

Township of Georgian Bay

Accessibility Plan



www.gbtownship.ca

Initial Plan-September 2003
Plan Update-April 2007
Plan Update-December 2008
Plan Update-December 2010
Plan Update-December 2012
Revisions September 2014

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Municipal Jurisdiction Participating in this Plan
The Township of Georgian Bay,
99 Lone Pine Road,
Port Severn, On
L0K 1S0

Bearing on the South East shores of Georgian Bay, the Township of Georgian Bay is situated approximately one and one half hours North of Toronto, and one and one half hours South of Sudbury. The Highway 400 corridor bisects the municipality which starts at Port Severn in the South and ends just North of MacTier. The Township is home to a permanent population of 2,340 (per 2006 Statistics Canada) and a combined permanent/seasonal population of approximately 21,000.

Council Commitment to Accessibility Planning

Improving accessibility is a shared responsibility and the Township of Georgian Bay wishes to demonstrate leadership in working with people with disabilities to create innovative approaches and solutions for an accessible community. In keeping with the legislation Council appointed an Accessibility Advisory Committee for the period 2007-2010.

Accessibility Advisory Committee

Committee Members	Position	Department Represented	E-mail Contact Address
Larry Braid	Councillor-Committee Chairperson	Council	bts.braid@xplornet.com
George Straight	Public Liaison Representative	Public	george.straight@sympatico.ca
Paul Schmid	Public Liaison Representative	Public	pps Schmid@sympatico.ca

Please contact Connie Devlin, Director of Human Resources (cdevlin@gbtownship.ca, (705-538-2337 x 262) for inquires regarding this Accessibility Plan or Accessibility issues.

- ✓ Update- Although the committee was officially disbanded at the end of term of 2010, the original committee members still continue to provide valuable feedback and comments that they gather from the community.

Council:

The Township of Georgian Bay provides a wide range of municipal services on behalf of the ratepayers. Council structure consists of a Mayor, 2 District Councillors (1 – Baxter Ward, and 1 – Freeman Ward Gibson Ward) and 3 Area Councillors (1 each-Baxter, Gibson and Freeman)

Administration Department:

The administration of the municipality occurs through a cooperative effort of the full time administrative staff and the elected political representatives of the Township of Georgian Bay. The Administrative Department is made up of a full time CAO, Clerk and Deputy Clerk, who is shared with emergency management. The senior management team is comprised of a Director of Operations, Director of Protection Services, Director of Finance/Treasurer, Economic Development Officer, and Director of Health & Safety/Human Resource Manager and a Director of Development Services.

The key activities/responsibilities of the senior management team is the development and coordination of all service delivery and programs in the Township of Georgian Bay.

The Community Services Coordinator is a shared position with the District of Muskoka; the employee is responsible for delivering key neighborhood support service, such a food bank operation and job skills development to the most vulnerable members of our municipality.

Operations Department:

The Operations Department encompasses both the Roads and Recreation Departments and oversees the operations of both departments.

a)Roads:

The delivery of municipal roads service is the key responsibility of this division of the Operations Department. This includes infrastructure improvements (construction) and maintenance activities. The work team currently consists of an Operations Supervisor, Fleet Manager, Lead Hand and equipment operators. There are two roads depots – one in the South at Port Severn and one in the North in MacTier.

b)Recreation:

The recreation function of the municipality includes recreation programs, and facilities operations. There is one community hall (Baxter Community Hall), one arena, (MacTier Arena) and two outdoor ice rinks (Honey Harbour and Baxter Hall) in addition there are a number of parks, boat launches and open spaces maintained by the municipality. The work team consists of a Lead Hand, Recreation Coordinator and Parks and Recreation Laborers.

Cross-training of staff in both departments has occurred and when necessary the employees work in either the Roads or Recreation divisions of the Operations Department.

Treasury

The treasury function of the municipality is undertaken by the Treasurer, Deputy Treasurer, Payroll Clerk, Accounts Receivable and Tax Clerks.

The Treasury department is responsible for the care and control of the finances of the municipality, including responsibility for the annual and capital budgets, and ensuring that the revenues and expenditures of the municipality are safeguarded.

