier free. Phase II of the Wilmot Recreation Complex exceeds the number of barrier free provisions required by law. Phase II includes an additional/2nd elevator, power operated doors at each of the access points to Phase I of the facility, extra barrier free shower stalls, extra barrier free change stalls, additional barrier free washrooms/change rooms immediately off the pool deck including barrier free counters and fixtures, extra barrier free parking stalls, wider walking lanes on the walking track, handrails on the walking track, extra barrier free seating areas in the pool for both levels, a deeper covered canopy at the North entrance, power operated doors at the additional south entrance and the north entrance of the facility. In the Aquatic Centre both pool tanks are accessible. The competitive pool tank has an access ramp with handrails leading down into the tank. The leisure pool has a beach entry with handrails as well.

Snow Clearance / Grass & Weeds Upkeep Barriers:

Goals:

- Investigate individuals and firms who provide assistance to people with disabilities with respect to snow clearing and grass cutting services.

Actions:

- A reciprocal arrangement with Wilmot's Youth Action Council was investigated in the summer of 2015 wherein students looking to fulfil the school's curriculum requirement relative to community hours, assist those faced with accessibility issues with snow clearing and yard maintenance. The program known as 'Volunity', is an excellent program which is anticipated to meet the needs of the community for those with disabilities. This arrangement will help to ensure that people that need assistance will be able to stay in their homes and thereby enhance the quality of life. Please visit 'Volunity' on the Township's website at www.wilmot.ca.
- The Clerk's Department will provide this information in the Community Newsletter, on the website and on Twitter.

5. ATTITUDINAL BARRIERS

Actions:

- Customer Service Standards:

The first standards under the AODA are the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07. Designated public sector organizations were required to comply with the standard by January 1, 2010. This standard is the law and obligated organizations must comply with the standards and report on compliance by a deadline of March 31, 2010.

In 2009, Wilmot Township established its Customer Service Standards Policy which was adopted by Council on April 27, 2009. All requirements of the new Customer Service standards have been complied with by the Township and the policy is available on the township's website or upon request by any person.

6. MULTI-YEAR ACTION PLAN 2016-20

PLANNED ACCESSIBILITY ACTION ITEMS	
Regulation	Planned Action Items
General Requirements	<p>Training</p> <p>Train employees, volunteers and all persons who participate in development of policies and all other persons who provide goods, services or facilities on behalf of the Township on Integrated Accessibility Standards, as well as Ontario Human Rights Commission as it relates to people with disabilities.</p>
Information & Communications	<p>Accessible feedback processes</p> <p>Ensure processes for receiving and responding to feedback are accessible to persons with disabilities by providing or arranging for the provision of accessible formats and communication supports upon request (refer to Alternative Format policy)</p> <p>Monitor, evaluate and take action on any customer feedback which may be received on newly launched website (December 2015), or at any municipal facility, through email or telephone.</p> <p>Accessible formats and communication supports</p> <p>Provide or make arrangements for accessible formats and communication supports when a person with a disability requests such;</p> <p>Provide in a timely manner and at no additional cost than the regular price charged to everyone for the same information;</p> <p>Consult with the person making the request in determining the suitability of an accessible format or communication support.</p>

<p>Employment</p>	<p>Recruitment</p> <p>Notify the public and employees about availability of accommodations for job applicants who have disabilities;</p> <p>Inform applicants that accommodations for people with disabilities are available on request for interviews and other selection processes; and</p> <p>When making offers of employment, notify the successful applicant of policies for accommodating employees with disabilities.</p> <p>Employment accommodation</p> <p>Ensure the availability of supports to employees with disabilities;</p> <p>Provide or arrange for the provision of accessible formats and communication supports; and</p> <p>Develop and implement a written process for the development of documented individual accommodation plans for employees with disabilities.</p> <p>Employees returning to work</p> <p>Put process into place for employees returning to work requiring disability-related accommodations.</p> <p>Performance management, career development and redeployment</p> <p>Take into account accessibility needs of employees with disabilities in performance management and career development</p>
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	<p>processes; and</p> <p>Take into account accessibility needs of employees with disabilities, as well as individual accommodation plans, when redeploying employees with disabilities.</p>
<p>Transportation</p>	<p>GRT Transit Trial</p> <p>Wilmot does not directly provide transportation service, however the Region is providing transit service on a trial basis in 2016 to estimate demand. Township staff will be certain to communicate any feedback of this service, including any accessibility concerns, to the Region.</p>
<p>Built Environment</p>	<p>Trails Master Plan</p> <p>AODA criteria to be considered include: operational experience, width, longitudinal/running slope, cross slope, total slope surface, changes in level and signage. Guidelines and technical requirements in the Built Environment Standards will be referred to during trail design and construction.</p>

APPENDIX “A”

ALTERNATE FORMATS POLICY

The Township of Wilmot will respond to requests for documents in alternate format on a case-by-case basis.

