



VILLAGE OF BURK'S FALLS

172 Ontario Street, Burk's Falls POA 1C0

www.burksfalls.net

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2025 to 2030: Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

Background:

The 20th Anniversary of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) will be celebrated in 2025. AODA is an important piece of legislation with the ultimate goal of creating an Ontario where it is possible for all people to realize their full potential.

The AODA sets out a process for the development and enforcement of accessibility standards in the province. These standards are intended to help reach a goal of an accessible Ontario by 2025. Ontario was one of the first Provinces and one of the first jurisdictions in the world to enact legislation which established a goal and timeframe for accessibility. It was also the first jurisdiction to legislate accessibility reporting requirements and to establish standards so that people with disabilities may benefit from more inclusive, barrier-free communities.

The AODA aims to have an accessible Ontario by 2025 through the implementation of mandatory accessibility standards in the areas of:

- Customer Service
- Information and Communications
- Employment
- Transportation
- Design of Public Space

It is known that everyone is likely to be affected by disability at some point in their lives – whether personally or indirectly through the experiences of family, friends or coworkers. Better access helps everyone. It improves the quality of life for our entire community.



Introduction:

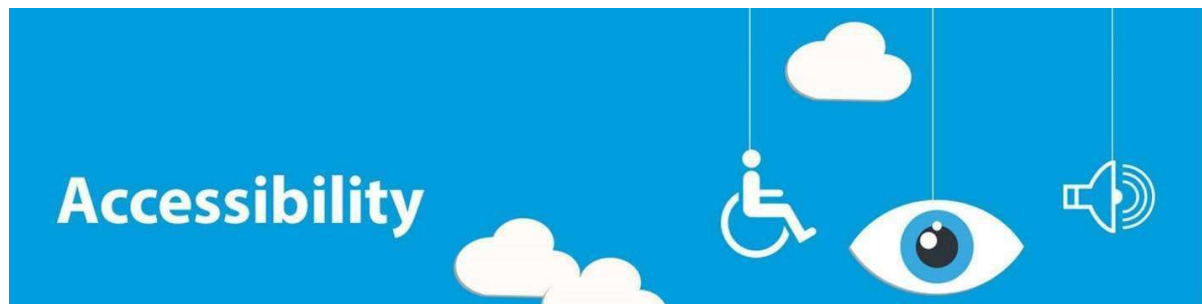
In December 2003, the Village of Burk's Falls created and adopted the first Accessibility Plan. The plan was revised for 2009, 2017, 2018 and 2021 as we continue to work towards the provincial requirement for full development, implementation and enforcement by January 2025. This updated Multi-Year Accessibility Plan for the Village of Burk's Falls builds on the accomplishments of the previous plan and sets new goals for moving forward.

Creating communities where every person can participate is important for people, business and building a sense of community. For this reason, it is important that the Village continue to plan for the future so that Village facilities and services are accessible and welcoming for everyone.

Accessibility Legislation:

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) became law in 2005. It sets accessibility requirements that an organization must meet in the areas of customer service, information and communications, employment, transportation and the design of public spaces. These are called standards. The Information and Communications, Employment, Transportation and the Design of Public Spaces Standards were all combined under the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR).

One of the IASR requirements is to prepare a multi-year accessibility plan. This is a shift from annual accessibility planning under the Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001 (ODA). The multi-year plan must include an organization's strategy to prevent and remove barriers and meet the requirements in the standards. Each year the organization must report on the progress in implementing the plan.



Statement of Commitment:

The Village of Burk's Falls is committed to inspiring all people in a way that allows them to maintain their dignity and independence. We believe in integration and equal opportunity. We are committed to meeting the needs of people with disabilities in a timely manner and will do so by preventing and removing barriers to accessibility and meeting accessibility requirements under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act*.

