



Municipality of Northern Bruce Peninsula Council Report

Report Number: DC 24-03

Subject: Annual Status Report of the Multi-year Accessibility Plan - 2024

From: Lindsay Forbes, Accessibility Coordinator, Deputy Clerk

Date: December 9, 2024

Recommendation:

That Council receives Report No. DC 24-03 Re: Annual Status Report of the Multi-year Accessibility Plan – 2024, as information.

Purpose:

The purpose of this Status Report is to report on the Municipality of Northern Bruce Peninsula's (the Municipality) progress with regard to the 2022-2026 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan to prevent and remove barriers and meet requirements under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (AODA). The [Municipality of Northern Bruce Peninsula's 2022-2026 Municipal Accessibility Plan](#) can be found on the Municipality's website.

This Status Report highlights various initiatives the Municipality has undertaken to enhance accessibility by addressing and preventing barriers within our facilities, programs, and services. This report, presented to the Council annually, showcases the Municipality's commitment to meeting accessibility requirements wherever possible.

A copy of this report will be available on the municipal website under the Accessibility webpage.

The Municipality's Commitment to Accessibility

- To ensure equal access and participation for people with disabilities;
- To treat individuals with disabilities in a manner that upholds their dignity and supports their independence;
- To eliminate accessibility barriers and comply with the requirements of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act and Ontario's accessibility laws;
- To encourage public participation and civic engagement in community accessibility matters.

A graphic summarizing these projects will be posted on the Municipality's Accessibility webpage at <https://www.northbrucepeninsula.ca/accessibility>

The Legislation:

The *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (AODA) is legislation that provides a framework for creating, implementing, and enforcing accessibility standards. Government entities, businesses, non-profits, and public sector organizations must comply with these standards. Given that the Municipality of Northern Bruce Peninsula has a population of fewer than 10,000 residents, it is not required to establish an Accessibility Advisory Committee. The role of the Accessibility Coordinator is fulfilled by the Deputy Clerk, who is responsible for overseeing the development, implementation, and monitoring of the municipality's accessibility initiatives and ensuring compliance with the AODA.

The O.REG 191/11: Integrated Accessibility Standards regulation comprises five (5) standards. This is now law, and requirements are being phased in each year:

- The **Information and Communications Standard** will help Ontario businesses and organizations make their information more accessible.
- The **Employment Standard** will help Ontario businesses and organizations make accessibility a regular part of their recruitment, hiring, and supporting of employees with disabilities.
- The **Transportation Standard** will make travel more accessible in Ontario.
- The **Design of Public Spaces Standard** will make it easier for persons with disabilities to move through, use, and enjoy our community public spaces.
- The **Customer Service Standard** will make it easier for persons with disabilities to obtain services and have their needs met accordingly.

For more information on this legislation, please visit the [AODA](#) website.

Highlights of 2024:

The list below highlights the accessibility action items for 2024, as outlined in the 2022-2026 Multi-Year Plan, along with additional initiatives completed in 2024. These items reflect the Municipality's dedication to working toward a barrier-free community. Any requirements completed in previous years are not included in this list.

National Accessibility Week

- National Accessibility Week, taking place from May 26 to June 1, 2024, was promoted via the Municipality's website and Facebook page.

Design of Public Spaces

- Twenty-five (25) new aluminum frame accessible picnic tables.
- Eight (8) new park benches that meet AODA standards.
- Ten (10) new bear-proof waste/recycling stations that meet AODA standards.
- Ongoing display of clear signage for paid parking areas.



AODA compliant picnic tables placed throughout the Municipality.



AODA compliant benches placed throughout the Municipality.



Accessible Bear-proof waste/recycling station placed throughout the Municipality.

Transportation

- Ongoing completion of the Lion's Head sidewalk construction project, sidewalks are wheelchair, walker, and stroller accessible.
- Ongoing completion of repairs to the interlocking brick sidewalk in Tobermory.
- Installation of Wheelchair Traffic Signs on Myles Drive and Rita Crescent in response to a request from a community member.