The fee to obtain a document in alternate format shall be the same as the fee the resident would pay for the unaltered document.

The Township will use a cost effective approach in the generation of documents in alternate format. The Township will produce information in Braille through an external organization; on computer diskette and in large print.

All requests for information in alternate formats or plain text received by the Township shall be treated in a confidential manner.

APPENDIX “B”

MUNICIPAL ADDRESSES

P A R K S

Baden ≈

**Sir Adam Beck Park
215 Snyder’s Road East
Baden**

**Livingston Square
Administrative Complex
60 Snyder’s Road West
Baden**

**Linear Park
Schneller Drive
Located on Schneller Drive
Baden**

**Shantz & Livingston Blvd.
Corner of Shantz Drive and Livingston Blvd.
Baden**

**Baden Parkette
On Foundry Street at the Baden Creek
Baden**

Haysville ≈

**Haysville Park
3433 Huron Road
Haysville**

Mannheim ≈

**Anna Tuerr Park
Milne Drive
Mannheim**

**Mannheim Community Park
1476 Mannheim Road
Mannheim**

New Dundee ≈

**New Dundee Community Park
Main & Bridge Streets
New Dundee**

**Doug Fischer Ball Diamond
1028 Queen Street
New Dundee**

**New Dundee Optimist Parkette
Main and Alderside Drive
New Dundee**

New Hamburg ≈

**Wilmot Township Arboretum
Waterloo Street
New Hamburg**

**Constitution Park
Hincks Street
New Hamburg**

**Greenwood Park
Greenwood Drive
New Hamburg**

**Heritage Park
75 Hunter Street
New Hamburg**

**Kirkpatrick Park
Wilmot Street
New Hamburg**

**Norm S. Hill Park
251 Jacob Street
New Hamburg**

**Optimist Youth Park
Bier Crescent
New Hamburg**

**William Scott Park
75 Hunter Street
New Hamburg**

**Riverside Park
Riverside Drive
New Hamburg**

Petersburg ≈

**Petersburg Park
1338 Notre Dame Drive
Petersburg**

St. Agatha ≈

**Sararas Park
St. Ann Avenue
St. Agatha**

**St. Agatha Community / Lions Park
1793 Erb's Road
St. Agatha**

Wilmot Centre ≈

**Oasis in the Centre
Bleams Road and
Wilmot Centre Road**

FACILITIES

Baden ≈

**Township Of Wilmot Administration Complex
60 Snyder's Road West
Baden**

**Wilmot Recreation Complex,
1291 Nafziger Road
Baden**

**Wilmot Seniors Woodworking & Craft Shop
35 Beck Street
Baden**

**Waterloo Regional Public Library
Baden Branch
115 Snyder's Rd. East
Baden**

**Baden Fire Hall
99 Foundry St
Baden ON N3A 2P9**

**Township of Wilmot Public Works Operations – Service Centre
2719 Sandhills Road
Baden**

Haysville ≈

**Haysville Community Centre
3433 Huron Road
Haysville**

Mannheim ≈

**Mannheim Community Centre
1476 Mannheim Road
Mannheim**

New Dundee ≈

**New Dundee Community Centre
1028 Queen Street
New Dundee**

**New Dundee Fire Hall
55 Front St
New Dundee ON N0B 2E0**

New Hamburg ≈

**New Hamburg Municipal Building
121 Huron Street
New Hamburg, Ontario**

New Hamburg Memorial Complex

251 Jacob Street

New Hamburg

Wilmot Community Pool

439 Waterloo Street

New Hamburg

Waterloo Regional Public Library

New Hamburg Branch

145 Huron Street,

New Hamburg

New Hamburg Fire Hall

121 Huron St

New Hamburg ON N3A 1K1

St. Agatha ≈

St. Agatha Community Centre,

1793 Erb's Road

St. Agatha

Policy Number: CA - 58
Policy Name: **Accessibility Standards for
Customer Service Policy**
Date Adopted by Council: April 27/09
Resolution No: 2009-82

APPENDIX "C"



TOWNSHIP OF WILMOT

ACCESSIBILITY STANDARDS FOR CUSTOMER SERVICE POLICY

1. BACKGROUND

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act 2005 (AODA) was passed by the Ontario legislature with the goal of creating standards to improve accessibility across the province.

The AODA allows the government to develop specific standards of accessibility that are designed to help make Ontario more accessible.

