



# **LOYALIST TOWNSHIP**

## **MULTI-YEAR ACCESSIBILITY PLAN**

**2018 - 2023**

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## **Loyalist Township's Commitment to Accessibility Planning**

The Council for The Corporation of Loyalist Township is committed to:

- The continued improvement of access to all municipally owned facilities, premises and services for all persons with disabilities
- The concept of universal design, which makes the environment more user-friendly for everyone
- The provision of quality services to Township residents with disabilities
- The continued participation on the Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee and support of its work to develop, recommend and monitor solutions to overcome barriers
- Prevent and plan to remove all obstacles to promote equal opportunity and participation by residents and visitors with disabilities. These barriers may include:
  - a. Physical barriers, such as stairs, uneven pavements or narrow pathways;
  - b. Architectural barriers;
  - c. Information or communication barriers, such as publications that are not available in large print;
  - d. Attitudinal barriers, such as assuming that a person with a disability cannot perform a certain task;
  - e. Technological barriers, such as traffic signals that change too quickly or meeting rooms without assistive listening systems for persons with hearing disabilities; and,
  - f. Barriers created by policies or practices, such as not offering different ways to complete a test as part of a job interview.

## **Introduction to Loyalist Township**

Loyalist Township is a growing community of 17,000+ people situated on the north shore of Lake Ontario between the Town of Greater Napanee and the City of Kingston. The Township is a blend of rural and urban areas with a number of smaller hamlets throughout, including its very own island community, accessible by ferry.

The Township offers a wide range of amenities for visitors of all interests and ages. Loyalist Parkway (King's Highway 33) runs along the lakefront, a defining feature of the Township, between Amherstview and the western boundary of the Township.

Loyalist is readily accessible from the 401 Highway, which cuts across the Township. By car, the Township is located at the mid-point between Ottawa and Toronto and is reachable from each of those major cities within 2-3 hours. Loyalist Township is located less than 4 hours from Montreal. For those who don't like the highway, County Road 2 (formerly King's Highway 2) provides a more leisurely access route.

## **Municipal Structure**

The Corporation of Loyalist Township is governed by an elected council consisting of a Mayor, Deputy Mayor and five Councillors from three wards within the Township. Elected officials serve a four-year term. The Mayor and Deputy Mayor are elected at large, and Councillors are elected from each of the Wards 1 (Amherst Island) and 2 (Bath) and three councillors are elected from Ward 3 (Ernestown).

The actual governing of the Township follows the rules and regulations set out by the Provincial Government in the Municipal Act.

Township Council makes decisions affecting the community and the services provided by Loyalist Township.

Loyalist Township offers a wide range of municipal services including fire protection, water and sewer services, recreational facilities and programs and construction and maintenance of the municipal infrastructure.

The Township employs over 250 full and part-time staff, including volunteer firefighters.

## **Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee**

In April 2002, the Council of the County of Lennox and Addington supported the creation of a single Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee to address the requirements of the Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001. The joint committee is appointed for the County of Lennox and Addington, the Town of Greater Napanee, the Townships of Stone Mills, Addington Highlands and Loyalist Township, as well as the Lennox and Addington County General Hospital.

The Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee is comprised of two (2) members of County Council and three (3) members from the county community with disabilities.

An auxiliary panel, as affiliates to the Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee, provides support and advice. It is comprised of one staff representative from each of the six partner organizations and three representatives from the community who are directly involved with services to improve accessibility and opportunities for citizens with disabilities.

The role of the Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee includes reviewing and advising the Councils and the Hospital Board on the following areas, as they pertain to accessibility:

- Requirements under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act and any other legislation,
- Site plans of new and existing municipal buildings,
- Significant renovations to municipal facilities,
- Leased facilities or any other facility used as a municipal building, and
- Goods and services provided by the municipality or agents providing services under contract with the municipality.

## **Past Actions to Remove and Prevent Barriers**

### **Customer Service – Principles: Dignity, Independence, Integration, Equal Opportunity**

Loyalist Township provides local municipal services to the public, including people with disabilities. We create a positive service approach by respecting the dignity and independence of people with disabilities. We

ensure there is equal opportunity for services, which are provided as much as possible in the same way, in the same place to other customers.

Staff training has included how to interact and communicate effectively with people with various types of disabilities. This includes telephone communication, in-person communication, and communication via e-mail.

When communicating over the telephone staff have been trained to use plain language, clear annunciation, and to tailor their responses as much as possible in support of the individual.

