

Township of Havelock-Belmont-Methuen



Multi-Year Accessibility Plan 2025 – 2030

The Township of Havelock-Belmont-Methuen is committed to:

1. Ensuring that decisions, actions and planning for the community apply the principles of dignity, equal opportunity, independence and integration;
2. Identifying, removing, and preventing barriers to our programs, services and facilities; and,
3. Providing an inclusive community in which employees, residents and visitors have equitable access for all ages, abilities and circumstances.

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Executive Summary

The Township of Havelock-Belmont-Methuen's Accessibility Plan 2025-2030 outlines the initiatives the Township intends to achieve to ensure compliance with the Province's accessibility legislation.

The Province has enacted several accessibility standards which set out specific rules and deadlines for government, businesses, non-profits, and public sector organizations to follow. As a designated public sector organization, the Township of Havelock-Belmont-Methuen is required to have and make public a multi-year accessibility plan.

The multi-year accessibility plan creates a road map for the Township to demonstrate to its customers how it intends to increase accessibility. The plan puts into action an organization's commitment to accessibility. Ontario's accessibility standards help businesses and organizations to identify and remove barriers to improve accessibility.

Accessibility Statement of Commitment

The Township is committed to meeting the accessibility needs of people with disabilities by giving people of all abilities opportunities to participate fully in everyday life by identifying and removing barriers and addressing the needs of those with different disabilities.

Our plan shows how the Township's role in making Ontario an accessible province for all Ontarians. The Township will put forth every effort to ensure that we meet the needs of people with disabilities, in a timely manner, through the implementation of this plan.

About the Municipality

The Township of Havelock-Belmont-Methuen is a lower-tier municipality in the County of Peterborough with a population of approximately 5,083 (2021 Statistics Canada Census) residents and a total area of 529.35 square kilometers. In addition to its permanent residents, the township also has a seasonal population of 6,200. Centrally located between Belleville and Peterborough and only 90 minutes from Toronto, Havelock-Belmont-Methuen is a charming rural community at the southeast corner of the County of Peterborough. The Township is located on the Treaty 20 Michi Saagiig territory of the Michi Saagiig and Chippewa Nations, collectively known as the Williams Treaties First Nations, which include Curve Lake, Hiawatha, Alderville, Scugog Island, Rama, Beausoleil, and Georgina Island First Nations. Surrounded by scenic lakes and rivers, the Township offers outdoor enthusiasts a host of activities such as hiking, boating, fishing and camping. The scenic rural countryside complements the waterways with a rich history of early settlements, railroading, resorts and mining ventures. The Township provides a balance of services to support our permanent and seasonal residents as well as the many tourists that visit the area.

Municipal Structure

The Township of Havelock-Belmont-Methuen is composed of a Mayor, Deputy Mayor and 3 Councillors. The Municipality provides a wide range of services for its citizens.

Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001 (ODA)

The Ontarians with Disabilities Act (ODA), was enacted in 2001 to improve opportunities and access for persons with disabilities. This Act applies to all provincial and municipal governments, school boards, colleges and universities, and hospitals.

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA)

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) is the law that sets out a process for developing and enforcing accessibility standards. Accessibility Standards Regulations are laws that government, businesses, non-profits and public sector organizations must follow to become more accessible.

Accessibility Standards

The Minister responsible for the AODA is required to establish a process to develop and implement all accessibility standards necessary to achieving the purposes of this Act. Within this process, standards development committees are established by the Minister to develop proposed accessibility standards.

The Province has issued a set of five (5) accessibility standards under the A.O.D.A. that will help organizations identify and remove barriers to improve accessibility for persons with disabilities.

The Five Accessibility Standards

1. Customer Service
2. Information and Communication
3. Employment
4. Transportation
5. Design of Public Space

Past achievements to remove and prevent barriers

1. Customer Service

- The Township of Havelock-Belmont-Methuen introduced an Accessible Customer Service Policy, on January 1, 2010, the policy recognizes that persons with disabilities should be provided with an equal opportunity to access goods and information in a manner consistent with the principles of independence, dignity, integration and equality as stated in the regulations of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005.
- Feedback forms and processes were put in place to ensure that processes were accessible for persons with disabilities and included various methods for providing feedback.
- As part of the accessibility training process, staff hired to provide services on behalf the Township are required to complete an accessibility training session when starting work.
- To enhance accessibility and better serve our residents, the automatic push button at the Municipal Office was relocated to meet accessibility standards.