Development Services:

The Development Services department houses both Planning and Building Services. Planning oversees development control, zoning and long range planning. The Building function oversees permit applications and issuances, conducts inspections in accordance with the Ontario Building Code, the Township Zoning By-law and Property Standards By-law.

The community planning function is undertaken by the Manager of Planning, a Senior Planner, and a Planning Technical Assistant.

The building function is undertaken by Chief Building Official, Deputy Chief Building Official, Building/Septic Inspectors and a Building technical assistant. The Inspectors are also responsible for the Septic System Re-inspection program to conduct evaluations and working order of older septic systems.

Protective Services:

Fire Services, Emergency Management Services, and Municipal Law Enforcement Services are combined in one department.

Fire protection services are provided by the dedication of volunteers at each of the three fire stations Port Severn, Honey Harbour and MacTier. The department consists of a Fire Chief, Fire Prevention Officer.

A Senior By-law Enforcement Officer, assisted in the tourist season by two part time enforcement officers, ensures that the regulatory by-laws are obeyed in the Township of Georgian Bay.

Library

The Georgian Bay Public Library is operated under the auspices of a Local Board. The members of the Board are appointed by the Township of Georgian Bay, in accordance with the Public Libraries Act. Library services are provided from two permanent locations – Honey Harbour and MacTier. A Third satellite library center operates out of the Community Service Building. The hours of operation are designed to fit the schedule of the communities in which they are located. The library staff consists of one CEO at 30 hours per week and part-time includes 1 Clerk II and 3 Clerk I's. Volunteers and summer students assist with the operation of the libraries.

In 2009, all municipal staff underwent accessibility awareness training with the organization "*People First*". Two members of management undertook the *Train the Trainer* certification program in order to be able to deliver the awareness training to new hires and to provide updated and on-going awareness training to existing staff.

Objectives

Persons with disabilities represent a significant and growing part of our population. According to Statistics Canada about 1.9 million Ontarians have disabilities – about 16% of the population. Disability tends to increase with age. In two decades it is estimated that 22% of the population will have disabilities. Enhancing the ability of people with disabilities to live independently and contribute to the community will have positive effects on future prosperity in Ontario.

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) received Royal Assent on June 13, 2005. The purpose of the AODA is to develop mandatory accessibility standards that will identify, remove and prevent barriers for people with disabilities in key areas of daily living:

- Customer Service
- Transportation
- Information and Communications
- Built Environment
- Employment

The standards apply to all provincially regulated sectors across Ontario including both public and private organizations.

Accessibility plans are intended to address existing barriers to people with disabilities and to prevent new barriers from being established. A great number of our seasonal residents are now retiring in the Township of Georgian Bay. Many of them are in their senior years and the demand for accessibility will increase. The municipality desires to ensure accessibility for its citizens and visitors alike.

Methodology

Council appointed the Accessibility Working Group on September 3, 2002. The group met throughout the fall of 2002 and in 2003 to identify past initiatives and identify remaining barriers in the municipality. An informal site audit was undertaken by the working group members in their own departments, of all municipally owned buildings and in particular to assess any barriers that may exist. The working group was also asked to provide any solutions to removing those identified barriers. The plan was then prepared in draft by the then CAO. An advertisement and application form was posted on the website and in a local publication inviting persons with disabilities to apply to review the draft plan. The Accessibility Working Group then met again to consider amendments to the Accessibility Plan according to the advice and consultation with the Persons with Disabilities. Once this review was complete and the initial Accessibility Plan finalized, it was taken to Council for final approval. It was then made public by posting on the website and in public facilities in the municipality.