One of the specific standards that has been developed, and made law, is the Accessible Customer Service Standard. This standard details specific requirements for all service providers.

In general, providers must deliver service in a way that preserves the dignity and independence of people with disabilities. Providers must also integrate services and equal opportunity.

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this Customer Service Standards Policy is to fulfill the requirements set out in regulation 429/07 to establish a policy for the Township of Wilmot for governing the provision of its goods or services to persons with disabilities.

3. STATEMENT

The Township of Wilmot provides goods, and services to all residents, including those with disabilities. Every effort will be made to ensure the following:

- The goods or services will be provided in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities.
- The provision of goods or services to persons with disabilities, and others, will be integrated unless an alternate measure is necessary, whether temporarily or on a permanent basis, to enable a person with a disability to obtain, use or benefit from the goods or services.
- Persons with disabilities may use assistive devices and/or support persons in the access of goods and services.
- That the Township of Wilmot employees when communicating with a person with a disability shall do so in a manner that takes into account the person's disability.

4. APPLICATION

This policy shall apply to every person who deals with members of the public or other third parties on behalf of the Township of Wilmot, whether the person does so as an employee, agent, volunteer or otherwise.

5. DEFINITIONS

"Accessibility Coordinator" shall mean the person appointed by Council as Accessibility Coordinator for the Township of Wilmot.

"Assistive devices" shall mean an auxiliary aid such as communication aids, cognition aids, personal mobility aids and medical aids (i.e. canes, crutches, wheelchairs, or hearing aids).

"Disabilities" shall mean the same as definition of disability found in the Ontario Human Rights Code.

"Employees" shall mean every person who deals with members of the public or other third parties on behalf of the Township of Wilmot.

"Persons with Disabilities" shall mean those individuals that are afflicted with a disability as defined under the Ontario Human Rights Code.

"Service Animals" shall mean any animal individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of a person with a disability.

"Support persons" shall mean any person whether a paid professional, volunteer, family member, friend to who accompanies a person with a disability in order to help with communications, personal care or medical needs or with access to goods or services.

6. EXCLUSIONS

This Accessibility Customer Service Standards Policy shall not apply during any period where Council has declared a "State of Emergency" as defined under the **Emergency Management Act**.

7. DOCUMENTATION

The Township of Wilmot shall upon request, give a copy of the policies, practices and procedures required under the Ontario Regulation 429/07 – Accessibility Standards for Customer Service to any person.

8. PRACTICES AND PROCEDURES

To implement this policy, Senior Management shall:

- establish practices and procedures;
- evaluate practices and procedures,
- revise practices and procedures as required.

9. REVIEW AND AMENDMENTS

The Accessibility Coordinator shall be responsible for the review process and any subsequent amendments to this policy document. .

10.0 ADOPTION

Adopted by Council this 27th day of April, 2009 by Resolution No. 2009-

Mayor

Clerk

BEST PRACTICES AND PROCEDURES

Accessible Customer Service follows four basic principles:

- Dignity
- Independence
- Integration
- Equal Opportunity

What can I do to help people with disabilities access our services?

- Ask how you can help
- Offer a variety of methods of communication
- Understand the nature and scope of the service you offer

FEEDBACK

Feedback from our customers gives the Township of Wilmot opportunities to learn and improve. The Township recognizes the right of our customers to make a complaint, compliment or make suggestions on ways to improve our services.

To assist the Township of Wilmot in ensuring that the delivery of goods and service to those with disabilities is provided in an effective and timely manner, the customer is invited to provide their feedback as follows:

In writing, in person, e-mail, or telephone, addressed to:

Accessibility Coordinator
Township of Wilmot
60 Snyder's Rd W
Baden ON N3A 1A1
Phone: 519-634-8444 ext 228
TTY: 519-634-5037
Fax: 519-634-5522
E-mail: barb.mcleod@wilmot.ca

The Accessibility Coordinator will respond either in writing, in person, e-mail or telephone acknowledging receipt of feedback. The Co-ordinator will forward any complaints to the relevant department to respond.

SERVICE ANIMALS, SUPPORT PERSON(S)

What about service animals and support persons accompanying a person with a disability?

Service animals, such as guide dogs, offer independence and security to many people with various disabilities. Some laws generally prohibit animals in certain areas, such as food preparation areas; however, service animals are permitted in most public situations.

Support people assist people with disabilities in a variety of ways, by assisting with communication such as an intervener sign language interpreter, or as a Personal Support Worker providing physical assistance. A support person may also be a friend or relative that will assist and support the customer.

