

THE MUNICIPAL CORPORATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF ARMOUR

BY-LAW # 4-2024

Being a by-law to update the Municipal Accessibility Plan.

WHEREAS the Province of Ontario passed the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (“AODA”), 2005;

AND WHEREAS Section 4(1)(a) states that designated public sector organizations shall establish, implement, maintain and document a multi-year accessibility plan, which outlines the organization’s strategy to prevent and remove barriers and meet its requirements under this Regulation;

NOW THEREFORE the Council of The Municipal Corporation of the Township of Armour hereby enacts as follows:

- 1. That the Council of the Township of Armour does hereby adopt the Municipal Accessibility Plan, attached as Schedule “A” to this By-law.
- 2. That any previous by-laws pertaining to municipal accessibility, including By-law #4-2019 is hereby rescinded.
- 3. The Clerk of the Township of Armour is hereby authorized to make any minor modifications or corrections of an administrative, numeric, grammatic, semantic or descriptive nature or kind to the by-law and schedule(s) as may be deemed necessary after the passage of this by-law, where such modifications or corrections do not alter the intent of the by-law.
- 4. That this by-law shall come into force and effect on the date of passing.

Read in its entirety, approved,
signed and the seal of the
Corporation affixed thereto and
finally passed in open Council
this 9th day of January, 2024.

Original signed by Rod Ward

Rod Ward, Mayor

Original signed by John Theriault

John Theriault, Clerk

**Schedule “A”
to By-law # 4-2024**

Municipal Accessibility Plan
(updated January 2024)

Council Message:

At the Township of Armour, we value accessibility, and look to provide accessible options with all of our services. We are committed to creating and maintaining accessible environments where residents and visitors can have access to programs and services in a way that will respect their dignity and independence. Council fully support the goals of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) and remain committed to working with the Accessibility Advisory Committee and Staff to establish policies, practices, and procedures which are consistent with the accessibility standards established under the AODA.

Local municipal governments play an important role in the planning and development of communities and the Township offers wide range of municipal processes created to ensure that public services and facilities are accessible to everyone. It is a priority of the Township to ensure accessible customer service, information and communication, employment, streets, parks, meeting places, programs, services, public buildings and elections.

By making accessibility a priority, the Township of Armour ensures that it continues to be a great place to live, work and play for everyone.

Accessibility Planning:

The Township of Armour, both as an employer and service provider, is committed to barrier free access and will:

- Take a leadership role in setting an example to the business, institutional and volunteer sectors in terms of access and integration, employment equity, communications, recreation, and education.
- Identify barriers and gaps in existing facilities and services.
- Continually improve the level of accessibility of municipal facilities, programs and services.
- Actively encourage input from all segments of the community in the design, development and operation of new and renovated municipal facilities and services.
- Ensure the provision of quality services to all members of the community with disabilities.
- Provide resources and support to give effect to the Plan.
- Promote accessibility within the community.

Identification of Barriers:

The intent of the Plan is to prevent, identify and remove barriers. Barriers are obstacles that stand in the way of people with disabilities from being able to do many of the day- to-day activities that people take for granted. A barrier is anything that prevents a person with a disability from fully participating in all aspects of society because of a disability. The traditional definition of a barrier used in the context of accessibility has been expanded to include obstacles beyond physical boundaries. There are several other categories of barriers to consider, such as:

Environmental Barriers: Features, buildings or spaces that restrict or impede physical access. For example, a doorway that is too narrow to accommodate entry by person in a motorized scooter.

Communication Barriers: Obstacles with processing, transmitting or interpreting information. For example, print on a brochure that is too small to read or documents not available in alternative formats.

Attitudinal Barriers: Prejudgments or assumptions that directly or indirectly discriminate. For example, assuming that all visually impaired persons can read Braille.

Technological Barriers: Occurs when technology cannot or is not modified to support various assistive devices and/or software. For example, a website that does not provide for increased text size or contrast options.

Systemic Barriers: Barriers within an organization's policies, practices and procedures that do not consider accessibility. For example, listing a driver's license as an employment qualification for an office position may prohibit persons with visual impairments from applying.

Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR):

The Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR) - Ontario Regulation 191/11 covers accessibility standards including Information and Communication, Employment, Transportation, Design for Public Spaces (including the built environment), and Customer Service. There is a phased-in approach to compliance with deadline dates for each standard being based upon organization type and size, with the goal of a fully accessible province by 2025.

Information and Communication Standard:

The Information and Communications Standards of the AODA list rules for organizations to create, provide, and receive information and communications that people with disabilities can access. The standards give all people an equal chance to learn and be active in their communities.