ACCESSIBILITY PLANNING CHECKLIST (Initial Plan)

Activity	Timeline	Completed
Establish a process for consultation with people with disabilities		Sept 3, 2002
Create an Accessibility Planning Work Group		Sept 3, 2002
First Meeting of Group		Oct 22, 2002
Review Past Initiatives		Dec 10, 2002
Conduct an Operational Review	March 2003	Mar – July 2003
Review Decision-making practices	March 2003	Mar – July 2003
Determine How to Address barriers	May 2003	Mar – July 2003
Develop a Draft Plan	July 2003	Aug 2003
Set Targets (6, 12 month or longer), establish a monitoring process	Monitoring every 12 months	Annually
Consult with people with disabilities on the draft plan;	August, 2003	
Amend plan based on AAC recommendations or the results of the consultations	Sept 2003	
Obtain Council Approval	Sept 15, 2003	
Make the Plan Public	Sept 30,	2003

Reviewing Past Initiatives to Removing Barriers

Many of the barriers identified on pages 9-13 of this plan were removed or remedied with the construction of a new Administrative Building which opened in August 2006. The building was constructed according to new building code regulations which require wheel chair accessibility, automatic door openers, and accessible meeting and washroom areas. The reception area provides accommodating counter space for those persons in wheelchairs. In addition, projection screens and microphones were added to the council chambers to assist those with visual or audio impairment. Audio Amplification Units are also available for loan during meetings. The office furnishings are fully ergonomic and are designed to accommodate persons who may require assistive mobility devices, such as scooters or wheelchairs.

In 2005-2006, upgrades were performed on the MacTier Area and Baxter Ward Community Centre Washrooms to bring these facilities into compliance with the OBC requirements for accessibility. Ramps were installed at the MacTier Arena to provide access for those with mobility impairments. The Arena has a staff operated lift which makes the second storey accessible for those who have difficulty with stairs. A new library was constructed in MacTier that is fully accessible.

The Library at the Honey Harbour Park Landing is fully accessible as it is on grade. All libraries engage in the services of the Inter Library Loan Service, which can provide large print and audio books upon request. Recent computer upgrades in both locations have accessibility tools built in, and large screen monitors assist those with limited vision. In addition, the library has two large typed Library Emergency Preparedness Plans posted for those patrons with visual impairments, and a laptop for each branch has been purchased to assist handicapped customers if the desk computers are not accessible.

Trash receptacles and drinking fountains located within the municipality are accessible. The public telephone at the Arena is easily accessible.

Parking spaces for persons living with disabilities have been dedicated at each public facility.

Sidewalks are designed for accessibility. Curb cuts, ramps, grate design and location and grade levels are present and included in any new designs.

There has been a ramp installed at the Bressette House. There is also a wheelchair accessible washroom.

In 2007, a new Community Services Building and public park opened in Port Severn. The Community Services Building (CSB) was designed and built on a single floor for maximum access to all useable space, including offices, and what was proposed to be, a health care clinic and OPP satellite office.

The Port Severn Park hosts a Splash Pad that is accessible for children living with various challenges; the brightly coloured water sprinklers and no-slip surface make it a place where all children enjoy. The playground has a rubberized base for safety and rest benches are conveniently located along the paved pathways.

Improved signage for way finding and slope/grade information is planned for in 2014 if budget permits.

Staff continues to educate and familiarize themselves with the new standards that came into effect under the Accessibility for Ontarian with Disabilities Act (AODA).

Identify Barriers and Strategy for Removal/Prevention 2003 Plan
Administration Department-

Barrier Type	Strategy for Removal/Prevention	Status
Architectural	Renovations were made in 1999 to the office to incorporate wheelchair accessibility to the washrooms. The entranceway was redesigned to be wheelchair accessibility by installing automatic doors.	Ongoing: There is still an outstanding work order on the washrooms since bars and lower locks were planned but have not yet been installed. Motion detector lights are also required since switches are too high to reach. CBO to outline requirements and recreation employees are to install.
Architectural	Reception area does not accommodate persons with disabilities. The area is too small for a wheelchair and there is no section of the counter that is lower so as to provide service to persons with disabilities.	Planned: A Needs Assessment Study was undertaken by an Architect, Rodney Young, in 2002, but the 2002 budget did not permit proceeding. The project is continuing and will be taken back to Council during budget deliberations for 2003.
Architectural	Second floor is inaccessible to present and future employees with disabilities and to the public with disabilities.	To be reviewed during Needs Study. A table could be added at reception for people to sit down at to fill out applications for planning but there is very limited space to do so.
Architectural	The cottage is being used as a meeting room for staff only at present. Public Meetings are held at other accessible buildings. It is not accessible at all.	Virtually impossible to make wheelchair accessible. Best solution is to include a meeting room in any addition to the Municipal Office.
Physical	Public Documents (eg. Assessment Rolls etc.) are located upstairs, rendering them inaccessible to persons with disabilities.	This same matter will be reviewed in 2003 subject to Council approval to proceed with a formal Needs Study. In the short term, staff brings the

