

The Corporation of the
Township of Uxbridge



2024 Accessibility Progress Report



Lions Accessible Playground at Elgin Park

Update to the 2020-2025 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

Submitted to: Mayor and Members of Council
Township of Uxbridge
February 2025

Celebrating Access and Ability in Uxbridge

The Township of Uxbridge is proud to renew its commitment to accessibility in 2024. With the help and guidance of our Accessibility Advisory Committee, local businesses, and our many community stakeholders, the Township of Uxbridge is prioritizing improved accessibility.

In 2024, our organization enhanced communications, undertook process reviews, and expanded our partnership network to further strengthen our commitment to accessibility. It was a collaborative effort that allowed us to:

- Partner with the Abilities Centre to complete the LEAD Program, which involved multiple assessments, action items and accomplished tasks.
- Secure the Inclusive Community Grant for accessibility upgrades to the Arena and Community Centre.
- Complete numerous pathway and trail improvement projects.

It has been incredible to see community spirit in action across the Township this past year. Local businesses and our residents have gone above and beyond to help ensure people of all abilities can participate equally, with dignity and independence in our community.

Let's continue moving forward together, looking at our community with accessibility in mind.



An Update from the Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC)

In 2024, the AAC welcomed one new member, bringing the number of members to nine - a full complement pursuant to the Committee's Terms of Reference. We are privileged to have so many diversely talented and engaged members who are passionate participants in the work the Committee does. Our committee has remained committed to working with the Township to support our legislative roles and responsibilities.

Accessibility Advisory Committee Members

Jodie Winnitoy, Chair
Mackenzie Rints-Sims, Vice-Chair
Jim Closs
Candace Chowen
Charmaine Alfred
Sarah Cummings
Graham Baskin
Judith Hayes
Edith Watters

Some highlights from the Committee's work in 2024 include the following:

- Providing a "Letter of Support" for the Inclusive Community Grant application;
- Nominated long-time AAC member, Maggie McCreath, for an accessibility award;
- Assisted with and advised on LEAD action items;
- Participated in facility audits of Town Hall and the Arena & Community Centre;
- Discussed municipal parking;
- Reviewed preliminary plans for a new Pool and a new Animal Shelter;
- Participated in Tri-AAC meeting with Brock and Scugog AACs;
- Reviewed survey content to assist the Age Friendly Advisory Committee;
- Provided follow-up input on the Lions Playground in Elgin Park;
- Provided insight on site and recreation plans;
- Advised on crosswalks and walkways, including pedestrian timings at Toronto St.;
- Participated in National AccessAbility Week activities and community outreach;
- Reviewed Township signage and draft communications; and
- Recommended a review of the Township's Facility Accessibility Design Standards.

We remain committed to our core responsibility: advocacy, knowledge of accessibility standards and providing education to the municipality and key stakeholders about accessibility, equity, and inclusion from a broad lens.

We look forward to working with the Township on several new initiatives in 2025. While working collaboratively with our municipal council, the AAC will remain proactive, responsive and committed to ensuring a barrier-free Uxbridge.

Regards,
Jodie Winnitoy, Chair

2024 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan Progress Report

The Township of Uxbridge believes in building a community where every person can fully participate.

The Township of Uxbridge 2024 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan Progress Report is our annual update, an opportunity to identify how we continue to improve accessibility in our community by implementing the standards outlined in the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (AODA) and the 2020-2025 Multi Year Accessibility Plan.

To view the Township's 2020-2025 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan and other accessibility standards, please visit uxbridge.ca/en/your-local-government/accessibility.aspx.

In 2024, the Township, with the support of the Accessibility Advisory Committee, upheld its commitments outlined in the 2020-2025 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan and achieved the following:

- ✓ Conducted facility audits at the Arena & Recreation Centre and Townhall;
- ✓ Secured the Inclusive Community Grant for Arena renovations;
- ✓ Repaired the rear exterior stairs at Townhall;
- ✓ Investigated closed captioning options for meetings;
- ✓ Upgraded the augmented listening device options in Council Chambers;
- ✓ Participated in a regional initiative to improve accessible taxi service;
- ✓ Drafted a plan to renovate the pool;
- ✓ Engaged the Accessibility Advisory Committee throughout processes;
- ✓ Partnered with the Ontario Land Tribunal to move to online Appeal process;
- ✓ Remediated 3 sidewalk terminations to improve grade and safety;
- ✓ Audited all sidewalks for accessibility issues and safety hazards;
- ✓ Created new sidewalks in Goodwood and extending a multi-use path on Toronto St;
- ✓ Conducted accessibility training with staff;
- ✓ Proclaimed May 26th - June 1st, 2024 National AccessAbility Week;
- ✓ Maintained its commitment to providing an accessible website and is seeking accessibility enhancements with the transition to a new website provider in 2025;
- ✓ Partnered with Jumpstart to offer Jumpstart Games to residents at no charge; and
- ✓ Undertook a Downtown parking study to examine community parking needs.

