

2018-2022

Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

An Update to the 2012-2017 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan



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Acknowledgement

The York Region 2015 to 2021 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan served as a template in the preparation of the Town of Georgina 2018-2022 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan. The Town of Georgina is thankful for York Region’s leadership in the field of accessibility planning and for its ongoing efforts to improve accessibility across the Region.

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1.0 Message from Town of Georgina Council

Georgina Council is proud of the Town's ongoing efforts to create accessible communities for residents of all abilities. Accessibility is embedded in the Town's Strategic Plan and reflects our corporate values of Integrity, Responsiveness and Respect. These values uphold Georgina's dedication to creating an inclusive and welcoming municipality where everyone feels that they belong.

Aided by the knowledge and commitment of the Georgina Accessibility Advisory Committee (GAAC), we will continue to create more inclusive neighbourhoods by further removing barriers that limit access to our services, programs and facilities. We thank GAAC members for their ongoing efforts to address the needs of our growing and diverse communities.



2.0 Message from the Georgina Accessibility Advisory Committee (GAAC)

Representing a cross-section of the community, the GAAC's role is to advise Council regarding the accessibility of Town services, programs and facilities. Our goal is to increase access for everyone by helping to remove barriers that prevent full participation in the life of our communities.

For over a decade, the GAAC has assisted the Town in these efforts, and we are proud to introduce the updated *2018-2022 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan*, which builds upon ongoing initiatives to not only meet the requirements of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA)*, but to go beyond by building inclusive neighbourhoods that enhance the quality of life for everyone in Georgina.

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We look forward to continuing to advise Council on the implementation of the updated Multi-Year Accessibility Plan as we strive to make Georgina an even better place to live, work, travel and play.

2.1 2014-2018 GAAC members:

- Phyllis Baines, Chair
- Annette Piggott, Vice Chair
- Councillor, Dave Harding
- Regional Councillor, Naomi Davison
- Cindy Clarke
- Dale Genge
- Robert McGill
- Toby Merker

2.2 Background

The *Town of Georgina 2018-2022 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan* outlines strategies and actions to identify, prevent and remove barriers for people with disabilities. The plan also details a strategy for meeting the requirements of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA)*.

3.0 Georgina at a Glance

The Town of Georgina is a geographically large lower-tier municipality with a current permanent population base of approximately 49,000 people in a land area of 289 sq. km. and a total jurisdictional area (including land and water areas) of 598 sq. km.

The municipality is located on the south-eastern shores of Lake Simcoe, at the top of the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) in the northern most reaches of the Regional Municipality of York. Georgina borders multiple lower-tier municipalities, including those located in the Regional Municipalities of York and Durham and the County of Simcoe, as well as the Chippewas of Georgina Island First Nation.

Georgina provides services and programs that are delivered across the municipality, including road and facility maintenance, fire services, water and stormwater management, waste collection, snow cleaning, municipal law enforcement, licencing, parks, recreational and cultural services, libraries, and more.

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As Georgina's population continues to grow in size, age and diversity, the number of people living with a disability will also grow. This growth underlines the importance of having an accessibility plan that addresses how the Town aims to make its programs, services and facilities increasingly accessible.

4.0 Ontario Laws Require Accessibility Plans

The AODA became law in 2005. It sets out accessibility requirements, called standards, which an organization must meet in the areas of customer service, information and communications, employment, transportation and the design of public spaces. 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. The multi-year plan must include an organization's strategy to prevent and remove barriers and meet the requirements in the standards. Each year, organizations must submit a compliance report to the Province that confirms its progress in implementing the plan.

The *Town of Georgina 2018-2022 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan* is the Town's first update of its multi-year accessibility plan developed in 2012.

5.0 Accessibility Planning Supports Georgina's Strategic Plan

The Town's Strategic Plan reflects Council's and staff's commitment to capitalize on opportunities to grow the municipality's employment base, protect our natural environment, ensure that our communities are healthy and safe, and to work collaboratively with community partners. The Multi-Year Accessibility Plan supports the Strategic Plan and its focus on promoting a high quality of life for Georgina's increasingly diverse communities. It is also a reflection of the Town's values of Integrity, Responsiveness and Respect.

6.0 Accessibility Policy and Statement of Commitment

The Town's Accessibility Policy establishes a framework that guides staff's responsibilities to comply with accessibility legislation. The policy also includes a "Statement of Commitment" that supports the Town's pledge to continue to create more inclusive neighbourhoods by further removing barriers that limit access to our services, programs and facilities:

"The Town of Georgina is committed to providing all members of the public and our employees an environment of inclusive design and integration through ongoing policy development in our services, products, and facilities."

7.0 Georgina Accessibility Advisory Committee (GAAC)

Ontario's accessibility laws require the Town of Georgina to have an accessibility advisory committee. The role of the GAAC is to provide recommendations to Council regarding the removal of barriers that exist within our municipal services, facilities, practices and programs and to review site plans upon request.

The GAAC consists of a maximum of 9 members including two members of Council. A majority of these members must be persons with disabilities and be representative of gender, ethnicity and types of visible and invisible disabilities identified in provincial legislation. Members can be on the committee for the same term length as Town Council Term of Office, or four years. At the end of each term, a new committee is formed from the community through an application process.

