

# MULTI-YEAR ACCESSIBILITY PLAN



THE CORPORATION OF  
THE TOWNSHIP OF NIPIGON  
52 Front Street, Nipigon ON P0T 2J0

2023-2028

## INTRODUCTION

The Township of Nipigon is located in Northwestern Ontario in the District of Thunder Bay and is east of the City of Thunder Bay. As per Statistics Canada - the 2021 Census, the population of the Township of Nipigon is 1,473 with 663 private households.

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) is a law established in 2005 by the government of Ontario in Canada to develop and enforce accessibility standards for government, businesses, nonprofits, and public sector organizations. Their goal for the province of Ontario is to be accessible to people with disabilities by 2025.

The purpose of the AODA is to develop, implement and enforce standards for accessibility related to goods, services, facilities, employment, accommodations and buildings. The target date for reaching this goal is no later than January 1, 2025.

The AODA is made up of five Standards, and a number of General Requirements.

The Standards include:

- Customer Service Standard;
- Information and Communications Standard;
- Employment Standard;
- Transportation Standard;
- Design of Public Spaces Standard.

The AODA standards are part of the Integrated accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR). The IASR includes, in addition to requirements specific to each standard, the following General Requirements:

- Accessibility training for staff and volunteers;
- Developing an accessibility policy;
- Creating a multi-year accessibility plan updating it every five years;
- Considering accessibility in procurement and designing.

This plan describes the goals and progress that the Township of Nipigon has set and rectified in the past, as well as goals that the Township has set for the future, identifying the need for the removal and prevention of barriers for people with disabilities who are either employed by the Township or utilize the facilities and services that the Township provides.

The Multi-Year Accessibility Plan is a requirement under the AODA and the IASR. The Plan offers an organizational strategy to prevent and remove barriers and enact the requirements contained within the standards. This plan will be reviewed and updated with open consultation provided to the residents of the Township of Nipigon including customers with disabilities and businesses within the Township.

## **COMMITMENT TO ACCESSIBILITY PLANNING**

The Township of Nipigon is committed to ongoing efforts toward achieving the accessibility of the requirements of the IASR, as well as making improvements based on innovative ideas and input from members of the public, and staff. The Municipality continues to plan to ensure its services, programs and facilities are inclusive and accessible for all and strives to excellence in serving all customers including people with disabilities and encourages individuals with disabilities to take advantage of the many services made available by the Township of Nipigon.

## **MULTI-YEAR ACCESSIBILITY PLAN OVERVIEW**

The 2022-2026 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan for the Municipality is a living document that is designed to continually meet the requirements of the AODA and its standards regulation. Different experiences and background are valuable in creating a Plan that supports an inclusive community through growth and change. With many of the timelines for specific standards having been met by 2021, a key aspect of this Plan will focus on monitoring and improving upon goals and strategies that are already in place and looking at how to provide better services to the community through new opportunities and public feedback.

The Plan contains a section for each domain of the IASR, as well as an additional section that covers content beyond the scope of the Standards. Each section of the Plan sets out a standard-specific goal and identifies strategies for achieving these goals. Examples of specific actions to be undertaken are provided at the end of this document, but are not intended to limit the potential scope of progress toward a barrier-free Municipality.

Opportunities to influence accessibility during the term of the Plan will be considered on an ongoing basis. The Plan will inform and work alongside other guiding documents and activities undertaken by the Municipality and community partners. The Municipality will monitor and report on progress toward the Plan's action items annually and will conduct a review and update of the Plan every five years.

This Plan furthers the municipal commitment to continue building a barrier-free community in which people of all abilities can enjoy the full extent of life.

# IMPLEMENTATION AND PROGRESS ON THE AODA REGULATIONS

The following outlines the Township of Nipigon's commitment and its progress in meeting accessibility standards as set out in the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) This plan applies to all Township employees, volunteers and to third parties who provide services or facilities to the public on behalf of the Township.

