



8.0 – INTEGRATED ACCESSIBILITY STANDARDS REGULATION POLICY

PART 1 GENERAL

1. Purpose:

In 2005, the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)* was passed. Under the authority of the Act, the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR) was established mandating both obligated public and private businesses and organizations to comply with specific accessibility standards in the areas of Information and Communications, Employment, and Transportation within explicit timeframes. The Regulation came into force July 1, 2011. In December 2012, the final standard was passed mandating accessibility standards applicable to the design of public spaces. The standard came into effect January 1, 2013, with compliance required by January 1, 2016. The objective of the standards established under Regulation 191/11 and 413/12 and others established under the Act are to ensure a barrier-free Ontario by January 1, 2025.

This policy identifies the measures that the Town intends to undertake to fulfill the requirements of the standards established under the IASR within the required timelines. This policy recognizes that the IASR does not replace or affect existing legal obligations under the *Human Rights Code* or other laws respecting the accommodation of people with disabilities and that both pieces of legislation must be adhered to.

2. Policy Statement:

“*In pursuit of the quality of life*” is the Corporation of the Town of Midland’s motto. In keeping with this motto and guided by the four core principles of Dignity, Independence, Integration and Equal Opportunity, the Town of Midland is committed to providing equal access to its goods and services and equal opportunity for all by identifying, removing and preventing barriers to people with disabilities. The measures outlined in this policy demonstrate the Town’s continued commitment to a barrier-free community and its efforts to ensure compliance with the accessibility standards in the areas of Information and Communications, Employment, Transportation and the Design of Public Spaces.

4. Definitions:

- a) “**Accessible Formats**” may include, but are not limited to, large print, recorded audio and electronic formats, Braille and other formats usable by persons with disabilities;
- b) “**Accommodation**” means the special arrangement made or assistance provided so that persons with disabilities can participate in the experiences available to persons without disabilities. Accommodation will vary depending on the person’s unique needs;
- c) “**Communication Supports**” may include, but are not limited to, captioning, alternative and augmentative communication supports, plain language, sign language and other supports that facilitate effective communications;
- d) “**Communications**” means the interaction between two or more persons or entities, or any combination of them, where information is provided, sent or received;
- e) “**Conventional Transportation Service**” means public passenger transportation services on transit buses that operate solely within the Province of Ontario that are provided by a designated public sector organization but does not include specialized transportation services.
- f) “**Information**” includes data, facts and knowledge that exists in any format, including text, audio, digital or images, and that conveys meaning.
- g) “**Internet Website**” means a collection of related web pages, images, videos or other digital assets that are addressed relative to a common Uniform Resource Identifier (URI) and is accessible to the public.
- h) “**Kiosk**” means an interactive electronic terminal, including a point-of-sale device, intended for public use that allows users to access one or more services or products or both.
- i) “**Mobility Assistive Device**” means a cane, walker, wheelchair, scooter or similar aid.
- j) “**Redeployment**” means the reassignment of employees to other departments or jobs within the organization as an alternative to layoff, when a particular job or department has been eliminated.
- k) “**Specialized Transportation Services**” means public passenger transportation services that operate solely within the Province of Ontario, are provided by a designated public sector transportation organization, and are designed to transport persons with disabilities.

l) “**Town**” means the Town of Midland.

m) “**Web Content Accessibility Guidelines**” means the world wide web consortium recommendation, dated December 2008, entitled “Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0.

5. General Provisions:

Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

The Town of Midland’s Multi-Year Accessibility Plan outlines the corporate strategy for identifying, removing and preventing barriers in accordance with the timeframes stipulated under the AODA’s IASR.

The Town will report annually on the progress of efforts undertaken to see the objectives identified within the Plan through to fruition. A status report will be posted on the Town’s website and will be provided in an accessible format upon request. The Plan will be reviewed and updated at least once every five years in consultation with the Midland Accessibility Advisory Committee and feedback from the public.

The Town will file an accessibility report with a director by the specified timeline and then bi-annually thereafter, as required.

