



ANNUAL ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

2009 - 2011

TOWNSHIP OF WARWICK

October 2009 – September 2011

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Executive Summary

The purpose of the Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001 (ODA) is to improve opportunities for people with disabilities and to provide for their involvement in the identification, removal and prevention of barriers to their full participation in the life of the province. To this end, the ODA mandates that each municipality prepare an annual accessibility plan.

The report describes the measures that the Township has taken in the past, and the measures that will be taken during the year 2009-2011 to identify, remove and prevent barriers to people with disabilities that use the facilities and services of the municipality, including staff and other members of the community.

Aim

This report describes the measures that the Township of Warwick has taken in the past and the measures to identify, remove and prevent barriers to people with disabilities that use the facilities and services of the municipality including staff and other members of the community.

Objectives

This report:

- 1) Describes the process by which the municipality will identify, remove and prevent barriers to people with disabilities.
- 2) Reviews earlier efforts to remove and prevent barriers to people with disabilities.
- 3) Lists the facilities, policies, programs, practices and services that the municipality will review in the coming year to identify barriers to people with disabilities.
- 4) Describe the measures the municipality will take in the coming year to identify, remove and prevent barriers to people with disabilities.
- 5) Describe how the municipality will make this accessibility plan available to the public.

Description of the Township of Warwick

The Township of Warwick is a restructured municipality (1998) comprised of the former municipalities of the Village of Watford and the Township of Warwick. The new municipality has a population of approximately 4060 residents. There is no seasonal population in the municipality.

The municipality is responsible for the provision of municipal services throughout the municipality including (1) arena, (2) community halls, (1) library, (3) ball diamonds and park buildings, (2) fire halls, (2) works depots, (4) courts, and (1) municipal office.

The Township of Warwick Commitment to Accessibility Planning

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

The Mayor and Council authorized the Administrator/Treasurer to prepare an accessibility plan that will enable the Township of Warwick to meet these commitments and was given the mandate:

- Conduct research on barriers to people with disabilities in all facilities, regulations, policies, programs, practices and services offered by the Township of Warwick.
- List facilities, regulations, policies, programs, practices and services that may cause barriers to people with disabilities.
- Identify barriers that will be removed or prevented in the coming years.

A. RECENT & PREVIOUS BARRIER-REMOVAL INITIATIVES

During the last years, there have been informal initiatives to identify, remove and prevent barriers to people with disabilities.

i) Sidewalks

- During 2009 and 2010, residential sidewalks were replaced along Wall Street to handicap width. The total length replaced was approximately 545 meters.
- Works Department has continued to address sidewalk irregularities in Watford and in 2009 and 2010 the Township concentrated on sections along Nauvoo Road. For 2010 and 2011 work has been approved for approximately 500 meters.

ii) Recreation

- New handicap ramp deemed necessary at Centennial Hall in Watford will be installed during 2010/11 to access two floor levels.
- The old Watford Fire Hall/Museum is being renovated and in 2010/11 handicap washrooms etc. will be located on the main level, as well as adding entrances and provide additional room for access. (this project is 75% complete)
- A new soccer complex is now completed. The new club house/change rooms, washrooms and parking are all designed for handicapped.
- The local Watford Carnegie Library has been identified and approved by Council to install either a lift or elevator. Council applied for grant funding in 2009/10 but was turned down. Council has subsequently re-applied for grant funding for 2010/11 which included architectural designs and quotations for an addition to accommodate a wheelchair accessible lift, expansion of the existing main floor washroom to accommodate accessibility requirements, and the addition of a parking lot with handicap accessible spaces.
- Under the 2010 RinC grant the Watford Ball Park Booth and Washrooms were re-designed to include fully accessible washrooms, a 24 hour family/wheelchair accessible washroom, change rooms, and illumination lighting. There is also an adjacent splashpad. An accessible walkway was also constructed to join the following facilities – tennis courts, ball hockey court, walking track, booth/washrooms, splashpad, and ball diamonds.