## CUSTOMER SERVICE STANDARDS

### Commitment

Continued awareness of the Accessible Customer Service Standard ensuring that all residents and visitors with disabilities are treated with respect, dignity, inclusion and independence and are welcome to all of our facilities and municipal programs. The township continues to provide upgrades to our facilities to ensure that persons with disabilities are accommodated.

### Assistive Devices

We will ensure that our employees are trained and familiar with the various assistive devices we have on site or that we provide which may be used by customers with disabilities while accessing our goods or services. The Township of Nipigon will only use facilities for meetings and public events that are accessible for persons with disabilities who use mobility aids and devices or have other facility-related needs.

### Communications

We will communicate accordingly with persons with disabilities. We will train our employees on how to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities.

### Service Animals

We welcome persons with disabilities and their service animals. Service animals are allowed on the parts of our premises that are open to the public. We will ensure that our employees are trained on how to interact with persons with disabilities who are accompanied by a service animal.

### Support Persons

We welcome people with disabilities who are accompanied by a support person. We will ensure that our employees are trained on how to interact with persons with disabilities who are accompanied by a support person.

### Notice of Temporary Disruption

In the event of a planned or unexpected disruption to services or facilities for customers with disabilities in the Municipal Office or the Community Centre, the Township of Nipigon will notify customers promptly. Notices will include information regarding the disruption, the anticipated duration of the disruption and a description of alternative facilities or services, if available. Notices will be provided via the Township's website, the Township's Facebook Page, and the bulletin boards in the Municipal Office and Community Centre, should there be a lengthy disruption.

### Training

The Township of Nipigon will provide ongoing and refresher training to employees and volunteers on delivering accessible customer service on the purposes of the AODA and requirements of the Accessibility Standards. The training provided shall be appropriate to the duties of the employee, volunteer or third party and take place, as soon as practicable.

### Feedback Process

Customers who wish to provide feedback on the Township of Nipigon's provision of goods and services to persons with disabilities can submit the feedback form as per Appendix "A", available in the Municipal Office; or on the Township's website, verbally or by email.

### Progress

- Train all employees, volunteers and third-party providers who serve the Township of Nipigon's customers or those who make plans and policies that shape how the Township's services are delivered.
- Review and update plans, policies, procedures, and practices regularly to ensure high quality, accessible customer service.
- File compliance reports as required with the Ministry of Community and Social Services, Accessibility Directorate of Ontario.
- Consult, research, and implement improvements to services and facilities as they relate to the Accessible Customer Service Standards.

### Goals

- Continue to train employees, volunteers and third-party providers who serve the public or make plans or policies that shape how services are delivered.
- Review and update policies, plans, procedures, and practices regularly to ensure high quality, accessible customer service.
- Continue to file compliance reports as required with the Ministry of Community and Social Services, Accessibility Directorate of Ontario.

## INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION

The Township of Nipigon shall be obligated to provide or arrange for accessible formats and communication supports for the persons with disabilities.

When the Township of Nipigon prepares emergency procedures, plans or public safety information and makes the information available to the public, the obligated organization shall provide the information in an accessible format or with appropriate communication supports, as soon as practicable, upon request.

### Progress

- New Township website that conforms to the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 that allow people with and without disabilities to have access to the information they want and need from our website.
- Provide, upon request, accessible or alternative formats when feasible.

### Goals

- Continue training and updating current plans, policies, and procedures.

## EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS

The Township of Nipigon is committed to providing equal employment opportunities for persons with disabilities, as well as meeting their accessibility and accommodation needs in a suitable timeframe, consistent with the principles of independence, dignity, integration, and equal opportunity.

The Township has adopted an Accessibility Policy which includes a section on 'Employment' which outlines the requirements established under the Integrated Accessibility Standards, Ontario Regulation 191/11 of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, as they relate to Employment Standards and that demonstrates how the Township will comply with these requirements.

### Progress

Adopted the Accessibility Policy that outlines requirements under the Regulation.

