



THE CORPORATION OF THE
Township Of Pelee

Municipal Accessibility Plan

June 2015

**Creating a Barrier Free Community
Municipal Accessibility Plan**

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Executive Summary

In Ontario, 15.5% of the population is made up of persons with disabilities, this number is expected to increase as the population ages because the incidence of disability increases with age.

On December 14, 2001, the *Ontarians with Disabilities Act (the ODA)* was passed to improve access and opportunities for people with disabilities.

The ODA was designed so that municipalities, hospitals, school boards, colleges and universities, public transportation providers, government ministries and agencies, the private sector and people with disabilities can take part in making Ontario a more accessible province.

Under the *Ontario Human Rights Code*, people with disabilities have the right to be free from discriminations in employment, service goods, and facilities and housing. The right to equal treatment is also addressed in a number of Ontario statutes and regulations, which include:

- The Assessment Act
- The Blind Persons' Act, 1992
- The Corporations Tax Act
- The Income Tax Act
- The Education Act
- The Ontario Disability Support Program Act, 1997
- The Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997

Interpretation

The purpose of the *Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001* is to improve access and opportunities for people with disabilities. The Act provides for their involvement in identifying, removing and preventing barriers so they have equal opportunities to participate in activities and employment with the rest of Ontarians.

Contact

For any further information, clarification, suggestions or recommendations the Clerk or Deputy Clerk can be contacted at the Municipal Office by using the following methods:

Phone: 519-724-2931
Fax: 519-724-2470
Email: info@pelee.ca
Mail/person: 1045 West Shore Road
Pelee Island, ON
N0R 1M0

Aim

This Plan describes measures that the Township of Pelee has taken and the measures the Township plans on putting into practise by identifying, removing and preventing barriers to people with disabilities who utilize services and facilities or who are employed by, or searching for employment with the Township of Pelee.

Objectives

The intention of this plan is to:

- 1.) Describe the process by which the Township will identify, remove and prevent barriers to people with disabilities;
- 2.) List the previous initiatives the Township has already undertaken with respect to removing barriers;
- 3.) List the facilities, policies, programs, practices and services the Township governs and identify and review barriers and the measures taken to prevent barriers;
- 4.) Describe how the Township will make the Accessibility Plan available to the public.

Description of the Township of Pelee

The Township of Pelee is the southernmost inhabited point in Canada located in Southwest Ontario in Lake Erie. The Island is approximately 4,000 hectares and is 14.5 km long and 5.6 km wide. The Island can be accessed by mainland Kingsville or Leamington by ferry, or by winter air service from Windsor.

Population

The Township of Pelee has a year round residency of approximately 275 and a seasonal population of 1,500 in the spring and summer.

Council Commitment to Accessibility Planning

The Council of the Corporation of the Township of Pelee is committed to:

- The continual improvement of access to municipal facilities, premises and services for those with disabilities;
- The provision of quality services to all members of the community with disabilities.

The Council has authorized the Clerk and/or Deputy Clerk to prepare an Accessibility Plan that will enable the Council to meet these commitments.

Key Definitions

BARRIER

A barrier is anything that stops a person with a disability from fully taking part in society because of that disability. Some barriers include:

Types of Barriers:

- Physical Barriers: A door knob that cannot be opened by an elderly person with limited upper body mobility and strength.
- Architectural Barriers: No elevators in a multi-level building, or doorways that are too narrow for wheelchairs or scooters.
- Informational Barriers: Typefaces that are too small to be read by a person with low vision.
- Communicational Barriers: A person who is communicating with someone who is hearing impaired, speaking in a low tone or not allowing clear view of their mouth when speaking.
- Attitudinal Barriers: Assumptions that persons with disabilities cannot perform certain tasks even when they can.
- Technological Barriers: Information on a Municipal website which cannot be accessed because it does not have accessible functions such as reading text aloud or increasing font size.
- Barriers created by Policies or Practices: A practise of announcing important messages over an intercom that people with hearing impairments cannot hear clearly.