New curb ramps installed for the Lion's Head Sidewalk Project



New curb ramps installed for the Lion's Head Sidewalk Project



Recently installed Wheelchair Traffic Sign

Facilities

- Converted eight (8) facilities to brighter LED lighting. – Rotary Hall, Lion's Head and Tobermory Libraries, Tobermory Airport, Stokes Bay Community Centre, Ferndale Information Centre, Tobermory Museum, and Ministry of Transportation Shed.
- Conducted a review and assessment of the Friendship Club, Stokes Bay Community Centre, and Rotary Hall washrooms for future accessibility improvements.
- Completion of Design and Tender for Tobermory Library and Ferndale Art Gallery entrance ramps/ railings – projects to be completed in April/ May 2025.

Information and Communication

- Ongoing publication of Council Meeting Highlights and printing of minutes in the Bruce Peninsula Press.
- Ongoing hosting of public meetings, both virtual and in-person, to gather feedback on key Council decisions.
- Ongoing use of the municipal website and Facebook page to share key municipal information and updates.
- Ongoing promotion of the Municipality as an equal opportunity employer dedicated to an inclusive, barrier-free recruitment and selection process, and actively encouraging applications from individuals with disabilities.
- Ongoing support and involvement in local job fairs.
- Ongoing utilization of web-based meetings enables increased participation, regardless of one's abilities. Telephone (call-in) option is available for meeting participants in addition to accepting written correspondence.
- Ongoing enhancements to the audio and video technology in the Council Chamber support livestreaming and meeting recordings. This technology allows the public to easily watch and engage in live Council meetings, as well as access recorded sessions afterward.
- Continuous use of ALT text and the implementation of OCR (optical character recognition) to enhance document accessibility.
- Ongoing use of an electronic records management system to enhance document accessibility and improve records management practices.

Customer Service

- Continuous accessible customer service training for staff members, council members, and committees
- Continuous rollout of new software and programs to enhance and streamline customer service, including features like online parking registration.

- Ongoing use of accessible fillable forms on the municipal website.
- Ongoing provision of paper copies of surveys and documents to the public upon request.
- Distributing monthly newsletters, Council Highlights, and municipal bulletins for the Bruce Peninsula Press to ensure that everyone stays informed in an accessible way.
- The Municipality offers several ways for customers to connect with staff or schedule appointments, including phone, web conference, email, or in person. This ensures that all members of the public, regardless of ability, can access municipal services. Additionally, individuals are encouraged to reach out to the Municipality if they require information or assistance in an alternative format.

Complaints

No formal accessibility complaints were filed in 2024.

Budget Implications:

Funds needed to meet accessibility standards are allocated annually through the accessibility budget.

Attachments:

- Accessibility Update 2024 Graphic

Municipal Strategic Commitment:

1. Creating a strong & resilient economy
2. Maintaining a transparent & responsible government.
3. Supporting the sustainability of environment and infrastructure.
4. Building a safe & vibrant community

Respectfully submitted:

Lindsay Forbes

Lindsay Forbes
Deputy Clerk

Approved by:

Peggy Van Mierlo-West

Peggy Van Mierlo-West,
Chief Administrative Officer

Accessibility Update 2024



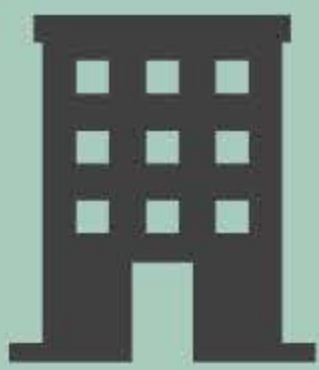
Public Spaces

- 25 new accessible picnic tables
- 8 new AODA compliant benches
- 10 new bear-proof AODA compliant waste and recycling stations



Transportation

- New curb ramps installed in Lion's Head
- Installation of wheelchair traffic signs
- Ongoing completion of Tobermory and Lion's Head Sidewalk projects



Facilities

- Converted 8 facilities to brighter LED lighting
- Completion of Tender for Tobermory Library and Ferndale Art Gallery entrance ramps and railing (2025 completion)



Information and Communication

- Ongoing utilization of an electronic Records Management System
- Ongoing promotion of alternative communication and attendance options (Livestream, Online, Telephone, Mail).



Customer Service

- Continuous staff training for accessible customer service
- Ongoing utilization of accessible programs and fillable forms
- Distribution of monthly newsletter and Council Highlights