- Every employee shall use reasonable efforts to allow persons with disabilities to use their own assistive devices to access goods and/or services.
- Every employee shall allow persons with disabilities to be accompanied by their guide dog or service animal unless the animal is excluded by law. Where an animal is excluded by law from the premises, the reason why the animal is excluded shall be explained to the persons with disabilities. Other reasonable arrangements to provide goods and services shall be explored with the assistance of the person with disability.
- When a service animal is unruly or disruptive (jumping on people, biting, or other harmful behaviour) an employee may ask the person with the disability to remove the animal from the area or refuse access to goods and services. Other reasonable arrangements to provide goods or services shall be explored with the assistance of the person with the disability.
- Persons with disabilities may be accompanied by their support person while accessing goods and/or services.

ADMISSION FEES – ADVANCE NOTICE

In the event that admission fees are charged, advance notice concerning what admission, if any, would be charged to a support person shall be posted in a conspicuous place.

SERVICE DISRUPTION – NOTICE

It is possible that from time to time there will be disruptions in service, such as an entrance way that is under repair, renovations that limit access to an area, or technology that is temporarily unavailable. If a disruptive in service is planned, and expected, it is important to provide reasonable notice.

People with disabilities may often go to a lot of trouble to access services, such as booking transit or arranging a ride. By providing notice, you can save that person an unnecessary trip.

Notice will be provided either on the website, over the phone, in writing and posted in a conspicuous place on site, where appropriate.

UNEXPECTED DISRUPTION IN SERVICE – NOTICE

In the event of an unexpected disruption in service, notice may be provided in a variety of ways and will be done as quickly as possible.

In the event of a service disruption, alternative methods of service may be considered and those impacted by service interruption shall be informed of any alternative methods.

TRAINING

- Every person who participates in developing the policy, practices and procedures under Ontario Regulation 429/07 – Accessibility Standards for Customer Service.
- Every person who deals with the public on behalf of the Township of Wilmot, including 3rd parties i.e. employees, agents, volunteers, management.
- Current employees, agents, volunteers, management, etc. shall receive training by January 1, 2010.
- New employees, agents, volunteers, management, etc. shall receive training as soon as "practicable", after being assigned.
- Ongoing training on changes to policies, procedures, and new equipments shall be provided.

The method and amount of training shall be geared to the trainee's role in terms of accessibility.

TRAINING RECORDS

Training records shall be kept, including the dates when the training is provided, number of individuals to whom the training was provided.

The following is an excerpt from the Ministry of Community and Social Services
 [http://www.mcscs.gov.on.ca/mcscs/english/how/howto_choose.htm]

TERMINOLOGY

Talk about Disabilities – Chose the Right Word

Words can influence and reinforce the public's perception of people with disabilities. They can create either a positive view of people with disabilities or an indifferent, negative depiction.

Here are some general tips that can help make your communication and interactions with or about people with all types of disabilities more successful.

- Use *disability* or *disabled*, not *handicap* or *handicapped*.
- Never use terms such as *retarded*, *dumb*, *psycho*, *moron* or *crippled*. These words are very demeaning and disrespectful to people with disabilities.
- Remember to put people first. It is proper to say *person with a disability*, rather than *disabled person*.
- If you don't know someone or if you are not familiar with the disability, it's better to wait until the individual describes his/her situation to you, rather than to make your own assumptions. Many types of disabilities have similar characteristics and your assumptions may be wrong.

The following preferred words and phrases will help you choose language that is neither demeaning nor hurtful. People with disabilities prefer these terms.

Instead of	Please use
Afflicted by cerebral palsy, multiple sclerosis, arthritis, etc.	Person who has cerebral palsy. Person who has multiple sclerosis. Person who has arthritis, etc. Person with a disability.
Aged (the)	Seniors
Autistic	A person with autism. A person who has autism.
Birth defect, congenital defect, deformity	A person who has a congenital disability. A person with a disability since birth.

Instead of	Please use
Blind (the), visually impaired (the)	<p>A person who is blind.</p> <p>A person with a vision disability.</p> <p>A person with vision loss.</p> <p>A person with a visual impairment.</p> <p>A person with low vision.</p>
Brain damaged	<p>A person with a brain injury.</p> <p>A person with a head injury.</p>
Confined to a wheelchair, wheelchair bound	<p>A person who uses a wheelchair.</p>
Crazy, insane, lunatic, psycho, mental, mental patient, maniac, neurotic, psychotic, unsound mind, schizophrenic	<p>A person with a mental health disability.</p> <p>A person who has depression.</p> <p>A person with schizophrenia.</p>
Cripple, crippled, lame	<p>A person with a disability.</p> <p>A person with a mobility impairment or, more specifically, a person who walks with crutches.</p> <p>A person who uses a walker.</p> <p>A person who uses a mobility aid.</p> <p>A person with arthritis, etc.</p>
Deaf (the), hearing impaired (the)	<p>A person who is deaf (person with profound hearing loss who communicates using sign language).</p> <p>A person who is deafened (deaf later in life).</p> <p>A person who is hard of hearing (person with hearing loss who communicates primarily by speech).</p> <p>A person with a hearing loss.</p> <p>When referring to the deaf community and their culture (whose preferred mode of communication is sign language) it is acceptable to use "the Deaf".</p>
Deaf and dumb, deaf mute	<p>A person who is deaf without speech.</p>
Deaf-Blind (the)	<p>Person who is deaf-blind (person who has any combination of visual and auditory impairments).</p>
Differently Abled	<p>A person with a disability.</p>
Disabled (the)	<p>People with disabilities.</p>