		information downstairs to assist those with disabilities.
Physical	Objects are stored in hallways and walkways in the office.	Move to another location and/or ensure walkways are cleared of objects.
Informational	Communication to the public.	The print size and style of newsletter to be looked at to ensure those with sight impairments can see it.
Informational	Application forms for planning/building etc. are not provided in alternative formats to people with disabilities. (i.e. large print, computer diskettes)	Ongoing: Work at providing some forms in alternative formats.
Communicational	No handicap signage on building.	OBC states there is to be Accessibility Signs installed where necessary to indicate location of entrance. There should be signs indicating means of egress as well.
Communicational	Do not have the availability of providing information to people who are deaf over the phone.	Ensure that information on accessibility is provided on the web page so persons who are deaf will still have access to it. Investigate the use of a TTY system for the phones.
Attitudinal	Staff has not had specific training with respect to interaction with people with disabilities and understanding issues concerning people with disabilities.	Ongoing: Exploring training for all employees.
Technological	Information on the municipal web site cannot be accessed by a person who is blind who has reading software for a computer.	There are CAP sites available at the libraries and further investigation into accessibility to the libraries needs to be undertaken. Also investigation should be undertaken into equipping CAP sites with software to assist the visually impaired.
Technological	The web site does not currently take into consideration web	Planned: Investigation into the Web

	accessibility guidelines.	Accessibility Initiative when the municipality is designing a new web page.
Policy/Practice	No policies in place on accommodating employees with disabilities.	Ongoing: Investigate drafting such policies.
Policy/Practice	Official Plan and Zoning By-law do not include regulations to promote or require barrier-free provisions.	Ongoing: Investigate making changes to the Official Plan and Zoning By-law that will promote or require barrier-free provisions.
Policy/Practice	Consider accessibility in the approval of subdivision and site plan approvals.	Ongoing: Review as the project warrants.
Policy/Practice	Implement policies in anticipation of AODA Standards-Information and Communication	2009- Developed Policy for the Standards of Information and Communication
Policy/Practice	Implement policies in anticipation of AODA Standards-Customer Service	2009- Developed Policy for the Standards of Customer Service

Operations Department – Recreation

Barrier Type	Strategy for Removal/Prevention	Status
Architectural	Washrooms and doors at Baxter Hall and MacTier arena are not wheelchair accessible.	Ongoing Investigation to ensure that they are wheelchair accessible
Architectural	No automatic doors at the Bressette House.	Ongoing: Consideration to be given in a future budget.
Physical	Washrooms at the MacTier Beach are not wheelchair accessible.	Ongoing: Washrooms have been decommissioned and portable facilities have been brought in.
Policy/Practice	Marketing for tourism in Georgian Bay does not include information on accessibility.	Ongoing: All future brochures and tourism marketing initiatives will include accessibility information.

Architectural	Playgrounds are not barrier free.	Ongoing: Will be addressed as budget warrants.
Policy/Practice	Barrier free designs incorporated into new construction projects and redevelopment of outdoor public spaces.	Ongoing: As the project warrants.

Operations Department - Roads

Barrier Type	Strategy for Removal/Prevention	Status
Architectural	Washrooms and doors at roads depots are not wheelchair accessible.	Ongoing Investigation to ensure that they are wheelchair accessible

Fire Department

Barrier Type	Strategy for Removal/Prevention	Status
Architectural	Washrooms and doors at fire halls are not wheelchair accessible.	Ongoing Investigation to ensure that they are wheelchair accessible.