- Conducted both the 2018 and 2022 Municipal Elections in an accessible manner, including internet, telephone and in-person voting. Accessibility Plans were prepared for both elections.

2. Information and Communication

- In 2018, the Township of Havelock-Belmont-Methuen implemented a new accessible website, ensuring the website conforms with WCAG 2.0 AA.
- In 2024 the Township of Havelock-Belmont-Methuen improved the website to ensure further compliance with the WCAG 2.0 AA requirements.

3. Employment

- Job postings and offers of employment to include a notice regarding availability of accommodation for applicants with disabilities.

4. Transportation

- The Township of Havelock-Belmont -Methuen does provide accessible transportation services by issuing a license to taxi companies which meet the required accessibility standards.

5. Design of Public Space

- Automatic door button was relocated at the main entrance of the Municipal Office.
- Installed accessible push buttons for the washrooms at the Havelock Library
- Installed accessible push buttons at the main entrance of the Stone Hall
- Installed a barrier free washroom at the Havelock Arena
- An accessible ramp leading to the side entrance of the Town Hall building was installed.
- A Proposed Access Plan 2020-2025 was created
- Installed accessible picnic tables at the HBM Community Centre, Rotary Park, Havelock Lions Park and Cordova Park
- Installed a splash pad with accessible features at the HBM Community Centre Park
- Installed accessible playground equipment at the HBM Community Centre Park
- Construction of a pedestrian crosswalk on George St E. near the Havelock Public School
- Upgraded the Mathison Trail, including widening and grading of the trail
- Highway 7 Concession Street intersection upgrades to crosswalk signals/displays/tactile indicators

Strategies and Actions

Overall vision:

The Township of Havelock-Belmont-Methuen is committed to delivering an accessible and inclusive environment for all community members, staff, and visitors. The Township strives to meet

the needs of its employees and customers by identifying and removing barriers to improve accessibility for people with disabilities.

General Requirements:

- Creation of a multi-year accessibility plan to identify and remove barriers to improve accessibility within the Township.
- Chief Administrative Officer to file Provincial Compliance Report on a bi-annual cycle.

Customer Service Standard:

The Customer Service Standard under the IASR requires the Municipality to provide accessible public services for people with disabilities and to ensure that policies and procedures are in place to facilitate this. It is intended to support Municipalities in improving access to goods, services and facilities by removing barriers for people with disabilities.

Objective:

To ensure that people of all abilities receive quality programs and services in a timely manner, supported by inclusive policies, procedures, tools and resources that promote accessible customer service.

Actions:

- Training of all Senior Staff, and Township Council
- Training of Volunteer Firefighters
- Ensure on-going customer service practices, programs and policies
- Review the Municipality's Accessibility: Customer Service Standard Policy periodically during the term of this Plan.
- Expand on process for receiving and responding to feedback in regard to accessibility to specifically include actions that will be taken if a complaint is received.
- Develop and implement a training program for volunteers on the requirements of the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR) and the Human Rights Code as it pertains to persons with disabilities.
- Develop an Election Accessibility Plan to support the Municipality's commitment to the identification, removal and prevention of barriers in regard to the 2026 Municipal Election.
- Explore assistive technologies that could make municipal programs and services more accessible including, but not limited to, assistive listening devices, assistive devices and charging stations for mobility devices.

Information and Communications Standard:

The Information and Communication Standard under the IASR requires the Municipality to communicate and provide information in ways that are accessible to the public.

Objective:

To provide enhanced accessibility as it relates to communication supports, formats, websites and web content.