Instead of	Please use
Elderly (the)	Seniors, older adults.
Epileptic	Person who has epilepsy.
Fits, spells, attacks	Seizures.
Handicapped (the)	Person with a disability. The term handicapped may be used when referring to an environmental or attitudinal barrier as in "a person who is handicapped by a set of stairs leading to the entrance".
Hidden disability	Non-visible disability.
Invalid	Person with a disability.
Learning disabled, learning disordered, the dyslexics	A person with a learning disability or people with learning disabilities.
Mentally retarded, idiot, simple, retarded, feeble minded, imbecile	A person with an intellectual disability. A person with a developmental disability.
Midget, Dwarf	A person of short stature. A person who has a form of dwarfism. A little person. A person diagnosed with "Achondroplasia, SED, or what ever their specific diagnosis is", a form of dwarfism.
Mongoloid, Mongolism	Person with Down Syndrome. One can use this terminology only when it is directly relevant. A person with an intellectual or developmental disability.
Normal	Person who is not disabled. Person who is able bodied. Specifically, a person who is sighted, a hearing person, a person who is ambulatory.
Patient	Person with a disability. The word patient may be used when referring to a relationship between the medical professional and a client.
Physically challenged	Person with a physical disability.
Spastic	Person who has muscle spasms.
Stutterer	A person with a speech impairment or impediment.
Victim of/suffers from/stricken with cerebral palsy, multiple sclerosis, arthritis, etc.	Person who has cerebral palsy. Person who multiple sclerosis, etc. Person with a disability.

Instead of	Please use
Visually impaired (the)	A person with a visual impairment. A person with low vision. A person with vision loss. A person with a vision disability.

For additional information visit the Ministry of Community and Social Services website at [<http://www.mcass.gov.on.ca/mcass>]

PHYSICAL disabilities include a range of functional limitations from minor difficulties in moving or coordinating one part of the body, through muscle weakness, tremors, and paralysis. Physical disabilities can be congenital such as Muscular Dystrophy; or acquired, such as tendonitis. A physical disability may affect an individual's ability to:

- Perform manual tasks such as holding a pen, turning a key or grip a door knob
- Move around independently
- Control the speed or coordination of movements
- Reach, pull or manipulate objects
- Have strength or endurance

Best practices and procedures for Customer Service:

There are many types and degrees of physical disabilities, and not all require a wheelchair. It may be difficult to identify a person with a physical disability.

Here are some tips on serving customers who have physical disabilities:

- Speak normally and directly to your customer. Don't speak to someone who is with them
- People with physical disabilities often have their own way of doing things. Ask before you help.
- Wheelchairs and other mobility devices are part of a person's personal space, don't touch, move or lean on them.
- Provide your customer information about accessible features of the immediate environment (automatic doors, accessible washrooms, etc.)
- Keep ramps and corridors free of clutter.
- If a counter is too high or wide, step around it to provide service.
- Provide seating for those that cannot stand in line.
- Be Patient. Customers will identify their needs to you.

HEARING loss can cause problems in distinguishing certain frequencies, sounds or words. A person who is deaf, deafened or hard-of hearing may be unable to:

- Use a public telephone
- Understand speech in noisy environments
- Pronounce words clearly enough to be understood by strangers

Best practices and procedures for Customer Service:

Like other disabilities, hearing loss has a wide variety of degrees. Remember, customers who are deaf or hard of hearing may require assistive devices when communicating.

Here are some tips on service customers who are deaf or hard of hearing:

- Attract the customer's attention before speaking. The best way is a gentle touch on the shoulder or gently waving your hand.
- Always ask how you can help. Don't shout. Speak clearly.
- Be clear and precise when giving directions, and repeat or rephrase if necessary. Make sure you have been understood.
- Face the person and keep your hands and other objects away from your face and mouth.
- Deaf people may use a sign language interpreter to communicate – always direct your attention to the Deaf person – not the interpreter.
- Any personal (e.g. financial) matters should be discussed in a private room to avoid other people overhearing.
- If the person uses a hearing aid, try to speak in an area with few competing sounds.
- If necessary, write notes back and forth to share information.
- Don't touch service animals – they are working and have to pay attention at all times.