Village Progress to Date

Year	Accomplishment
2018	Accessibility upgrades to the concession stand at the Towne Theatre Installation of new doors with automatic openers at the Towne Theatre
	A redesign of the Village's website was completed to meet requirements of WCAG 2.0 Level AA
2021	New front steps, ramps and railing installed at Municipal Office New accessible reception desk installed at Municipal Office Accessibility upgrades to sinks and toilets at the Arena
2021	Front entrance of the Village Municipal Office was renovated to accommodate an accessible entrance New accessible doors and automatic door openers installed at the Municipal Office New accessible doors and automatic door openers installed at the Seniors Centre New accessible doors and new automatic door openers installed at the Library
2022	Compressed Work Week Policy was adopted to extend the hours of the Municipal Office from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. to 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
2024	Automatic door openers relocated at the Almaguin Highlands Health Centre for great accessibility.
2025	Provided updated training software for staff, Council and Village's volunteers on the requirements of the AODA, Accessible Customer Service, IASR, the Human Rights Code.
Ongoing	The Village continues to provide opportunities for members of the public to provide comments/complaints/feedback in relation to the accessibility of Village's services. Alternate formats are available upon request
	The Village permits service animals in Village facilities unless prohibited by law.

About the Plan:

The Village of Burk's Falls 2025 to 2030 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan outlines how the Village intends to reach its goal of meeting the needs of people with disabilities in a timely manner by preventing and removing barriers to accessibility and meeting accessibility requirements under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act. This plan includes an overview of the Village's strategy to prevent and remove barriers and to meet the requirements of the AODA and the IASR.

This plan includes a review of accessibility work that was completed throughout the duration of the previous Village plan (outlined above) and sets new goals and actions to be completed over the next four years. Many of these goals and actions may be ongoing throughout the length of the plan and beyond.

Identification of Barriers:

Barriers are obstacles which stand in the way of persons with a disability from being able to do many of the day-to-day activities that many people take for granted. It is defined as anything that prevents a person with a disability from fully participating in all aspects of their community. There are several categories of barriers to consider:

- **Physical/Architectural Barriers:** features, buildings or spaces which restrict or impede physical access (e.g., a doorway that is too narrow, event or meeting spaces which are inaccessible);
- **Informational and Communicational Barriers:** obstacles with processing, transmitting or interpreting information (e.g., print on an advertisement that is too small to read, busy or confusing signs/advertisements);
- **Attitudinal Barriers:** prejudgment or assumptions that directly or indirectly discriminate. (e.g., assuming that a person with vision loss cannot enjoy movies, TV or concerts, assuming that a person with a speech impairment cannot understand you);
- **Technological Barriers:** when technology cannot be or is not modified to support various assistive devices and/or software. (e.g., having only one way for residents to contact you, websites that do not provide for increased text size)
- **Systemic Barriers:** barriers within an organization's policies and procedures which do not consider accessibility. (e.g., people with disabilities are excluded



from events or event planning, not giving consideration to accommodation that may be required for a person with a disability to participate).

To identify barriers to be addressed by municipal accessibility plans, municipalities are required under the AODA to consult with the Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC). The creation of an AAC is not required when a municipality has a population of 10,000 people or less. Since the Village of Burk's Falls does not have an AAC, a working group comprised of appointed Municipal Staff have visited Municipal facilities to identify, remove and prevent barriers to people with disabilities as budget allocations.

Multi-Year Accessibility Initiatives: 2025 to 2030

The Village's primary focus moving forward will be to ensure that we are meeting the requirements of the AODA and the IASR. The legislation covers general requirements with respect to customer service, feedback and training, accessible information and communication, employment, transportation and the design of public spaces. This multi-year plan represents the Village's response to the requirements of the legislation and our commitment to providing public service in an accessible manner.