Actions:

- Provide or arrange for accessible formats and communication supports in a timely manner, upon request.
- Provide emergency procedures, plans or public safety information to the public in an accessible format or with appropriate communication supports, as soon as practicable, upon request.
- Establish a process and accountability framework to monitor the Municipality's website and web content to ensure continued compliance with WCAG 2.0 Level AA.
- Explore opportunities to expand closed captioning of video recordings to Committee meetings and opportunities to provide real-time captioning for Council and/or Committee Meetings.
- Provide training and resources to staff on creating documents, information and communications in accessible document format.

Employment

The Employment Standard under the IASR sets out accessibility requirements that the Municipality must follow to support the recruitment and accommodation of employees. This includes making employment practices and workplaces more accessible, and safe for new and existing employees with disabilities.

Objective:

Accommodation practices that ensure people of all abilities are able to participate fully in recruitment and employment at the Municipality.

Actions:

- Continue to provide information on accommodation in the recruitment process on all job postings
- Explore opportunities to engage with applicants and new hires to obtain feedback on how to make the recruitment and selection process more accessible and inclusive.
- Continue to notify new hires of policies for accommodating employees with disabilities.

Design of Public Spaces

The Design of Public Spaces Standard under the IASR requires the Municipality to ensure that newly constructed or significantly renovated public spaces are accessible. It focuses on removing barriers in areas not covered by the Ontario Building Code such as exterior paths of travel, on- and off-street parking, recreational trails, pedestrian crossings and service counters.

Objective:

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

Actions:

- Establish a process for consultation with the public and persons with disabilities when constructing new or redeveloping existing recreational trails, outdoor play spaces, exterior paths of travel (rest areas) and on-street parking, as required under the IASR.
- Review accessibility legislation and this Plan when creating new public spaces, making renovations to Municipal property and when designing and building new infrastructure and seek opportunities to enhance accessibility and remove barriers.
- Give consideration to accessibility in the development of open spaces, including trails
- Develop procedures for the preventative and emergency maintenance of the accessible elements required in the Design of Public Spaces Standards, such as curbs and ramps, handrails and tactile indicators on stairs.
- Develop pamphlets/information that may be shared during the residential permitting process to raise awareness and encourage the inclusion of accessible features in residential development.

Transportation

The Transportation Standard under the IASR sets out the requirement to prevent and remove barriers to public transportation and was developed to make travel easier for everyone in the province.

Objective:

Continue to seek opportunities to promote barrier free transportation and active transportation.

Actions:

- Continue to provide accessible transportation services by issuing a license to taxi companies which meet the required accessibility standards.
- On going advocacy work to support transportation needs in the Township.
- Review design standards for directional, street name and information signs to improve accessibility, giving consideration to visibility, legibility, consistency, colour contrast, surface (glare) and positioning.

Preventative and Emergency Maintenance of the Accessible Elements

As part of the Provincial legislated requirements, accessibility plans must include procedures for preventative and emergency maintenance of the accessible elements in public spaces and procedures for dealing with temporary disruptions when accessible elements are not in working order. (O. Reg. 413/12, s.6.)

The Township is committed to:

- Maintaining annual service contracts to ensure equipment is safe and in proper working order;
- Maintaining an Asset Management Plan;
- Maintaining budget access for emergency repairs through the purchasing policy;
- Having a Municipal Emergency Plan; and
- Completing documented monthly and annual inspections of all playground equipment.

Communication of the Accessibility Plan

The Accessibility Plan is posted on the Townships' website and copies, including alternative Formats and Communication supports, will be made available, upon request.

For more information contact:

Bob Angione, Chief Administrative Officer/Clerk

Phone: 705-778-2308

Email: havbelmet@hbmtwp.ca

Our accessibility plan is publicly posted at:

Township website: www.hbmtwp.ca

Standard and accessible formats of this document are free on request from:

Bob Angione, Chief Administrative Officer/Clerk

Phone: 705-778-2308

Email: havbelmet@hbmtwp.ca

For more information on the Accessibility Standards contact:

Ministry for Seniors and Accessibility

601A-777 Bay Street, Toronto, ON M7A 2J4

Toll-free: 1-866-515-2025 or 416-849-8276

TTY/Teletypewriter (for people with hearing disabilities):

1-800-268-7095 or 416-326-0148

Fax: 1-416-325-9620

accessibility@ontario.ca