- Warwick Park – a fully accessible Park Booth and Washrooms have been constructed in 2010 which was fully funded by the Township (no grants).

iii) Handicapped Parking

- All handicapped parking spaces were repainted in 2010.
- Arena – the outside entrance at the Arena to the adjacent Track, has been improved to accommodate parents with baby strollers, etc. The Arena is being re-designed to accommodate a wheelchair accessible lift to allow persons with disabilities to access the upstairs (heated area for viewing events such as Hockey Tournaments, Figure Skating Carnival, Ball Hockey Tournaments, etc.). This project will require Provincial/Federal grant funding.
- Centennial Hall and the Municipal Office - in 2010 a buzzer-type bell is being installed, for election purposes, to assist such persons (ie disabled, persons with walkers, parents with strollers) to enter the said buildings to vote.
- In 2010 Centennial Ave. (Arena and Centennial Hall are located on Centennial Ave.) has been re-surfaced and re-lined for parking access and two spaces are allocated for handicapped parking.

iv) Municipal Banking Options

The municipality continues to offer a range of banking options for residents conducting business with the municipality. Water and tax bills can be paid by computer banking.

v) Accessibility Training

In 2010 all municipal staff has been trained, as per the Ministry's requirement, under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act. Ongoing training is conducted for all new employees.

vi) Informal site audit of municipally owned buildings

Completed in August/2010

vii) Web Site / E-mail

The Township’s website is continually updated and staff will update the Council information after the 2010 municipal elections.

vii) Handicapped Parking Spaces

During this period additional handicapped parking spaces were considered by Council, but the existing locations are deemed adequate in Watford, except at the Watford Carnegie Library. We have proposed eliminating the one handicapped parking space on Nauvoo Road (a busy County Road) to installing two handicapped parking spaces in the proposed back parking lot (if approved for grant funding).

B. BARRIER IDENTIFICATION METHODOLOGIES

Barrier identification methods were examined in the following ways:

Staff: Staff reviewed the properties and facilities to evaluate accessibility and barriers at each location.

Operational Review: Staff visited various sites to check each facility’s accessibility.

C. BARRIERS IDENTIFIED

The informal site audit identified some barriers in all municipally owned facilities. Over the next several years, the municipality has decided to review and focus on the removal of these barriers. Barriers have been divided into two groups ie: Systemic Barriers and Facility Barriers.

<i>Systemic Barrier</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Strategy for Removal/prevention</i>
1) Municipal Road Signage	Information	The municipality phase out existing road signage

		with small print and replace with larger print signs that will meet code. Continue to install signs that warn motorists of persons with disabilities
2) Handicap Parking Spots	Information	Recent study completed - Improve painting and signage for all spots
3) Municipal Office	Information	Automated front doors are required
4) Watford Carnegie Library	Grant	If approved for grant, Twp. to budget in 2011 for a wheelchair accessible lift and a fully accessible washroom
5). Watford Arena	Grant	If approved for a grant, Twp. to budget in 2010 for a wheelchair accessible lift

Barriers that will be addressed in the future

As indicated, above, two of the projects (Arena and Library) are dependent upon the municipality receiving grant funding from the Provincial and/or Federal governments. Also, Senior Management Advisory Committee will continue to identify further systemic barriers and prepare a report for council’s consideration.

D. REVIEW AND MONITORING PROCESS

The Township of Warwick plans to consult with people with disabilities through the Upper Tier Accessibility Advisory Committee to further identify accessibility issues and update the Local Accessibility Plan to meet the accessibility guidelines in the future.

Services of the County Planning and Building Inspection Department will be utilized to advise the code and accessibility guidelines during retrofit procedures.

Staff will provide the newly appointed Council with the said recommendations, for consideration in the 2011 budget deliberations.

E. COMMUNICATION OF THE PLAN

Copies of the plan are available in the Municipal Office and Libraries in the Township of Warwick. The plan will also be included on the Township website:

www.warwicktownship.ca. On request, the report will be made available on hard copy, in large print or computer disk.