DISABILITY

A disability is any degree of physical disability, infirmity, malformation or disfigurement caused by bodily injury, birth defect, or illness and includes, but is not limited to:

- Diabetes mellitus;
- Epilepsy;
- Brain Injuries;
- Any degree of paralysis;
- Amputation;
- Lack of physical coordination;
- Blindness or visual impediment;
- Deafness or hearing impediment;
- Muteness or speech impediment;

- Physical reliance on a guide dog or other animal, or on a wheelchair or other remedial appliance or device;
- A condition of mental impairment or developmental disability;
- A learning disability, or dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols in spoken language;
- A mental disorder or mental illness;
- An injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board.

Duties of the Township of Pelee

Each year the Township administration and Council will:

- Meet annual reporting requirements;
- Review and amend plan as necessary;
- Gather advice for identifying and eliminating barriers from the Accessibility Advisory Committee;
- If no advisory committee is present then consultation will be done with people with disabilities to help identify barriers and solutions; and
- Make the Accessibility Plan and any additions or amendments available to the public.

Operational Review to Prevent Barriers

- The municipality will examine our suppliers annually before buying equipment, supplies or services for itself, its employees or the public to consider the accessibility of the equipment, services and supplies to people with disabilities.
- Council will take into consideration how accessible any equipment, supplies or services to be bought by the municipality, for use by itself, its employees or the public.
- The Municipality will continue to review the Municipal Building to ensure safe accessibility to the public annually and plan for any required updates in the annual budget.
- The Municipality will continue to review Municipal services to determine any barriers.

Review of Decision Making Process

- The Township of Pelee will use the Government of Ontario barrier-free design guidelines that promote accessibility for people with disabilities to buildings that the Township buys, leases, builds or significantly renovates. The barrier-free design guidelines used will ensure the level of accessibility for government buildings is at least as good as or better than the level of accessibility required by the Building Code Act, 1992.
- Council and administration will accommodate the employment related accessibility needs of people with disabilities who apply for jobs with the Municipality, as required by the Human Rights Code.
- The Township will ensure that its managers, supervisors and employees have access to information necessary to accommodate and promote an accessible workplace.
- Council and administration will review and amend by-laws prior to adoption to ensure they meet accessibility requirements.

Municipal Facilities and Services

- 1.) Municipal Office: is located on West Shore Road and is open to the public for general business. The Office has a side ramp leading to the back door as well as newly constructed front steps and railings to allow for safer access to the front door.
- 2.) East Park Campground: is located on East Shore Road and is accessible to the public for camping recreation and retail purposes. The building/store is all on one level, there are currently no separate handicap washrooms, but the lobby and doorway to the building have room for manoeuvring.
- 3.) Scudder Marina: is located on North Shore Road and provides shower and washroom facilities and a small store. All amenities are located on one level and there is a separate handicap washroom.
- 4.) The Pelee Island Airport: is located on Centre Dyke Road. The Airport building is one level and washrooms are large enough to accommodate wheelchairs and other mobility devices.
- 5.) Pelee Island Volunteer Fire Department: located on Centre Dyke Road and houses necessary fire equipment. This facility is not open to the public.
- 6.) Public Works Garage: located on Centre Dyke Road this garage and workshop is used to house and fix equipment. This facility is not open to the public.
- 7.) Pelee Island Pheasant Farm: located on Centre Dyke Road is used to house and raise pheasants for annual pheasant hunts. This facility is not open to the public.

8.) Water Treatment Plant: located on West Shore Road is used for the storage, treatment and delivery of potable water. This facility is not open to the public.

9.) Waste Transfer Station: located on McCormick Road, used for disposal of waste and recycling. This facility is accessed by vehicle and attendants are available to assist in lifting and disposing of waste.

10.) North End and Star of the Sea Cemetery: two cemetery locations are present on the Island, both on level ground with walking space throughout the cemeteries. Both are accessible by foot.

11.) Pelee Island Public Library: located on North Shore Road, this facility is not yet open to the public but is all on one level and will adhere to current building and accessibility requirements.