DEAF-BLINDNESS is a combination of hearing and vision loss. The result for a person who is deaf-blind is significant difficulty accessing information and performing daily activities. Deaf-blindness interferes with communication, learning, orientation and mobility. People who are deaf-blind communicate using various sign language systems, Braille, telephone devices, communication boards and any combination thereof. Many people who are deaf-blind use the services of an intervener who relay information and facilitate auditory and visual information and act as sighted guides.

Best practices and procedures for Customer Service:

Most people who are deaf-blind will be accompanied by an intervener, a professional who helps with communicating.

Interveners are trained in special sign language that involves touching the hands of the client in a two-hand, manual alphabet or finger spelling, and may guide and interpret for their client.

Here are some tips on serving customers who are deaf-blind:

- Do not assume what a person can or cannot do. Some people who are deaf-blind have some sight or hearing, while others have neither.
- A customer who is deaf-blind is likely to explain to you how to communicate with them or give you an assistance card or a note explaining how to communicate with them.
- Do not touch or address the service animals – they are working and have to pay attention at all times.
- Never touch a person who is deaf-blind suddenly or without permission unless it's an emergency.
- Understand that communication can take some time – be patient.
- Direct your attention to your customer, not the intervener.

VISION disabilities reduce one's ability to see clearly. Very few people are totally blind. Many have limited vision such as tunnel vision, where a person has a loss of peripheral or side vision, or a lack of central vision, which means they cannot see straight ahead. Some can see the outline of objects while others can see the direction of light.

Vision loss can result in:

- Difficulty reading or seeing faces.
- Difficulty maneuvering in unfamiliar places.
- Inability to differentiate colours or distances.
- A narrow field of vision.
- The need for bright light, or contrast.
- Night blindness.

Best practices and procedures for Customer Service:

Vision disabilities can restrict your customer's abilities to read signs, locate landmarks or see hazards. In some cases, it may be difficult to tell if a person has a vision disability. Others may use a guide dog or white cane.

Here are some tips on serving customers who have vision disabilities:

- Verbally identify yourself before making physical contact.
- If the person uses a service animal – do not touch or approach the animal – it is working.
- Verbally describe the setting, form, location as necessary.
- Offer your arm to guide the person. Do not grab or pull.
- Never touch your customer without asking permission, unless it is an emergency.
- Don't leave your customer in the middle of a room. Show them to a chair, or guide them to a comfortable location.
- Don't walk away without saying goodbye.

INTELLECTUAL disabilities affect a person's ability to think and reason. It may be caused by genetic factors such as Down's Syndrome, exposure to environmental toxins, such as Fetal Alcohol Syndrome, brain trauma or psychiatric disorders. A person with an intellectual disorder may have difficulty with:

- Understanding spoken and written information
- Conceptual information
- Perception of sensory information
- Memory

Best practices and procedures for Customer Service:

People with intellectual or developmental disabilities may have difficulty doing many things most of us take for granted. These disabilities can mildly or profoundly limit one's ability to learn. You may not be able to know that someone has this disability unless you are told, or you notice the way people act, ask questions or use body language.

As much as possible, treat your customers with an intellectual or developmental disability like anyone else. They may understand more than you think, and they will appreciate you treating them with respect.

Here are some tips on serving customers who have an intellectual or developmental disability:

- Don't assume what a person can or cannot do.
- Use clear, simple language.
- Be prepared to explain and provide examples regarding information.
- Remember that the person is an adult and unless you are informed otherwise, can make their own decisions.
- Be patient and verify your understanding.
- If you can't understand what is being said, don't pretend. Just ask again.
- Provide one piece of information at a time.
- Speak directly to your customer, not to their companion or attendant.

SPEECH disabilities involve the partial or total loss of the ability to speak. Typical disabilities include problems with:

- Pronunciation
- Pitch and loudness
- Hoarseness or breathiness
- Stuttering or slurring

Best practices and procedures for Customer Service:

Some people have problems communicating. It could be the result of cerebral palsy, hearing loss, or another condition that makes it difficult to pronounce words, causes slurring or stuttering, or not being able to express oneself or understand written or spoken language. Some people who have severe difficulties may use communication boards or other assistive devices.