Accessible Formats and Communication Support:

Organizations must provide or arrange accessible formats and communication support when providing information to people with disabilities, upon request.

Accessible formats, sometimes called alternate formats, are ways of presenting printed, written, or visual material so that people with print disabilities can access it. For instance, accessible formats include:

- Large print
- Accessible digital files, such as:
 - Html
 - Microsoft Word
- Text transcripts of visual or audio information

Accessible formats and communication support must be given in a timely manner when requested. Moreover, organizations cannot charge more for accessible formats or communication supports than for the original format. Organizations should work with the person asking for the information to find out what format or support the person needs. If conversion to a certain accessible format or communication support is not technically possible, the organization must explain why and summarize the information.

Employment Standard:

The Employment standard focuses on policy, procedures and training requirements to identify and remove barriers in the workplace. This standard requires employers to have processes in place to determine an employee's accommodation needs. This component also addresses key processes in the life cycle of a job such as recruitment, assessment, selection and retention. The Township of Armour ensures

all policies and practices reflect the requirements under the AODA and will continue to develop or update policies as necessary for compliance with this and other legislation.

Design of Public Spaces Standard:

The Design of Public Spaces standard focuses on removing barriers in public spaces and buildings that are newly constructed or redeveloped. Technical requirements have been developed for beach access, outdoor public use seating areas, outdoor play spaces, exterior paths of travel, service counters, maintenance, etc. Understanding a wide variety of barriers for persons with disabilities in the physical environment is essential to implementation of the standard. Staff will review the design standards that must be met and how they are meeting them. The Township understands the importance of a built environment that allows for independence and participation for persons with disabilities. Public spaces will receive regular inspections and preventative maintenance to ensure that accessible elements are in proper working order. If an accessible element (ramp, tactile surface, etc.) becomes damaged and is unusable a service disruption notification will be placed on the Township's website as well as the social media account. Emergency maintenance will take place to ensure that the accessible element is restored to working order as soon as possible.

In addition to the Design of Public Spaces Standard, the Ontario Building Code has been amended to include accessible requirements. The amended Building Code is used when the Township is issuing building permits and conducting building inspections.

Customer Service Standard:

The Customer Service Standard ensures that people with disabilities receive goods and services in a manner that considers their disability. Accessible customer service means dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity for all people. All staff is trained on the practices and procedures for accessible customer service including the following:

- The use of assistive devices by persons with disabilities;
- The use of service animals by persons with disabilities;
- The use of support persons by persons with disabilities;
- Notice of temporary disruptions in services and facilities.

Conclusion:

The Township of Armour continues in its efforts and commitment to remove barriers from within all municipal facilities – buildings, parks, and amenities. While the goals outlined in this are primarily directed towards persons with disabilities, many of the achievements associated with accessibility will benefit all municipal residents. In accordance with provincial legislation, the Township of Armour will continue to meet its compliance obligations by developing and implementing programs, policies and initiatives that create and maintain an accessible and inclusive community. The identification and removal of barriers will continue to be an ongoing activity for municipal staff.

Municipal Highlights:

The Township of Armour is located in the south east corner of the Parry Sound District, 14 kilometres north of the District of Muskoka with Highway # 11 passing through it from south to north. The Township is situated in the Almaguin Highlands Tourist area and the population increases in the summer months to between 4,000 and 5,000 people in the form of seasonal tourists using our trailer parks and resorts, and owners of seasonal properties around our many lakes. Snowmobiling is an active winter recreation sport in Armour Township, with well-maintained trails by the local snowmobile club. Our Township is a preferred destination because of our topography, picturesque scenery and amenities.

Armour Township shares services with the Township of Ryerson and the Village of Burk's Falls, these services are the Fire Department, the Landfill and Recycling Depot, the Arena and the Public Library. Armour Township also shares Economic Development services on a Regional basis.

Health Unit Services are provided by the North Bay Parry Sound District Health Unit.

Plan Development Working Group:

Staff and Council of the Township of Armour with consultation with members of the public developed this plan. This plan has been compiled using their personal experiences and consultation with the residents of the municipality. The Municipal Corporation of the Township of Armour is committed to providing quality programs and services that are accessible to all persons served by the municipality.

Initiative:

Council and staff of the Township of Armour will review the current status of all buildings, parks and playgrounds owned and operated by the municipality and general policies and procedures to identify, remove and where possible, prevent barriers for people with disabilities.