Initiatives to Remove Barriers

- Wheelchair ramp to access Municipal Building;
- Re-construction and expansion of front steps with more secure railing at the Municipal Building for front door access;
- Office staff assist public when necessary in filling out applications and/or forms as well as providing verbal information of written materials distributed to the public;
- Upon request large print notices and forms are provided, such as large print tax notices;
- Voting method has been changed to vote by mail, which has assisted in accessibility issues at voting locations;
- Municipal staff has had customer accessibility training to ensure proper conveyance of information and effective methods of communication when addressing the public;
- East Park Campground and Scudder Marina are both one level public facilities allowing access to those with mobility issues;
- Email communication with residents and the public is available to assist with those that have hearing impairments.
- The Heritage Centre building which is owned by the Township has constructed a wheelchair ramp as well as expanded their doorway and lobby to allow for easier access to those with mobility issues.

Barrier Identification Methodologies

The following resources and methodology is used to identify barriers:

- 1.) **Staff Review:** each department head and member of the administration team will be required to review their facilities and equipment to determine any barriers.
- 2.) **Municipal Officials Review:** The list of identified barriers will be presented to Council and reviewed through the budget process.
- 3.) **Plan Development and Review Working Group:** The identified barriers will be delivered to those responsible for monitoring and amending the Accessibility Plan for review, or brought to an advisory committee or members of the public with disabilities.

Township of Pelee Identified Barriers

The review resulted in a number of barriers being identified, as listed below. A few barriers have been remedied in recent years, however over the next several years, Council will have to decide which barriers should be addressed each year, keeping in mind budget restraints and feasibility.

Barrier	Type of Barrier	Strategy for Removal/Prevention	Status
Museum entrance renders the facility inaccessible to those with mobility issues	Architectural	Design and cost will have to be determined with the help of an engineer	Completed in 2014; a grant was applied for to reconstruct and expand the entrance and build a wheelchair ramp.
Entrance to the Municipal Building does not allow for easy access to those with mobility issues due to narrow and ageing steps.	Architectural	Design and Cost	Completed in 2014; new concrete steps were installed to make them wider and deeper with more secure railings.
Size of Parking Spaces	Architectural	Design and Cost	Handicap parking spaces are available at the Municipal Airport, but sufficient parking is not available at the Municipal Office

			for those with mobility issues
No automatic door openers on any township buildings	Physical	Design and Cost	Currently not addressed
Limited signage at township facilities relating to services for the disabled	Informational	Design, Cost, training, implementation	Some informational issues were addressed in 2013/14, and concerns have been addressed on a per inquiry basis; currently no signage
Website currently does not have accessibility features	Technological	Feasibility study, design and cost	Included in the 2015 budget and confirmation has been made with web designer that accessibility features will be included
Handicap Washrooms (Municipal Office, Campground)	Physical	Consultation with engineer, feasibility study, design and cost	Currently not addressed

Anticipated Timeline to Address Barriers

Barriers to be addressed in 2015:

The barriers that are planned to be remedied in 2015 are the implementation of an accessible website as well as more informative signage and methods of assistance for those with disabilities.

Barriers to be addressed in 2016-2020:

Throughout the next five years, planning, costing and engineering will be researched and included in the budget process to address outstanding accessibility barriers such as handicap accessible washrooms, automatic door openers and parking spaces.

Review and Monitoring of the Process

Council is committed to following through with this plan, this plan will be updated annually to follow specified reporting regulations and keep any newly identified barriers up to date, as well as to track progress of rectifying outstanding barriers. The annual

review process of this plan will also allow Council staff and the public to monitor barriers and the direction to which the Township is moving to remove all barriers under the Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001.

Making Feedback Accessible

The Township of Pelee is committed to providing services to all members of the public or third parties it serves. Feedback from the public or third parties is welcomed as it may identify areas that require change and encourage continuous service improvements. Feedback on how the Township of Pelee provides its services or to resident concerns will be responded to, documented and tracked.

Feedback will be received in a number of forms, for those with disabilities:

- Handwritten
- Email
- By Phone
- In Person
- Or by any other format necessary to ensure feedback can be accepted and considered by all members of the public.

Making Information Accessible to the Public

It is important to have the ability to provide information requested in appropriate formats to those with disabilities. Different formats may not be readily available, but the Township will work with individuals to ensure that an appropriate format can be produced.