Here are some tips on serving customers with speech or language impairments:

- If possible communicate in a quiet environment.
- Give the person your full attention. Don't interrupt or finish their sentences.
- Ask them to repeat as necessary, or to write their message.
- If you are able, ask questions that can be answered 'yes' or 'no'.
- Verify your understanding.
- Patience, respect and willingness to find a way to communicate are your best tools.

LEARNING disabilities include a range of disorders that effect verbal and non-verbal information acquisition, retention, understanding and processing. People with a learning disability have average or above average intelligence, but take in and process information and express knowledge in different ways. Learning disabilities can result in:

- Difficulties in reading.
- Problem solving.
- Time management.
- Way finding.
- Processing information.

Best practices and procedures for Customer Service:

- Learning disabilities are generally invisible and ability to function varies greatly – respond to any requests for verbal information, assistance in filling forms and so on with courtesy.
- Allow extra time to complete tasks if necessary.

MENTAL HEALTH disabilities include a range of disorders however there are three main types of mental health disability:

- Anxiety
- Mood
- Behavioral

People with mental health disabilities may seem edgy or irritated; act aggressively; be perceived as pushy or abrupt; be unable to make a decision; start laughing or get angry for no apparent reason.

Best practices and procedures for Customer Service:

- Treat each person as an individual. Ask what would make him/her the most comfortable and respect his/her needs to the maximum extent possible.
- Try to reduce stress and anxiety in situations.
- Stay calm and courteous, even if the customer exhibits unusual behaviour, focus on the service they need and how you can help.

SMELL disabilities can involve the inability to sense smells or a hypersensitivity to odours and smells. A person with a smelling disability may have allergies to certain odours, scents or chemicals or may be unable to identify dangerous gases, smoke, fumes and spoiled food.

TOUCH disabilities can affect a person's ability to sense texture, temperature, vibration or pressure. Touch sensations may be reduced or heightened resulting in a hypersensitivity to touch, temperature, or the opposite, numbness and the inability to feel touch sensations.

TASTE disabilities can limit the experience of the four primary taste sensations; sweet, bitter, salty and sour. A person with a taste disability may be unable to identify spoiled food or noxious substances.

OTHER disabilities result from a range of other conditions, accidents, illnesses and diseases including ALS, asthma, diabetes, cancer, HIV/AIDS, environmental sensitivities, seizure disorders, heart disease, stroke and joint replacement.

Disabilities are not always visible or easy to distinguish.

Sample Forms

1. Notice – Expected service disruption
2. Notice – Unexpected disruption in service
3. Notice – Training Record
4. Pamphlet – Understanding Accessible Customer Service
5. Pamphlet – Accessible Customer Service Policy



TOWNSHIP
OF WILMOT

NOTICE OF

SERVICE DISRUPTION

There will be a scheduled service disruption at the _____. The disruption will be from _____ until _____.

These disruptions include:

- _____ (repairs to doors)
- _____ (repairs to technology)

On behalf of the Township of Wilmot we would like to thank you for your patience in this matter.

Department Contact

519-634-8444

519-634-5037 – TTY



TOWNSHIP OF WILMOT

NOTICE OF

DISRUPTION IN SERVICE

There is currently an unexpected service disruption. The estimated time of the service disruption will be from _____ until _____.

These disruptions include:

- _____ (repairs to doors)
- _____ (repairs to technology)

On behalf of the Township of Wilmot we would like to thank you for your patience in this matter.

Department Contact

519-634-8444

519-634-5037 - TTY

What if a person with a disability has a suggestion or comment on how we deliver services?

We welcome any comments on the provision of goods or services to people with disabilities. Comments can be directed to:

Accessibility Coordinator: Barb McLeod

E-mail: barb.mcleod@wilmot.ca

Telephone: 519-634-8444 Ext 228

TTY: 519-634-5037

In person, or in writing:

The Corporation of the Township of Wilmot

60 Snyder's Rd W

Baden ON N3A 1A1

The comments provided will be reviewed by staff, and where applicable by the **Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC)**. An annual report on the nature and results of the comments and feedback will be made by the **Accessibility Coordinator to the AAC**.

The Corporation of the Township of Wilmot Accessible Customer Service Policy

The Township of Wilmot provides goods or services to all residents, including those with disabilities. Reasonable efforts will be made to ensure the following:

- The goods and services will be provided in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities.
- The provision of goods and services to persons with disabilities, and others, will be integrated unless an alternate measure is necessary, whether temporarily or permanently, to enable a person with a disability to obtain, use or benefit from the goods and services.
- Persons with disabilities will be given an opportunity – equal to that given to others – to obtain, use and benefit from the goods and services.
- Persons with disabilities may use assistive devices and/or support persons in the access of goods and services.