Libraries

Barrier Type	Strategy for Removal/Prevention	Status
Architectural	Outside ramps required at both the MacTier and Honey Harbour Libraries.	Investigation to occur on the possibility of doing so. Lots are very small.
Physical	Honey Harbour Library doors are not automatic.	Ongoing: Investigation to occur on the possibility of installing automatic doors openers.
Physical	MacTier Library is not accessible to all people with wheelchairs and those with walkers.	The library itself could not accommodate any alterations to make it accessible as it is too small an area.
Information	There is a small supply of books available on tape for the visually	Investigation is ongoing into a leasing program for books on

	impaired.	tape for both branches.
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Addressing Barriers

The Council of the Corporation of the Township of Georgian Bay is committed to the continual improvement of access to all municipally owned facilities, premises and services for all those with disabilities and the provision of quality services to all members of the community with disabilities.

Over the next several years, Council will make decisions on which barriers are to be addressed each year, based on recommendations of the Accessibility Advisory Committee and subject to budget restraints and feasibility. Staff will continue to ensure that accessibility is considered when developing policy or implementing process changes.

One of the key challenges currently faced by the municipality in implementing programs for accessibility is the apparent public perception regarding the requirement for such services. In the ever growing balancing act between programs and budget, it is difficult to convey to stakeholders the need to include the requirements of the standards, not just because of legislation, but because it helps us build an inclusive community.

Developers have indicated that accessible built homes are currently not in demand and therefore they have a difficult time justifying the additional construction components and expense.

Georgian Bay has a large seasonal population with a vast number of those housed on off-shore islands. The municipality does not provide commercial docking facilities; the temporary docking provided at the Port Severn Park is of a fixed and stable nature. The docking at the Honey Harbour Park Landing is a combination of fixed and floating docks. The municipality has, and will continue to strive to make the waterfronts accessible and inclusive for all subject to budgetary priority and constraints.

Many of the commercial marina users have begun to comment on how much they would appreciate additional stability and safety measures to be installed at the marina facilities. Staff has committed to working with any private business owner to provide information and suggestions as to how to develop an accessible business environment; not just in the built environment, but through hiring practices and corporate initiatives. Through education, staff expects to be able to demonstrate how having an accessible and inclusive business environment can increase profits.

Appendix A

Dates of Review and Summary of Actions- Accessibility Advisory Committee

Year	Date of Review	Action
2007	January 29, 2007 Jan30-Feb 9/07 Feb 15/07 Feb 21, 22/07 March 5/07 Apr 4/07 Apr 23/07	Formation of Committee Advertise for Additional Public Representatives Initial Meeting to Review ODA Purpose/Policy Site Audit Summary of Findings Review/Format Implementation /Draft Report for Council Submit Annual Report to Council.
2008	April-May 2008	Review Plan, Report on Achievements, identify deficiencies, update strategy for removal of existing barriers.
2009	April-May 2009	Review Plan, Report on Achievements.
2010	April-May 2010	Review Plan, Report on Achievements, identify deficiencies, update strategy for removal of existing barriers. Enact new committee for 2011-2015.

Appendix B 2009 PLAN FOR REMEDIATION

The Committee identified remaining barriers at each location and has proposed a timeline for remediation which is identified in each table. During the site reviews, the following barriers were identified as existing:

Barrier Type	Strategy for Removal/Prevention	Status	Estimated Cost Completion Date
Physical	Visual Smoke Alarms.	Ongoing Investigation into availability and other technological warning system options.	Current Requirements are met, look at upgrade for 2009 Budget
Communicational	Limited ability of providing information to people who are deaf over the phone.	TTY system for the phones can be accessed through Bell Special Needs Service. Ensure that information is provided on the web page so people who are deaf will still have access to it.	Bell Equipment is on a fee per use basis. As needed. For TTY Service Call 1-800-855-0511. Barrier Removed
Attitudinal	Staff has not had specific training with respect to interaction with people with disabilities and understanding issues concerning people with disabilities.	Ongoing: Invite ODA to present sensitivity training for staff.	Organizational wide training completed 2009. Training offered to all new employees as part of orientation process. Ongoing Process
Technological	Limited ability of providing information to people with vision or cognitive disabilities	Continue to enhance accessibility features on Municipal Website	Ongoing: Minimal Expense working with iCompass provider.
Policy/Practice	No policies in place on accommodating employees with disabilities.	Ongoing: Investigate drafting such policies.	Policy will be guided by the Human Rights Code and by WSIB requirements.