To ensure that accessible information can be provided, the Township will:

- 1.) **Assess current information:** determine how information is typically shared with the public and identify anything that would make it difficult for someone with a disability to see, hear or understand.
- 2.) **Make Information accessible upon request:** Township resources may restrict formats that can be made readily available, but staff will work with individuals to find a format that is favourable, for example for a visually impaired individual, the original document can be read aloud and discussed.
- 3.) **Provide information as soon as possible:** some information may be able to be provided instantly, for example, by enlarging print for someone who is visually impaired; however some formats may take longer to prepare. The Township will work to get requested information in requested formats quickly.

- 4.) **Let the public know:** to assist the public in being aware of their options, the Township will let them know that accessible options are available upon request by including it in newsletters or on the Township website.

Communication of Plan

This plan will be available to the public through the Township's website, as well as hard copies being available in the Township Office upon request. If a copy of the plan should be requested in Braille, every attempt will be made by staff and Council to contact CNIB for translation. If there are any questions or concerns about the understanding of the plan for those with certain disabilities, a staff member will assist them in answering their questions and providing further explanations where necessary.

Appendix A

Accessible Customer Service Plan

Providing Goods and Services to People with Disabilities

The **Corporation of the Township of Pelee** is committed to excellence in serving all customers including people with disabilities.

Assistive devices

We will ensure that our staff are trained and familiar with various assistive devices we have on site or that we provide that may be used by customers with disabilities while accessing our goods or services.

Communication

We will communicate with people with disabilities in ways that take into account their disability.

Service animals

We welcome people with disabilities and their service animals. Service animals are allowed on the parts of our premises that are open to the public.

Support persons

A person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person will be allowed to have that person accompany them on our premises.

Fees will not be charged for support persons where they are not partaking in municipal services or activities provided at that location, but solely present to provide support to a customer with a disability.

Notice of temporary disruption

In the event of a planned or unexpected disruption to services or facilities for customers with disabilities, The **Corporation of the Township of Pelee** will notify customers promptly.

This clearly posted notice will include information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated length of time, and a description of alternative facilities or services, if available.

Services/Facilities include:

All municipal buildings and facilities open to the public

The notice will be made publicly available at the following locations:

- 1) Township Hall, 1045 West Shore Road, Pelee Island, Ontario, Canada N0R 1M0
- 2) Municipal Website: www.pelee.org
- 3) The affected municipal building and/or facility

Training

The **Corporation of the Township of Pelee** will provide accessible customer service training to employees, volunteers and others who deal with the public or other third parties on our behalf.

Training will also be provided to people involved in the development of policies, plans, practices and procedures related to the provision of our goods and services.

Individuals in the following positions will be trained after being hired:

Chief Administrative Officer
Deputy Clerk
Deputy Treasurer
Administrative Assistant
Environmental Services Manager
Parks and Recreation Manager/Airport Manager
Marina Manager
Campground Manager
Roads Superintendent
Pheasant Farm Manager
Fire Chief

Training will include:

- An overview of the **Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005** and the requirements of the customer service standard
- The Corporation of the Township of Pelee's plan related to the customer service standard
- How to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities
- How to interact with people with disabilities who use an assistive device or require the assistance of a service animal or a support person
- How to use the equipment or devices available on-site or otherwise that may help with providing goods or services to people with disabilities.

- What to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty in accessing The Corporation of the Township of Pelee's goods and services

Staff will also be trained when changes are made to our accessible customer service plan.

Feedback process

Customers who wish to provide feedback on the way The Corporation of the Township of Pelee provides goods and services to people with disabilities can provide feedback in the following way(s):

In person, by mail, or by e-mail at:

Municipal Office
Township of Pelee
1045 West Shore Road
Pelee Island, Ontario N0R 1M0

Telephone: (519) 724-2931
Toll-Free: 1-866-889-5203
Fax: (519) 724-2470
E-Mail: info@pelee.ca

All feedback, including complaints, will be handled in the following manner:

Feedback and complaints will be responded to by the Chief Administrative Officer or designate within five (5) business days

Notice of availability

The Corporation of the Township of Pelee will notify the public that our documents related to accessible customer service, are available upon request by posting a notice at the following location:

Municipal Office
Township of Pelee
1045 West Shore Road
Pelee Island, Ontario N0R 1M0

Notice will also be posted on the municipal website at:

www.pelee.org

Modifications to this or other policies

Any policy, practice or procedure of The **Corporation of the Township of Pelee** that does not respect and promote the principles of dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity for people with disabilities will be modified or removed.