Procuring or Acquiring Goods, Services or Facilities

The Town will incorporate accessibility criteria and features when procuring or acquiring goods, services or facilities, except where it is not practical to do so in which case, if requested, an explanation will be provided.

Self-Service Kiosk

The Town will take into consideration the needs of persons with disabilities and incorporate accessibility features when designing, procuring or acquiring self-service kiosks.

Training

The Town will ensure that training on the requirements of the accessibility standards referred to in the Regulation and on the *Human Rights Code* as it pertains to persons with disabilities is provided to all employees, members of Council, Committee members, Board members and volunteers.

Training will include the following:

- Information about achieving accessibility by 2025;

- The requirements of the three standards: Information and Communication, Employment and Transportation, and on the Human Rights Code: (appropriate to duties of employees, volunteers and other persons) as they apply to the Town's business; and
- The Town's policies, practices and procedures relating to the Integrated Accessibility Standards.

In addition to the above, conventional and specialized transit operators (employees and volunteers) will receive training on the safe use of accessibility equipment and features, acceptable modifications to procedures in situations where temporary barriers exist or accessibility equipment on a vehicle fails, and emergency preparedness and response procedures.

Timing of Training: Training will be provided to all new Level 1 members on a quarterly basis. The Town will also provide ongoing training with respect to changes in policies, practices and procedures. The Human Resources Department will keep records of the training provided, including the dates and names of persons attending.

Level 1 Training - Municipal: Individuals in the following positions will be provided with in-house training: Council Members, Committee Members, Board Members, All Municipal Staff, and Volunteers.

Level 2 Training - Third Parties & Contract Agencies: The training requirement for these individuals will be met by requiring that they provide copies of their policy and procedures regarding Accessible Customer Service to the municipality as proof of training being provided.

PART II

ACCESSIBLE INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS

6. Information and Communication Standard:

The Town will create, provide and receive information and communications in ways that are accessible to people with disabilities.

If it is determined that it is not technically feasible to convert the information or communications, or the technology to convert the information or communication is not readily available, the person requiring the information will be provided with:

- a) an explanation as to why the information or communications are unconvertible; and
- b) a summary of the unconvertible information or communications.

7. Accessible Formats and Communication Supports:

Upon request, the Town shall provide or arrange for accessible formats and communication supports for persons with disabilities about its goods, services or facilities:

- a) In a timely manner that takes into account the persons' accessibility needs due to a disability;
- b) At a cost that is no more than the regular cost charged to other persons;
- c) By consulting with the person making the request and determining suitability of an accessible format or communication support;
- d) By notifying the public about the availability of accessible formats and communication supports.

8. Emergency Information:

Emergency procedures, plans or public safety information produced by the Town and made available to the public will be provided in an accessible format or with appropriate communication supports, as soon as practicable, upon request.

9. Feedback:

The Town of Midland's Accessible Customer Service Policy is available on the Town's website and provides an overview of the process in place for receiving feedback on the accessibility of its goods and services. Upon request, the Town will provide accessible formats and communication supports when receiving and responding to feedback.

10. Website Accessibility:

The Town shall make their internet website and web content conform with the World Wide Web Consortium Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 initially at Level A and increasing to Level AA as per IASR requirements.

11. Public Libraries:

The Midland Public Library Board shall:

- Provide access to or arrange for the provision of access to accessible materials where they exist;

- Make information about the availability of accessible materials publicly available and shall provide information in accessible format or with appropriate communication supports, upon request;

PART III ACCESSIBLE EMPLOYMENT

12. Employment Standard:

The Employment Standard builds upon the existing requirements under the *Ontario Human Rights Code* in relation to how to accommodate individuals with disabilities throughout the job application process and the employment relationship. It applies in respect to employees and does not apply to volunteers and other non-paid individuals.