Goals/Actions: Customer Service

What is required?	Goals/Actions	Timeline
Accessible Customer Service training for staff, Council and volunteers	Provide updated training for staff, Council and Village volunteers on the requirements of the AODA, IASR, the Human Rights Code.	annually
Incorporate accessibility and the need of people with disabilities when procuring or acquiring goods, services and facilities.	Review and update the Village's procurement policy/by-law.	2025
Accessible Elections (the Clerk is required to plan for the identification, removal and prevention of barriers that affect electors and candidates during Municipal Elections)	Give consideration to continued use of alternative voting methods for the 2026 Municipal Election (e.g., Internet and Telephone Voting)	2026

Goals/Actions: Information and Communication

What is required?	Goals/Actions	Timeline
Provide information that is produced and controlled by the Village in alternate formats at no additional cost and in a timely manner.	Provide training to staff with respect to the use of plain language in writing, whenever possible. The Village will consult with the individual making the request to determine the most appropriate accessible format or communication support, based on the needs.	As required
Achieve compliance with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG 2.0).	Train administration staff on accessible writing for the web, accessible PDF documents and web content accessibility guidelines (WCAG 2.0).	As required
Create accessible resources and documents for use online.	Train administration staff on accessible writing for the web, accessible PDF documents and web content accessibility guidelines (WCAG 2.0).	As required

Goals/Actions: Employment

What is required?	Goals/Actions	Timeline
Ensure that recruitment, hiring, promotion and retention processes are inclusive and accommodation.	Continue to regularly update standard operating guidelines based on current legislation.	As required
Accommodate current employees who have or acquire a disability.	Develop a standard operating guideline for individual accommodation plans, when required.	As requested

Goals/Actions: Design of Public Spaces

What is required?	Goals/Actions	Timeline
Recreational trails and beach access routes	Ensure that members of the public and persons with disabilities are consulted when new trails are developed (e.g. location of rest areas). Ensure that any new trail signage includes information about the technical	As required

What is required?	Goals/Actions	Timeline
	aspects of the trail (length, slope, rest areas).	
Outdoor Public Use Eating Areas	Explore the possibility of purchasing and installing an accessible picnic table for Village.	As required
Outdoor Play Spaces	Ensure that all new and redeveloped outdoor play spaces consist of an area that includes play equipment that enhances the play opportunities and experiences for children and caregivers with various disabilities; consult with members of the public and people with disabilities on the features of the park. Include sensory components and active play, accessible ground cover.	As required
Exterior Paths of Travel; ensure that the technical aspects of the Design of Public Spaces Standards are followed (e.g. width, surface, slope, height of overhead obstacles, tactile walking surface indicators)		As required
Accessible Parking: provide Type A and B accessible parking spaces for off-street parking that includes access aisle and is on an accessible path of travel. Consult with members of the public regarding the need, location and design of on-street parking.		As required

2025 to 2030: Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

What is required?	Goals/Actions	Timeline
Maintenance: ensure that existing public spaces are in good working order and condition.	Continue to conduct regular health and safety inspections to identify any need for repair/improvement. .	Annually
Temporary Disruptions notifications	Procedure: Nature and cause of the disruption, Expected duration, Description of alternative facilities or services, if available Acceptable notification methods.	As required
Identify and plan for the removal of barriers in Village's owned spaces	Complete annual accessibility inspections utilizing the checklist formulated.	Annually

Goals/Actions: General

What is required?	Goals/Actions	Timeline
Ensure that the Village is compliant with Provincial Accessibility Legislation	Village staff will continue to monitor and follow amendments to accessibility legislation and respond/report to Council as necessary.	2025 to 2030
Compliance Reports to be filed with the Accessibility Directorate of Ontario (ADO)	Village staff will complete compliance reports for the province, as required.	2026, 2029
Accessibility Plan Status Report	Village staff will report to Council annually, by January 31 st of each year on the status of this Multi-Year Accessibility Plan.	2025-2030

Working Group Contact Information:

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Comments /Feedback

The Village of Burk's Falls is committed to ensuring that accessibility is considered throughout our services, facilities and business operations. Your feedback is welcome and helps us to identify other areas for improvement. Please contact us with your questions, ideas or comments:

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