This document is available in an alternate format on request.

Appendix B**Employee Accessibility Plan****Making Hiring Accessible**

Making employment within the Township of Pelee accessible to all applicants is very important, there are a number of approaches that can be taken in order to encourage those with disabilities to feel more comfortable when applying for a position and to accommodate special needs. In order to let applicants with disabilities know that accommodations can be made during the selection process the following steps can be taken:

- Post information on our website and/or include it in job postings
- Call applicants directly or speak to them in person, and
- Write them a letter or send an email.

If it is requested by a prospective candidate to have certain accommodations made the Township of Pelee will make the necessary arrangements, such as using a TTY line for deaf applicants or asking what interview format works the best for the candidate. The Township will utilize a series of forms and checklists in order to ensure the environment is conducive to the candidate's needs; such as an interview checklist and a script read to candidates pre-interview to inform them of our commitment to addressing barriers and to give candidates an opportunity to request necessary accommodations (i.e. wheelchair or sign language interpreter) .

When a decision has been made on a successful candidate the Township will notify them of our policies for accommodating employees with disabilities using one of the following methods:

- By including the information in the offer letter or in a separate email, or
- By calling the applicant or speaking with them directly.

Employee Supports

The Township of Pelee will inform employees of the policies used to support employees with disabilities, including policies on the provision of job accommodations that take into account an employee's accessibility needs. The Municipality will provide updated information to all employees whenever there is a change to existing policies on the provision of job accommodations that take into account an employee's accessibility needs due to disability. The Township will ensure that there are one on one meetings with any managers who will train or supervise any employees with disabilities, as well as have staff meetings with any employees involved in day to day activities with any employees with disabilities. If any employee is unsure of support procedures, extra training or information will be available in order to ensure safe practices and a safe work environment for employees with disabilities. All employees will have access to the

Township's Accessibility Plan and any updates that become available, as well as new hires being informed of the plan and policies in a timely manner.

Making information accessible to employees

Through consultation with employees to determine the appropriate accessible format or communication support the Township will arrange for accessible formats and communication support as needed in order to perform the requirements of their role.

Steps taken:

- All employees are automatically notified of any policy change.

Planned action:

- The Township will inform all employees of accessibility policies, as soon as practical, and include in all offer letters to new employees.
- All employees will be updated on any policy change affecting accommodation.
- Any accessibility formats and/or communication supports will be included in an employee's individual accommodation plan.
- If an employee requests an accessible format or communication support, necessary accommodations will be provided.

Helping employees with disabilities stay safe

In order to ensure that all employees are properly trained in workplace safety requirements, accommodations will be made specific to each individual with a disability to ensure they fully understand and can partake in any workplace safety training. Supervisors will also be made aware to assist any employees with disabilities if they require further information or accommodation to safely perform their work.

To assist in safe emergency response practices for those with disabilities, the Township will:

- Provide individualized workplace emergency response information to employees who have a disability, if the disability is such that the individualized information is necessary and the employer is aware of the need for accommodation due to the employee's disability.
- Provide the workplace emergency response information to the person designated by the employer to provide assistance.

- Provide the information required as soon as practicable after the employer becomes aware of the need for accommodation due to the employee's disability.

- Review the individualized workplace emergency response information:
 - a.) When the employee moves to a different location in the organization;
 - b.) When the employee's overall accommodation needs or plans are reviewed; and
 - c.) When the employer reviews its general emergency response policies.

Developing accommodation plans for employees with disabilities

Accommodation plans are important to allow for individual accommodation for employees with disabilities in a clear and consistent way. Not every employee's disability can be dealt with in the same way, they need to be considered on an individual basis in order to make the workplace safe and enjoyable.

In most cases employees with disabilities will notify the employer of any accommodation requests, however if it is known that there is a disability then the employer can discuss with the employee their particular needs and what accommodations are required.