13. Recruitment:

The Town shall notify employees and the public about the availability of accommodations for applicants with disabilities:

- During the recruitment process when job applicants are individually selected to participate in an assessment or selection process;
- If a selected applicant requests an accommodation. The Town shall consult with the applicant and provide or arrange for the provision of a suitable accommodation that takes into account the applicant's disability;
- When making offers of employment, successful applicants will be informed of the Town's policies for accommodating employees with disabilities.

14. Employee Notification:

The Town shall inform its employees of its policies used to support its employees with disabilities, including but not limited to, policies on the provision of job accommodations that take into account an employee's accessibility needs due to a disability.

Employees will be notified of changes to the Town's policies for supporting employees with disabilities.

New employees will be informed of the Town's policies as soon as practicable after they begin their employment.

15. Accessible Formats:

Where an employee with a disability requests it, the Town will consult with the employee to provide or arrange for the provision of accessible formats and communication supports suitable to the employee for:

- Information that is needed in order to perform the employee's job;
- Information that is generally available to employees in the workplace.

16. Individual Accommodation Plan (IAP):

The Town shall have in place a written process for the development of a documented individual accommodation plan for employees with disabilities that includes the specific elements as mandated under section 28 (2) of Ontario Regulation 191/11.

17. Return to Work:

The Town will have in place a return to work process for employees who have been absent from work due to a disability and require disability-related accommodations in order to return to work. Such processes shall be documented and shall outline the steps that the Town will take to facilitate the return to work and include an individual accommodation plan.

18. Performance Management, Career Development and Advancement, and Redeployment:

The Town will take into account the accessibility needs and/or individual accommodation plans of employees when:

- Using performance management processes;
- Providing career development and advancement information; and
- Using redeployment procedures.

19. Workplace Emergency Response Information:

The Town shall 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; and to the person designated by the Town to provide assistance to the employee, if assistance is required and upon the employee's consent;

- As soon as practicable after becoming aware of the need for accommodation due to the employee's disability; and will review the individualized workplace emergency response information when the employee moves to a different location in the organization, when overall accommodations needs or plans are reviewed and when the employer reviews its general emergency response policies.

While the Employment Standard under the IASR applies in respect to employees only, the Town believes it is good business practice to apply the standard to unpaid staff and volunteers where applicable.

PART IV ACCESSIBLE TRANSPORTATION

20. Transportation Standard

Conventional Transportation

As a conventional transportation service provider, the Town will:

- Hold annually at least one public meeting involving persons with disabilities to ensure that they have an opportunity to review and provide feedback on the accessibility plan.
- Provide, upon request, current information on accessibility equipment and features of their vehicles, routes and services;
- In the event of an accessible equipment malfunction, take reasonable steps to accommodate persons with disabilities who would otherwise use the equipment and ensure equipment is repaired as soon as practicable;
- Conduct employee and volunteer accessibility training on the safe use of accessible equipment and features, acceptable modifications to procedures where temporary barriers exist or accessible equipment fails; emergency preparedness and response procedures that provide for the safety of persons with disabilities.
- Refrain from charging a fare to a support person who is accompanying a disabled person if the person with the disability has demonstrated their need for a support person;
- Include in its Accessibility Plan a description of the procedures for dealing with accessible equipment failure, and the process for managing, evaluating and taking action on customer feedback (conventional);

- Upon the request of a person with a disability, deploy lifting devices, ramps or portable bridge plates, ensure adequate time to safely board, be secured and deboard, provide assistance for these activities, and if possible, provide for the safe and careful storage of mobility assistive devices.
- Ensure that persons with disabilities are able to board or deboard at the closest available safe location, that is not an official stop, as determined by the operator and taking into consideration the disabled person's preferences, if the official stop is not accessible and the safe location is along the same transit route.
- Ensure that transit operators promptly report to the Manager of Maintenance Operations where a transit stop is temporarily inaccessible or temporary barrier exists.
- Ensure courtesy seating is located as close as practicable to the entrance door of the transit vehicle, is clearly marked, and that a communication strategy is in place that informs the public about the purpose of courtesy seating.
- Where a route or scheduled service is temporarily changed and the change is known in advance of the commencement of the trip, make available alternate accessible arrangements to transfer persons with disabilities to their route destination where alternate arrangements for persons without disabilities are inaccessible, and communicate this information in a manner that takes into account the person's disability.
- Ensure the provision of pre-boarding and on-board audible verbal announcements of the route, direction, destination, destination points, or next major stop. Pre-boarding and on-board announcements will be provided electronically by **January 1, 2017**, in accordance with IASR standards.
- Ensure all conventional transportation vehicles manufactured on or after January 1, 2013, fulfill the technical requirements mandated under sections 53-61 of the IASR.
- Allow a person with a disability to travel with a medical aid.