In the event of a service disruption at the recreation facility staff are trained to communicate immediately by posters and/or video monitors at the entrances of the affected areas. For calls regarding services, the voice message will indicate the closure. Notifications are posted on the website and communicated on social media, including Twitter and Facebook. There is also an e-mail distribution list used for participants in some cases. We may also use local media for major closures.

The Township is committed to providing accessible invoices to all customers. For this reason, invoices can be provided in larger print or by e-mail upon request. Any questions customers may have about the content of the invoice are answered in person, by telephone or email.

The Township also ensures that staff know how to use the assistive devices which are available on our premises, including electronic door openers and elevators.

Feedback from customers is welcomed in person, by phone, by email or in another form that is accessible for the customer.

## **Information and Communication**

Loyalist Township is home to a public library run by the County of Lennox and Addington. There have been changes made to increase accessibility, as detailed in the County of Lennox and Addington's Accessibility Plan. These include availability of large print books, public access computers with large screen monitors, accessible keyboards, JAWS software, and hand-held magnifiers.

In 2013 Loyalist Township upgraded its website to conform with the World Wide Web Consortium Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0, level

AA. It includes Browse Aloud software which is designed to help the print disabled community to understand webpages.

Public documents are available in accessible formats, i.e. PDF, or other formats upon request.

In 2014 the Township instituted alternative voting methods, including on-line voting, telephone and paper voting. These changes increased accessibility for those with disabilities.

## **Employment**

The Human Resources Department, in co-operation with management and union representatives, provides for accommodation of workers when needed. Accommodations can include changes to job responsibilities, hours of work, and/or equipment.

All job descriptions include the following clause “The Township provides support in its recruitment processes to applicants with disabilities, including accommodation that takes into account an applicant’s accessibility needs. Candidates requiring accommodation during the recruitment process are asked to contact the Human Resources Manager.”

The selection process for job candidates is accessible. Accommodations are provided upon request.

## **Procurement**

Loyalist Township, under Procurement By-law 2018-38, Section 27, is required when purchasing goods, services, and facilities to incorporate accessibility design, criteria and features except where it is not practical to do so. The Township commits that when specifications are prepared for procurement, such specifications will take into account the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act 2005.

## **Self-Service Kiosks**

Loyalist Township does not currently provide services using self-service kiosks. In the event that the Township were to install self-service kiosks

they would be designed and installed in a manner that would ensure accessibility.

## **Transportation**

The Township ensures that taxi licensing obligations are met, and identification is visible in accordance with the legislation. The Township also ensures that no person with a disability is charged additional fees or is charged a fee for storage of mobility aids or mobility assistive devices.

The Township provides conventional bus service that is fully equipped to service-disabled individuals with wheelchairs, power scooters and other mobility devices. Conventional bus drivers have been trained on a variety of mobility and assistive devices. For those individuals who cannot use the conventional bus service the private sector offers mobility taxis.

Public consultation/public opinion poles are used by the Township to collect accessibility information to ensure our transit services meet the requirements of our disabled residents.

## **Other Achievements (2013 – 2017)**

- The W. J. Henderson Recreation Centre had a widened push button door installed to the skating arena dressing rooms.
- Wedgewood sidewalk was installed in Amherstview.
- Alternative voting methods were offered to residents to allow for greater accessibility. Examples include voting by telephone and internet.
- Automatic opening doors were installed at the Amherstview Community Hall.
- Granular pathways in Hawley Park in Bath were completed.
- Davy Street sidewalk installation in Bath was completed.
- New gazebo in Bath was constructed. This structure is fully accessible and meets the requirements of the AODA.
- As part of the new gazebo project, the parking spaces were paved, and a pathway was created to increase accessibility to the park.
- New ferry docks and new electric ferry were designed and built to meet accessibility standards.



- New municipal office was designed and upgraded to meet accessibility standards.
- The Finkel Shores project resulted in a new paved parking lot with accessible parking spaces.
- The Briscoe Park project is scheduled for 2020 and is focused on increasing the accessibility to the playground structure.

## **Current Strategies and Actions to Remove and Prevent Barriers**

Loyalist Township has identified the following actions to be undertaken between 2018 and 2023 to meet its obligations under the Ontarians with Disabilities Act and to remove and prevent barriers to people with disabilities.

### **Customer Service**

Loyalist Township believes in and supports the four principles underpinning accessible customer service: Dignity, Independence, Integration, and Equal Opportunity.

Dignity: Every customer is treated with respect and receives the same degree of goods, service, and attention.