Understanding Accessible Customer Service



The Corporation of the Township of
Wilmot

Background

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) was passed by the Ontario legislature with the goal of creating standards to improve accessibility across the province.

The AODA allows the government to develop specific standards of accessibility that are designed to help make Ontario more accessible.

One of the specific standards that has been developed, and made law, is the Accessible Customer Service Standard. This standard details specific requirements for all service providers.

In general, providers must deliver service in a way that preserves the dignity and independence of people with disabilities. Providers must also integrate services and equal opportunity.

What is Accessible Customer Service?

Accessible customer service can mean many things. Mostly, it is the understanding that each individual may need a slightly different type of accommodation.

For example, a person who is blind may need to have information read aloud to them; an individual with a learning disability may need to have instructions written down; and someone who uses a wheelchair may need help in finding a route they can use.

Accessible customer service is good customer service – courteous, helpful and prompt.

What can I do?

Always start with people first. In language, that means saying "person with a disability", rather than "a disabled person". In any interaction, it means addressing the person's service needs, rather than focusing on the disability.

Take some time to understand what some of the various disabilities involve – but don't jump to conclusions! Each person, and each disability, is different, but it can be helpful to know a little about how to best communicate, interact, and assist people with disabilities.



Most importantly, relax! People with disabilities are generally aware they may need some accommodations and will work with you. Just remember to ask how you can help.

What happens if we can't serve a person with a disability?

It is possible that from time to time there will be disruptions in service, such as an elevator under repair, renovations that limit access to an area, or technology that is temporarily unavailable. If a disruption in service is planned, and expected, it is important to provide reasonable notice.

People with disabilities may often go to a lot of trouble to access services, such as booking transit or arranging a ride. By providing notice, you can save that person an unnecessary trip. Notice can be provided on the website, over the phone, and/or in writing.

In the event of an unexpected disruption in service, provide notice in a variety of ways and as quickly as possible. Consider offering alternative methods of service while informing those that may be impacted personally.

Comments

We welcome comments on the provision of goods or services to people with disabilities.

Comments can be directed to the Accessibility Coordinator by telephone, e-mail, in person or in writing:

E-mail: barb.mcleod@wilmot.ca

Telephone: 519-634-8444

In person, or in writing:

The Township of Wilmot
60 Snyder's Rd W
Baden ON N3A 1A1

Comments provided will be reviewed by staff, and where applicable by the Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC). A timely response will be provided. An annual report on the nature and results of the comments and feedback will be made by the Accessibility Coordinator to the AAC.

If you are a person with a disability, or if you provide support for a person with a disability, please:

- Let us know how we can help. We are open to discussing your ideas on the service options available.
- Help our staff understand your needs.



Accessible Customer Service Policy



The Corporation of the
Township of Wilmot

Background

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) was passed by the Ontario legislature with the goal of creating standards to improve accessibility across the province.

The AODA allows the government to develop specific standards of accessibility that are designed to help make Ontario more accessible.

One of the specific standards that has been developed, and made law, is the Accessible Customer Services Standard. This standard details specific requirements for all service providers.

In general, providers must deliver service in a way that preserves the dignity and independence of people with disabilities.

Accessible Customer Service Policy Statement

The Township of Wilmot provides goods and services to all residents, including those with disabilities. Every effort will be made to ensure the following:

- The goods and services will be provided in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities.
- The provision of goods and services to persons with disabilities, and others, will be integrated unless an alternate measure is necessary, whether temporarily or permanently, to enable a person with a disability to obtain, use or benefit from the goods and services.

- People with disabilities may use assistive devices, guide animals and/or support persons in the access of goods and services.
- Communication with a person with a disability shall be done in a manner that takes into account the person's disability.



Appendix “D” New Township Website

Beginning in 2014, representatives from each Department within the Corporation of the Township of Wilmot set out to create a new municipal website. Although there were many reasons to undertake this project, the driving force was accessibility and AODA compliance.

With the help of eSolutions Group the final product met the requirements for the Integrated Standards for Communications and Technology. Some of the highlights of the website related to accessibility include:

Accessible feedback mechanisms;

Pages dedicated to accessibility, accessibility advisory committee, inclusive and support services, and Accessibility Feedback;

BrowseAloud;

Multiple search methods;

High contrast font colours; and

Adjustable font size.

Prior to the launch of the website, the Grand River Accessibility Advisory Committee were presented the draft site. The feedback received was incorporated into the website and will be considered if other online tools are implemented such as ecommerce functions and Ping Street.

The website is constantly changing and being updated not only for current information but also to ensure we are meeting the needs of the users. The Township welcomes feedback from all members of the community.