Specialized Transportation

Specialized transportation services in the Town are provided by an alternate service provider - Community Reach. The Town is committed to working in cooperation with Community Reach to strive for full compliance with the IASR timelines mandated.

In its provision of specialized transportation service, Community Reach will:

- Use the three qualifying categories of eligibility: Unconditional, Temporary and Conditional, in conjunction with an Eligibility Application, in determining a person's eligibility for specialized transportation services. A person whose eligibility has not been determined within 14 calendar days of applying will be considered to have temporary eligibility until a decision on his or her eligibility has been made.
- Develop procedures for granting temporary eligibility earlier than 14 calendar days when the applicant needs specialized transportation services because of an emergency or on compassionate grounds. This applies only when no other accessible transportation services are available to meet the individual's need.
- Make specialized transportation services available to visitors and develop criteria to determine who falls into the category of visitor including policies respecting the collection, use and disclosure of personal information collected to determine eligibility.
- Ensure the provision of origin to destination services within the Town's service area taking into account and accommodating its passengers' abilities.
- Ensure the same hours and days of service as its conventional transportation services.
- Provide same day service to the extent that is available, and where not available, accept booking requests through an accessible means up to three hours before the published end of the service period on the day before the intended day of travel.
- Where service delays may occur, provide information on the duration of the service delay to affected passengers by a method agreed to by the specialized transportation service provider and passenger.
- Ensure that no restrictions, policies or operational practices are implemented that limit the number of trips a person with a disability is able to request or unreasonably limits the availability of the specialized transportation services.
- Ensure, where space is available, that dependants are able to travel with a person with disabilities provided such an accommodation does not result in the denial of service to other persons with disabilities.
- Provide, upon request, current information on accessibility equipment and features of their vehicles, routes and services;

- In the event of an accessible equipment malfunction, take reasonable steps to accommodate persons with disabilities who would otherwise use the equipment and ensure equipment is repaired as soon as practicable;
- Conduct employee and volunteer accessibility training on the safe use of accessible equipment and features, acceptable modifications to procedures where temporary barriers exist or accessible equipment fails; emergency preparedness and response procedures that provide for the safety of persons with disabilities.
- Refrain from charging a fare to a support person who is accompanying a disabled person if the person with the disability has demonstrated their need for a support person;
- Include in its Accessibility Plan a description of the procedures for dealing with accessible equipment failure, and the process for managing, evaluating and taking action on customer feedback (conventional);
- Include in its Accessibility Plan the process for estimating the demand for specialized transportation services including the development of steps to reduce wait times.
- Ensure fare parity, consistent fare structure and payment options for its conventional and specialized transportation services, including the provision of alternative options to persons with disabilities who cannot, due to their disability, use a fare payment option.

Accessible Taxicabs

In addition to conventional and specialized transportations services provided in the Town, taxis (licensed by the Municipality) play a key role in the provision of transportation to residents and visitors by providing door-to-door service, 24-hours a day; seven days a week. Currently there are no on-demand accessible taxicabs licensed by the Town.

In meeting the requirements mandated under the IASR, the Town will:

- Consult with the Midland Accessibility Advisory Committee, persons with disabilities and the public to determine the proportion of accessible taxicabs required in the community, including steps to meet the need;
- Include in its Accessibility Plan the progress made by the municipality to meet the accessible taxi needs of the community;
- Ensure that Town licensed taxicabs do not charge a higher fare or additional fee to persons with disabilities;

- Ensure that Town licensed taxicabs do not charge a fee for the storage of assistive devices;
- Ensure that Town licensed taxicabs have appropriate information displayed both on the rear bumper and available in an accessible format to passengers.