Independence: Each customer is given the freedom to do things on their own without being offered unnecessary help or interference.

Integration: All customers can access goods and services in the same manner - free from separation and barriers.

Equal Opportunity: All customers receive the same quality of service. To do so, employees may have to adapt their approach and tailor it to the individual customer's needs.

Loyalist Township will comply with the Customer Service standard by upholding the above principles while we continue to:

- Take people's disabilities into account when communicating with them.
- Provide billing information to customers in alternative formats when requested.
- Welcome people with disabilities and their service animals and support persons to access services.

- Notify customers when services are disrupted using multiple channels of communications.
- Provide training to new Township employees on accessible customer service and the Ontario Human Rights Code and the AODA.

## **Information and Communications**

Loyalist Township is committed to providing information and communications in accessible formats based upon the requests of people with disabilities. We continue to:

- Communicate our willingness to accept feedback and respond to feedback regarding accessibility.
- Provide communications in accessible formats, upon request.
- Maintain the website to be compliant with WCAG 2.0, level AA.
- Web-site redevelopment to highlight Accessibility initiatives throughout the Township.
- Make public emergency plans available in accessible formats, upon request.

## **Employment**

Loyalist Township complies with the employment standard in the following ways:

- Providing individualized workplace emergency response information to employees who have a disability, where necessary.
- Including communications to employees and the public about the availability of accommodation for applicants with disabilities in the recruitment process.
- Notifying applicants that accommodations are available when assessment is part of the recruitment process. Providing newly hired employees with disabilities accommodations when required.
- Informing existing and new employees of policies used to support employees with disabilities, job accommodations, Whenever, there is a change in policy, updated information will be provided.
- Providing accessible formats of information needed to perform jobs to any employee upon request
- Documenting individual accommodation plans for employees with a disability, as needed

## **Procurement**

Loyalist Township, under Procurement By-law 2018-38, Section 27, is required when purchasing goods, services, and facilities to incorporate accessibility design, criteria and features except where it is not practical to do so. The Township commits that when specifications are prepared for procurement, such specifications will take into account the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act 2005.

## **Self-Service Kiosks**

Loyalist Township does not currently provide services using self-service kiosks. In the event that Loyalist Township procures self-service kiosks, accessibility features will be included in the design.

## **Training**

Loyalist Township is committed to providing training regarding accessibility and the Ontario Human Rights Code, as required by the AODA. The Township will:

- Train all employees on the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation and the Ontario Human Rights Code as it applies to people with disabilities.
- Train new employees as part of the orientation process.
- Provide additional training to employees, should there be changes to accessibility policies.
- Maintain a record of training provided.

## **Design of Public Spaces**

Loyalist Township is committed to meeting the requirements of the AODA in relation to public spaces. The Township will:

- Follow the Design of Public Spaces standard when building or making any changes to exterior paths of travel, rest areas, ramps, stairs, curb ramps and depressed curbs.

- Install accessible pedestrian signals which meet the requirements of the Design of Public Spaces Standard when new pedestrian signals are being installed or existing pedestrian signals are being replaced at a pedestrian crossover.
- Provide the number of accessible parking spaces at new or renovated Township service locations, in keeping with the numbers set out in the Design of Public Spaces Standard.
- Determine the best location for the accessible parking spaces in relation to accessible entrances.
- Meet all the requirements of the Design of Public Spaces Standard when constructing new or replacing existing service counters.
- Provide accessible seating when constructing a new waiting area or redeveloping an existing waiting area.

### **Proposed Accessibility Projects (2018 – 2023)**

- 2018 - Granular pathways in Hawley Park in Bath were completed.
- 2018 - Davy Street sidewalk installation in Bath was completed.
- 2019 - New gazebo in Bath was constructed. This structure is fully accessible and meets the requirements of the AODA.
- 2019 - As part of the new gazebo project, the parking spaces were paved, and a pathway was created to increase accessibility to the park.
- 2020 - New ferry docks and new electric ferry were designed and built to meet accessibility standards.
- 2020 – Assisted listening devices will be available in the Council Chamber to assist residents with hearing disabilities

The Township has a number of other projects that will have accessibility related components planned for the coming years. The Multi-Year plan will be updated once we have budget confirmation for the respective projects.

### **For More Information**

For more information on this accessibility plan, please contact the Corporate Services Department.

This plan is available electronically on Loyalist Township's website at [www.loyalist.ca](http://www.loyalist.ca)

**Standard and accessible formats of this document are also available, free of charge, upon request by contacting the Program and Policy Analyst**