Decision Making Review:	Council
Review Methodologies:	Policy and Operational Review
Review Date:	Every 5 years
Identified Existing Barriers:	Environmental, Communication, Attitudinal, Technological and Systemic
Target Group for Plan:	General Public and Staff
Activity:	Update Accessibility Plan
Time Period of Activity:	2024-2029

Operational Review:

The Township of Armour is a small rural municipality with few public buildings. Over the years, Staff have provided courteous service and fulfilled requests for goods to all the public, providing for individual assistance to those with disabilities when the need arises.

Other Organizations and Agencies Participating in This Plan:

The Burk's Falls and District Historical Society is an active organization involved in the municipality. This group of community volunteers use the municipally owned building known as the Watt Century Farm House Heritage Centre, 827 Chetwynd Road, Burk's Falls. This heritage centre contains local artifacts and is seasonally opened to the public.

Municipal Buildings and Parks:

1. Municipal Office and Council Chambers, 56 Ontario Street

This single storey building with a full basement contains the municipal Administration Offices, Building Department and Council Chamber for the Township of Armour. The Waste Management Co-ordinator, By-law Enforcement Officer(s) and Economic Development Office is situated below level. This building is frequently used by the public. Disabled parking is provided and identified by signage. The front entrance is accessible via a ramp, complete with an automatic door opener. Council chambers is also wheelchair accessible. The building is

equipped with staff washrooms, staff kitchen facilities and storage areas. Two accessible public washrooms are provided. The Council chambers are equipped with auditory and visual aid equipment.

Identified Issues:

- Gravel parking lot may make building accessibility a challenge
- Stairs to the lower level
- Future employees with a disability will be afforded individual accommodation plans and be reviewed

Opportunities for Improvements:

When funds are available the following should be considered a priority:

- Pave parking lot of the municipal office building upon approval from MTO
- Install a chair lift

Over the past 5 years no accommodations have been requested concerning the above identified issues or opportunities for improvement.

2. Municipal Garage, 564 Garage Road

This is a single storey building which houses the road department trucks, grader, backhoe, excavator/brusher, lunchroom and storage. A sand/salt storage building is also located on this property. These buildings and property are not normally frequented by members of the public.

Identified Issues:

- Gravel parking lot may make building accessibility a challenge
- No automatic door opener
- No handicapped parking is designated
- A single step up is required to access the staff lunchroom

Opportunities for Improvements:

When funds are available the following should be considered a priority:

- Designate a handicapped parking location and pave that area
- Make staff lunchroom and washroom accessible

Over the past 5 years no accommodations have been requested concerning the above identified issues or opportunities for improvement.

3. Berriedale Community Centre, 232 North Pickerel Lake Road

This single storey building is not currently being used as a community centre, and is leased to a private individual who runs a seasonal antique store. No improvements are proposed for this structure.

4. Landfill/Recycling Centre, 141 Chetwynd Road

The landfill area is land that is used to accept household waste, and includes a designated drop off area accessible by the public. Recycling material is processed in a main building which is not accessed by the public. A steel Quonset building houses the designated area for the public to sort recyclables and is accessible from an asphalted parking area. A covered roof area is used seasonally as a re-use area for the public to drop off or pick-up reusable items. Signage to direct individuals with special needs are in place.

Identified Issues:

- Facility cannot accommodate staff with special needs in current condition
- Individuals with special needs cannot function independently in the facility's current condition

Over the past 5 years no accommodations have been requested concerning the above identified issues.

5. 12 Three Mile Lake Road

This property consists of a wood frame building and a wood framed shingled canopy for shelter. There is a gravel drive with a large grass and gravel parking area. The facility has been rented to a food vendor, who operates out of a personal trailer on an annual lease. No improvements are planned for this location at this time.

6. Katrine Community Centre, 6 Brown's Drive

This is a single storey building with a basement that is used as a community centre/meeting hall. The building is accessible via a ramp. The building includes a kitchen, storage, bar, office and washrooms. The baseball diamond area includes bleachers, picnic tables, a canteen with washrooms and a shelter. The Katrine Community Centre is an active facility in the municipality. In 2020, a technological renovation to allow for virtual meetings and presentations was installed. In 2021, a lit outdoor ice rink was installed on the property which serves as a basketball court in the summer. The ice rink is inspected daily during the operating season for hindrances to accessibility and safety. In 2023, the building had a complete and comprehensive renovation for accessibility improvements and greater public engagement opportunities through new technology. The facility is used by the public for community social and recreational events. The basement of this facility is used as a seniors' meeting and recreational area and is equipped with a chairlift. This is a multi-purpose service for both indoor and outdoor activities with accessible parking access. The paved parking lot also serves as a car pool parking area for the Almaguin region. A plan for additional renovations, subject to budget approvals and timing of construction to be determined.