7.1 Highlights of Achievements to Remove and Prevent Barriers

The GAAC plays an integral role in helping the Town achieve the requirements of Ontario's accessibility laws. Since the last accessibility plan was approved in 2012, the GAAC and Town staff have worked together to accomplish the following achievements:

- Expanded on legislated requirements by helping to develop the Facility Accessibility Design Standards (FADS) that outlines standards that build a universally-designed and accessible community for residents, visitors and employees. These standards apply to all new and/or renovated Town owned, leased or operated facilities;
- The GAAC meet on an average of ten times annually to provide guidance to staff and Council;

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- Undertook accessibility upgrades at the Stephen Leacock Theatre and Club 55, including the installation of a main entrance ramp, automatic sliding doors, and touchless washroom amenities;
- Installed the Town's first universal washroom at The Link and constructed an interior accessible ramp funded by Enabling Accessibility Fund;
- Replacement of two wheelchairs at the Sutton Leisure Pool with new water wheelchairs that can accommodate various body weights. The Pool also installed a water chair lift to assist those accessing the therapy pool;
- Installation of a metal arm to the ROC zipline platform to provide access without climbing, as well as the purchase of an accessible harness for individuals who cannot bear weight;
- Funded by Canada 150 Community Infrastructure Program, constructed an accessible ramp at De La Salle Park that connects to an accessible beachfront pathway, undertook accessible washroom upgrades, and installed an accessible path that provides a north-south connection through the park;
- Conducted numerous site audits to identify accessibility barriers at various municipal facilities and amenities;
- Assisted in the Site Plan review process by reviewing approximately 30 plans and making recommendations to Town staff regarding future developments;
- Worked with the Communications Division on the following initiatives:
 - design of a new GAAC logo;
 - service Animal Sticker Campaign to raise awareness among Town staff, local non-profits, and the business community about the rights of persons with disabilities who require service animals;
 - newspaper article about sidewalk hazards during the summer months;
- Training of over 1,640 Town employees, volunteers, community partners and Town contractors on AODA/IASR;
- Developed a new corporate website that conforms with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0 level A;
- Undertook Building Condition Assessments of various Town facilities that identify areas of AODA non-compliance to be addressed in the Capital Plan;
- Worked with the Economic Development and Tourism Division to draft a letter regarding how local businesses can make their retail locations more accessible; and
- Provided advice to Council regarding the allocation of donations received in memory of former Regional Councillor, Danny Wheeler.

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7.2 AODA Progress to Date

In addition to the accomplishments listed above, the following outlines the legislated AODA requirements the Town has achieved between 2012 and 2017:

2012

- Provide:
 - accessible emergency and public safety information;
 - publicly available emergency information like evacuation plans or brochures, in an accessible format, when asked;
 - accessible emergency information to staff;
 - accessible and customized emergency information when necessary;
 - taxi registration and identification in accessible formats; and
- When licencing taxicabs, ensure drivers provide their vehicle registration and identification information in accessible formats for passengers with disabilities.

2013

- Create accessibility policies and a multi-year accessibility plan;
- Buy goods, services or facilities that are accessible to people with disabilities;
- Include accessibility features when purchasing or designing self-service kiosks; and
- File an Accessibility Compliance Report with the Province.

2014

- Train staff on Ontario's accessibility laws;
- Train employees and volunteers on the accessibility requirements that apply to their job duties;
- Make it easy for people with disabilities to provide feedback;
- Make websites accessible;
- Make employment practices accessible; and
- File an Accessibility Compliance Report.

2015

- Make public information accessible when asked; and
- File an Accessibility Compliance Report.

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2016

- Make new or redeveloped public spaces accessible including:
 - recreational trails and beach access routes
 - outdoor public use eating areas
 - outdoor play spaces
 - public outdoor paths of travel
 - on and off street parking areas
 - service counters
 - fixed waiting lines
 - waiting areas with fixed seating; and
- File an Accessibility Compliance Report.

2017

- File an Accessibility Compliance Report

8.0 Town of Georgina Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

8.1 AODA Compliance Timeline from 2018 to 2022

The tables below show the actions the Town must take to meet the upcoming AODA requirements. They are organized under the following accessibility standards of the AODA: Customer Service, Information and Communications, Employment, Transportation, and Design of Public Spaces.

Requirement	Action
January 1, 2021	
Make all websites and web content accessible	Ensure all websites and web content conform to Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 Level AA. Provide accessible formats of content published before 2012, upon request.

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Requirement	Action
Annually	
File an Accessibility Compliance Report	Before December 31 each year, electronically submit a compliance report to confirm the Town of Georgina has met current accessibility requirements under the <i>Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)</i> .

8.2 Monitoring and Evaluation

The AODA requires the Town to review and update the plan at least every five years. The Town is also responsible to submit annual compliance reports to the Accessibility Directorate of Ontario. In addition to meeting the requirements of the AODA, the Town will continue to identify and prevent barriers that people with disabilities may face when accessing municipal programs, services and facilities. Town staff will also continue to consult people with disabilities and the GAAC as required by law. Finally, Town staff will work towards updating the Town’s Accessibility Policy in 2018-2019

9.0 Let Us Know What You Think

Your feedback is welcome. Please let us know what you think about the *Town of Georgina 2018-2022 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan*. To request a copy of the plan in another format or to send us your comments or questions, please contact us at:

Email:

info@georgina.ca

Mail:

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Keswick, Ontario L4P 3G1

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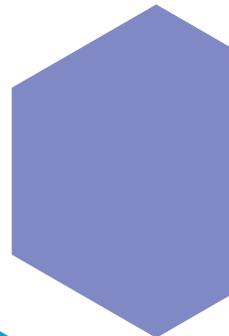
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To view this plan online visit www.georgina.ca



GEORGINA



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Attachment 1
Report RC-2018-0007