PART V DESIGN OF PUBLIC SPACES (THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT)

The Design of Public Spaces standard is specific to new construction and significant redevelopment of public spaces that the Town intends to maintain.

21. Exterior Elements

The Town recognizes that an accessible built environment is key to ensuring full participation and independence for persons with disabilities. The Town continues to be proactive in its approach to ensuring accessibility for people with disabilities and has been modifying existing exterior infrastructure (parks, roads, sidewalks, etc.) for a number of years now to permit full accessibility.

Recreational Trails

When contemplating new construction and significant redevelopment, the Town will:

- Consult with the public, persons with disabilities and the Midland Accessibility Advisory Committee regarding the slope of the trail, the need for and location of ramps, and the need for rest, passing and viewing areas, amenities on the trail and any other relevant features.
- Ensure compliance with all mandatory technical requirements.

Beach Access Routes

When contemplating new construction and significant redevelopment, the Town will:

- Ensure compliance with all mandatory technical requirements.

Outdoor Public Use Eating Areas

When contemplating new construction and significant redevelopment, the Town will:

- Ensure that at least 20 percent of tables are accessible to persons using mobility aids including knee and toe clearance underneath the table.
- Ensure the ground surface leading to and under tables is level, firm and stable, and includes a clear ground space to permit a forward approach.

Outdoor Play Spaces

When contemplating new construction and significant redevelopment, the Town will:

- Incorporate accessibility features, such as sensory and active play components.
- Ensure a ground surface that is firm, stable and has attenuating properties for injury prevention and sufficient clearance to provide children and caregivers the ability to move through, in and around the outdoor play space.
- Consult with the public, persons with disabilities and the Midland Accessibility Advisory Committee on the needs of children and caregivers.

Exterior Paths of Travel (including ramps, stairs, curb ramps, depressed curbs, accessible pedestrian signals, and rest areas)

When contemplating new construction and significant redevelopment, the Town will:

- Consult with the public, persons with disabilities and the Midland Accessibility Advisory Committee, where applicable.
- Ensure compliance with all mandatory technical requirements.

Accessible Off-Street Parking

When contemplating new construction and significant redevelopment, the Town will:

- Meet the minimum number of accessible parking spaces as mandated.
- Provide both Type A and Type B parking spaces for use of persons with disabilities including access aisles.
- Erect signage that distinctly indicates that the parking space is for the use of persons with disabilities.
- Ensure compliance with all mandatory technical requirements.

Accessible On-Street Parking

- Will consult with the public, persons with disabilities and the Midland Accessibility Advisory Committee, where applicable.
- Ensure compliance with all mandatory technical requirements.

22. Service Counters

The Town will:

- Ensure a minimum of one service counter that accommodates a mobility aid for each type of service provided and clearly identified signage where there are multiple queuing lines and service counters.
- Ensure that each service counter accommodates a mobility aid, where a single line serves a single or multiple counters.
- Ensure proper countertop height, knee clearance and floor space to accommodate a person seated in a mobility aid.

23. Fixed Queuing Guides

The Town will when constructing new fixed queuing guides:

- Ensure sufficient width and floor area to allow for the passage of mobility aids and mobility assistive devices, as well sufficient clear floor area to permit mobility aids to maneuver when queuing lines change direction.
- Ensure fixed queuing guides are cane detectable.

24. Waiting Areas

The Town will when constructing new or redeveloping an existing waiting area where seating will be stationary:

- Ensure a minimum of three per cent is accessible seating.

25. Maintenance

To ensure the continued availability of accessible elements in public spaces, the Town will:

- Develop procedures for preventative and emergency maintenance.
- Develop procedures for dealing with temporary disruptions.