Identified Issues:

- No accessible outdoor public use seating areas
- No lit sports field
- No playground

Over the past 5 years no accommodations have been requested.

7. Watt Century Farm House Heritage Centre, 827 Chetwynd Road

This two-storey historic building with an unfinished basement was constructed in 1902 and contains the Burk's Falls and District Historical Society's museum artifacts. The property was acquired by the Township from Northland Power in 2019 and is operated by community volunteers. The basement is not open to the public and does not contain any artifacts. The facility contains two levels of local artifacts and is a re-creation of an early 1900s-homestead. Numerous accessibility improvements have been made, including an access ramp with railing enhancements to the building, an electric chair lift to allow access to the upper level of the heritage centre, door bell, widening of doorways to allow for wheelchair access throughout the main level, visual fire alarms, stonework improvements to pathways for safe travel, and a seasonal rental of an accessible portable washroom on site. A plan for additional renovations, subject to funding, budget approvals and timing of construction to be determined.

Identified Issues:

- No handicapped parking is designated
- No accessible indoor washroom
- Gravel parking area may make accessibility a challenge
- No automatic door opener
- Stairs to the basement

The municipality strives to continue addressing accessibility concerns as they arise.

8. Doe Lake Municipal Park, 1014 Ferguson Road

This municipal park is complete with public beach, washroom building equipped with a wheelchair ramp and sensor lighting. The park has picnic tables, a shade structure, beach volleyball area, basketball pad and net, swings, and playground equipment. The playground equipment was upgraded in 2010 to include new equipment and barrier free play. The beach area has accessible access to the swim area with a paved ramp into the water. A separate new interlocking stone boat ramp was constructed in 2019 for watercraft. Accessible parking spaces are designated and signed. Weekly inspections of the playground are completed during the summer months for hindrances to accessibility and safety.

Identified Issues:

- Install new accessible picnic tables and ensure that the ground surface leading to and under the accessible tables is level, firm, and stable to accommodate mobility aids, and enough clear space around the accessible tables is provided so people using a mobility aid can approach the tables

Over the past 5 years no accommodations have been requested concerning the above identified issues.

9. Halcyon Shore Beach, across from 2159 Pickerel & Jack Lake Road

This public beach opened in the spring of 2017. The location offers a public beach, picnic tables, and playground equipment, including swings. The playground equipment is inspected weekly during the summer months for hindrances to accessibility and safety. A seasonal portable washroom is on site.

Identified Issues:

- Install new accessible picnic tables and ensure that the ground surface leading to and under the accessible tables is level, firm, and stable to accommodate mobility aids, and enough clear space around the accessible tables is provided so people using a mobility aid can approach the tables
- No handicapped parking is designated
- No accessible washroom

Over the past 5 years no accommodations have been requested concerning the above identified issues.

10. Three Mile Lake Public Beach, 5 Sunnylea Avenue

A plan for this new location is to be completed, subject to budget approvals; timing of construction to be determined. The Township of Armour acquired this property in 2022.

11. Richard Thomas Memorial Park, 134 Pickerel & Jack Lake Road

This park is formerly known as Thompson Rapids and is on the Magnetawan River. The location offers a picnic area with picnic tables and a seasonal portable

washroom on site. Parking is across the travelled road. The swimming area is not accessible to everyone due to the river rocks and rapids.

Identified Issues:

- Install new accessible picnic tables and ensure that the ground surface leading to and under the accessible tables is level, firm, and stable to accommodate mobility aids, and enough clear space around the accessible tables is provided so people using a mobility aid can approach the tables
- No handicapped parking is designated
- No accessible washroom
- The parking lot is across the travelled road from the public beach

Over the past 5 years no accommodations have been requested concerning the above identified issues.

12. Pickerel Lake Park, 180 Kent Road

This location offers public access to Pickerel Lake via a natural, sand and gravel boat launch and beach. There is a picnic area and a seasonal portable washroom on site.

Identified Issues:

- Install new accessible picnic tables and ensure that the ground surface leading to and under the accessible tables is level, firm, and stable to accommodate mobility aids, and enough clear space around the accessible tables is provided so people using a mobility aid can approach the tables
- No handicapped parking is designated
- No accessible washroom

Over the past 5 years no accommodations have been requested concerning the above identified issues.