Policy/Practice	Official Plan and Zoning By-law do not include regulations to promote or require barrier-free provisions.	Ongoing: Investigate making changes to the Official Plan and Zoning By-law that will promote or require barrier-free provisions.	Revision of Zoning By-law process started December 2012. Zoning By-law to include barrier free parking provisions. Target date of adoption November 2014.
Policy/Practice	Consider accessibility in the approval of subdivision and site plan approvals.	Ongoing: Review as the project warrants.	See Above

Operations Department – Recreation/Roads

Barrier Type	Strategy for Removal/Prevention	Status	Estimated Cost Completion Date
Physical	Visual Smoke Alarms for all Public Buildings.	Ongoing Investigation into availability and other technological warning system options.	Current Requirements are met, look at upgrade for 2009 Budget.
Physical	Ramp at least 1 exit from the Gym at the BWCC, patch cracks, repair threshold and heaving at main doors to provide level entry.	Ongoing	Consideration for 2015 budget.

Library

Barrier Type	Strategy for Removal/Prevention	Status	Estimated Cost Completion Date
Physical	Lower light switch & hook in washrooms. Extend the pad area outside the emergency exit.	Minor changes/repairs in progress.	Estimate \$250.materials Spring 2009
Physical	Visual Smoke Alarms.	Ongoing Investigation into availability and	Incorporate into any new construction

		other technological warning system options.	
Physical	Designate/Sign & Paint Accessible Parking Areas at MacTier/Signage for Washrooms	Ongoing	Estimate \$500. Materials Spring 2009

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

ODA	ONTARIANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT, 2001
AODA	ACCESSIBILITY FOR ONTARIANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT, 2005
AAC	ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE
OBC	ONTARIO BUILDING CODE
TTY	TELETYPEWRITERS (Available from Bell Canada 1-800-855-0511)
OP	OFFICIAL PLAN FOR THE TOWNSHIP OF GEORGIAN BAY
HH	HONEY HARBOUR
BWCC	BAXTER WARD COMMUNITY CENTRE
ON GRADE	AT GROUND LEVEL

2008 Report and Update

In 2008, the Township of Georgian Bay opened the new MacTier Library. This facility is compliant with the building requirements for accessibility, including automatic doors, on grade construction, and restroom facilities.

The accessible doors at the Honey Harbour Library have been installed, as has the grab bar in the restroom.

Approved signage for public rest facilities has been purchased and will be installed before the end of 2008.

It has become apparent that ongoing maintenance to the entrance pad at the Baxter Ward Community Centre will be required as a matter of safety and accessibility. Frost heaving makes the surface uneven and difficult to maneuver at certain times. It may be preferable to budget for replacement of the entire pad rather than ongoing maintenance and signage.

Curb cuts at the MacTier Arena have been painted for enhanced visibility, and the accessible parking space has been painted and signed. Recent flooring replacement at the arena has improved traction and stability for all users.

2009 Initiatives

A planned relocation of the Baxter Ward Playground will include level access for those with mobility issues. Improved street lighting in the area will assist those with low vision.

Recreational Trails currently being proposed for the municipality will be designed in accordance with established accessibility standards.

The committee received correspondence from a ratepayer regarding concerns that a private marina that currently offers accessible docking facilities may close. The Township of Georgian Bay has no authority to require private marina's to remain open or to upgrade their current facilities; however, in discussions with the Director of Planning, a requirement to provide a least one accessible dock space can be made in any new Commercial Marina Site Plan Agreements. The Township of Georgian Bay will consider creating accessible public docking and wharves in its' future capital projects.

Designated accessible parking spaces at the MacTier Library will be identified and signed in the spring of 2009. Approved signage for the restrooms will also be installed.

Policies are currently being written with respect to how the Township of Georgian Bay will communicate with those who have accessibility needs as well as the service standards the Township will adhere to, and staff will continue to plan and implement the mandated accessibility standards outlined in the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA).

2010 Initiatives

Council approved By-law No. 2010-02 to adopt the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service Policy in January 2010. By-law incorporated Schedule A - Customer Service Policy, practices and Procedures.

A new recreational use trail was opened in 2010 which has been utilized to some degree by persons living with mobility and/or visual impairment issues.