Township of Uxbridge's 2024 Accessibility Highlights

Completion of the LEAD Program

In August 2023, The Township commenced the LEAD Program, facilitated by the Abilities Centre. This program involved multiple group meetings, assessments and the development of an action plan aimed at improving the accessibility and inclusivity of Township facilities, services and processes. On November 19, 2024, staff participated in a final meeting with the LEAD team to talk about progress made on action items, and to discuss steps to ensure continued improvements and success going forward.

Staff gained valuable insights, resources and partnerships by participating in this process and will continue to reference the action items plan to continue making improvements throughout the years.

National AccessAbility Week

The Township of Uxbridge celebrated National AccessAbility Week from May 26th–June 1st, 2024 by planning for and participating in the following activities:

- ✓ Proclaimed May 26th-June 1st, 2024 'National AccessAbility Week';
- ✓ Raised the International Disability Flag at Townhall on May 27th;
- ✓ Participated in the Easter Seals' 'Red Shirt Day' by hosting an information booth to engage with the community about National AccessAbility Week, Red Shirt Day, and the work of the Accessibility Advisory Committee;
- ✓ Used Accessibility Advisory Committee budget funds to purchase official 'Red Shirt Day' t-shirts for Accessibility Advisory Committee members;
- ✓ Posted Easter Seals' book and movie recommendation posters at the Uxbridge Public Library and Zephyr Public Library;
- ✓ Distributed Easter Seals' colouring pages to the Uxbridge Public Library and the Zephyr Public Library for public use; and
- ✓ Posted communications in Townhall and on the Township website about National AccessAbility Week and Red Shirt Day.



AODA Compliance

The *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (AODA) became law in 2005. Under the Act, organizations must meet the requirements of the AODA in the areas of information and communications, employment, transportation, design of public spaces and customer service. The summary below highlights the AODA requirements that are part of the Township of Uxbridge's day-to-day operations:

- ✓ Provide accessible customer service
- ✓ Provide emergency and public safety information in accessible formats
- ✓ Provide employees with accessible and customized emergency information
- ✓ Create accessibility policies and a multi-year plan
- ✓ Buy accessible goods, services or facilities
- ✓ Make the website accessible
- ✓ Train employees on Ontario's accessibility laws
- ✓ Make it easy to provide feedback
- ✓ Make employment practices accessible
- ✓ Make public information accessible, when requested
- ✓ Make new or redeveloped public spaces accessible
- ✓ Consult regularly with the Accessibility Advisory Committee on all matters related to accessibility within the Township.

Dedication to Continuous Improvement & Celebrating Success

The Township of Uxbridge is committed to improving accessibility beyond legislated requirements. We are continuously working on our internal processes to create better efficiencies, which ultimately benefit residents. Staff who are responsible for posting information attend AODA training sessions. Project charters are being developed for all new operational and capital projects to help identify barriers to accessibility and engage with relevant stakeholders.

As always, we want to hear from you about accessibility!

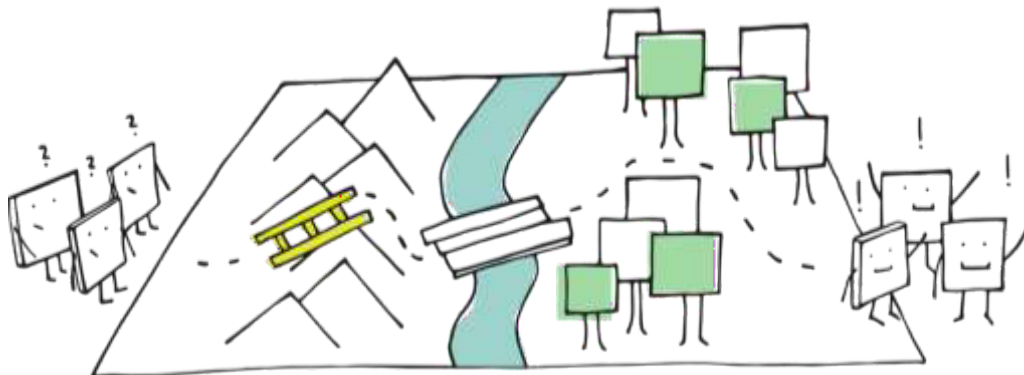
Review & Monitoring Process

The Accessibility Plan is intended to be a working document. Comments and recommendations will be noted throughout the upcoming year and will be reflected in annual updates to the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan. Accessibility improvements and changes to accessibility legislation will also be reflected in updates like this. Additional evaluation and reporting efforts include Accessibility Compliance Reports submitted to the Province.

Communication of the Plan

Feedback is an integral part of the evaluation process. The Township of Uxbridge will continue to review and expand consultation strategies to engage key groups in providing accessibility-related feedback, including those with lived experience.

Members of the public are encouraged to make comments on the Township of Uxbridge Multi-Year Accessibility Plan and accessibility matters in general. There are several ways you can contact the Township of Uxbridge to express your accessibility-related comments, including contacting the undersigned.



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Email: accessibility@uxbridge.ca

The 2024 Progress Report on the 2020-2025 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan will also be available in the following locations:

- Report to Council: Initially, this Progress Report will be made available through a report to Council.
- Township Website: The 2024 Progress Report on the 2020-2025 Multi-Year Accessibility can be found on Township of Uxbridge website at uxbridge.ca/en/your-local-government/accessibility-plan.aspx.