In order to develop individualized accommodation plans, there are a number of factors that should be examined and discussed, such as:

- 1.) Consider how staff requesting accommodation can participate in the development process of their accommodation plan.
- 2.) Identify the means by which the employee is assessed on an individual basis.
- 3.) Develop a process to identify the manner in which the employer can request an evaluation by an outside medical or other expert, at the employer's expense, to assist the employer in determining if accommodation can be achieved and, if so, how accommodation can be achieved.
- 4.) Develop a process to identify the manner in which the employee can request the participation of a representative from their bargaining agent, where the employee is represented by a bargaining agent, or other representative from the workplace, where the employee is not represented by a bargaining agent, in the development of the accommodation plan.

- 5.) Identify the steps taken to protect the privacy of the employee's personal information.
- 6.) The frequency with which the individual accommodation plan will be reviewed and updated and the manner in which it will be done.
- 7.) If an individual accommodation plan is denied, the manner in which the reasons for the denial will be provided to the employee.
- 8.) Determine the means of providing the individual accommodation plan in a format that takes into account the employee's accessibility needs due to disability.
- 9.) If requested, include any information regarding accessible formats and communications supports provided.
- 10.) Have documented accommodation requirements in the form of Modified Work Agreements, where both the manager and the employee develop and approve the accommodation plan.
- 11.) If required, include individualized workplace emergency response information; and
- 12.) Identify any other accommodation that is to be provided.

Help employees with disabilities return to work

The Township's Occupational Health and Safety Policy has a documented process for supporting employees for a safe and early return to work. This policy includes accommodation options to facilitate and support the return to work process.

Steps taken:

- 1.) Develop and have in place a return to work process for its employees who have been absent from work due to a disability and require disability-related accommodations in order to return to work;
- 2.) Document the process;
- 3.) Outline the steps the employer will take to facilitate the return to work of employees who were absent because their disability required them to be away from work;
- 4.) Use documented individual accommodation plans.

If long term accommodation plans must be instituted after a disability is determined than the steps to develop an employee specific accommodation plan will be used to ensure they can return to work promptly.

Performance management, career development and job changes

The Township's performance management process takes the unique needs of each employee into account.

Planned action:

- Review an employee's individual accommodation plan to understand his/her accommodation needs, and determine whether adjustments are needed to improve performance.
- Provide documents related to performance management in accessible formats.
- Provide informal and formal coaching and feedback in a way that takes an employee's disability into account.

The Township will provide equal opportunities for career development and job changes to all employees while taking into account the accessibility needs of its employees with disabilities as well as any individual accommodation plans, when providing career development and advancement to its employees with disabilities. The process for management to follow to ensure equal treatment in terms of career development and job changes will be clearly documented and communicated to employees and management throughout the organization who participate in recruitment/staffing/redeployment related activities and performance management activities.

Training employees and volunteers

Training employees and volunteers under the appropriate regulations and legislation is important to ensure a consistent and well informed workplace.

Training through the Township of Pelee will be on the following legislation:

- Integrated Accessibility Requirements that apply to the Township;
- Appropriate training under the Ontario Human Rights Code relating to disability.

Training will be provided to:

- All employees and volunteers, including paid and unpaid positions;
- Anyone who is involved in developing the Township's organizational policies, including administration, Council and department heads.

- Anyone who provides goods or services or facilitates on the Township's behalf, such as facility management and contract centres.

Training staff based on their duties is imperative, training programs will have to reflect the duties of the job and focus on areas of concern for that particular position. For example, a human resource manager will require different training than front line staff.

The way that training is conducted will also differ depending on the accessibility requirements of employees and volunteers. Training can be provided in one of the following ways:

- Making separate training programs;
- Include information as part of an orientation session or staff meeting; or
- Incorporate information into an overall training program.

Methods to effectively deliver this message may be through online modules, written guides, handouts, presentations or staff meetings.

There are always changing needs, processes and requirements in the workplace, ongoing training and updates will be required as they become apparent. It is also important to deliver appropriate training to new employees as close to their start date as possible.

Records will be kept and maintained to reflect what employees were trained in and when they were trained.