### Goals

Continue training and updating current plans, policies, and procedures. Articulate the availability of accommodations and alternative methods to candidates during the recruitment process. Continue with periodic review of policies and procedures to ensure ongoing compliancy with the Employment Standards Act.

## **TRANSPORTATION STANDARDS**

The Township of Nipigon will Continue to monitor potential partnerships with neighbouring municipalities for on- demand accessible transportation services for persons with disabilities.

## **DESIGN OF PUBLIC SPACES STANDARDS**

The goal of the Accessibility Standards for the Design of Public Spaces is to remove barriers in public spaces and buildings in order to make it easier for all Ontarians, including people with disabilities, seniors and families, to access these spaces and buildings. The standard for public spaces only applies to new construction and planned redevelopment.

The Township of Nipigon shall continue to strive to meet accessibility requirements when constructing and maintaining new or redeveloped elements of public spaces.

When undertaking new construction or redevelopment, the Township will incorporate accessibility and design, criteria and features when procuring or acquiring goods, services or facilities, except where it is not practicable or feasible to do so.

The Township will incorporate public consultation into existing process wherever possible, to assist Council and staff in identifying and breaking down barriers.

## **REVIEWING AND MONITORING OF THE PROCESS**

Council and staff are committed to following this Multi-Year Accessibility Plan. This plan will be updated every five years and reviewed annually, thus allowing Council, employees, and the public to monitor the goals identified in this plan, the progress in which the Township has achieved, and the need for future goals to remove all barriers under the Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001 (ODA) and the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA).

## **COMMUNICATION OF THE PLAN**

The Multi-Year Accessibility Plan will be posted at the Municipal Office and on the Township's website making it available to persons with disabilities for their perusal and review. The Township will participate in opportunities to educate and raise awareness amongst the public about accessibility and inclusion.

Should a copy in braille be requested, Council and Staff will make every effort to accommodate through inquiry to the Canadian National Institute for the Blind (CNIB).

## **CONCLUSION:**

The 2023-2028 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan provides guidance to help ensure that persons of all abilities can actively participate in a community that is barrier-free by reducing and eliminating barriers. The Township continues to focus on ensuring the quality of life that community residents and visitors have come to expect and enjoy.

It is the policy of the Corporation of the Township of Nipigon that citizens with disabilities achieve accessibility in the provision of goods and services by the Township to the community, consistent with the principles of independence, dignity, integration and equal opportunity as set out in the AODA regulations. Ensuring an accessible Nipigon will be a team effort of Council, employees and those providing a good, service or program within the municipality.

## **FOR MORE INFORMATION:**

For more information on this accessibility plan, please contact;

Phone: 807-887-3135

Fax: 807-887-3564

Mail: c/o Linda Berube, Deputy Clerk-Treasurer  
Township of Nipigon  
52 Front Street, PO Box 160  
Nipigon, ON P0T 2J0

Email: [lindaberube@nipigon.net](mailto:lindaberube@nipigon.net)





APPENDIX "A"

**ACCESSIBLE CUSTOMER SERVICE FEEDBACK FORM**  
Providing Goods and Services to People with Disabilities

Thank you for visiting The Township of Nipigon. We value all of our customers and strive to meet everyone's needs. Your comments will be responded to within ten (10) days.

Please tell us the date and time of your visit: \_\_\_\_\_

Staff Member, Department or Service Location you visited: \_\_\_\_\_

Did we respond to your customer service needs today?  YES  NO

Was our customer service provided to you in an accessible manner?

YES  SOMEWHAT (please explain below)  NO (please explain below)

Did you have any problems accessing our goods and services?

YES  SOMEWHAT (please explain below)  NO (please explain below)

Please add any other comments you may have:

Contact information (optional): \_\_\_\_\_

Township of Nipigon  
52 Front St, PO Box 160, Nipigon ON P0T 2J0  
Phone: 807-887-2029 Fax: 807-887-3564  
Email: [info@nipigon.net](mailto:info@nipigon.net)  
[www.nipigon.net](http://www.nipigon.net)