



**West Nipissing Ouest**

# Accessibility Plan

2021-2025

Joie de vivre  
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# Table of contents

## INTRODUCTION

<a href="#">Goal</a>	3
<a href="#">Commitment to Accessibility</a>	3
<a href="#">Terminology</a>	3

## BACKGROUND

<a href="#">Legislation Summary</a>	4
<a href="#">About West Nipissing</a>	4

## ACCESSIBILITY GROUPS

<a href="#">Accessibility Advisory Committee</a>	5
<a href="#">Municipal Accessibility Operations Group</a>	5

## POLICIES AND STANDARDS

<a href="#">Accessible Customer Service Policy 2009/361</a>	6
<a href="#">Integrated Accessibility Standard Policy 2013/379</a>	6
<a href="#">Design of Public Spaces Standard</a>	6

## ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

<a href="#">Committee Objectives 2021-2025</a>	8
<a href="#">Accessibility Barriers Update 2021</a>	8
<a href="#">Barrier Identification Methodologies for 2021-2025</a>	9
<a href="#">Accessibility Accomplishments</a>	9
<a href="#">Barriers to Address in 2021-2025</a>	10
<a href="#">Review and Monitoring</a>	10
<a href="#">Communication Plan</a>	10

## APPENDICES

Appendix A – Building Assessment Report (AODA)



## INTRODUCTION

### Goal

The Accessibility Plan describes how the Municipality of West Nipissing can continue to identify, remove and prevent barriers for people with disabilities with respect to the use of municipal services, facilities, and workplaces.

### Commitment to Accessibility

The Municipality of West Nipissing is committed to providing equal treatment to persons with disabilities by putting into practice these four key principles: dignity; independence; integration; and equal opportunity. As such, the Municipality will work to reduce barriers in the community.

The Municipality strives for compliance with the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (AODA) by implementing standards pertaining to: accessible customer service; information and communication; employment; transportation; and the built environment.

### Terminology

In the context of this plan, a barrier is identified as anything that prevents a person with a disability from fully participating in all aspects of society because of a disability, including: a physical barrier; an architectural barrier; an information or communication barrier; an attitudinal barrier; a technological barrier; a policy; or a practice.



## BACKGROUND

### Legislation Summary

The purpose of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (AODA) is to benefit all Ontarians by recognizing the history of discrimination against persons with disabilities in Ontario by:

- Developing, implementing and enforcing accessibility standards in order to achieve accessibility for Ontarians with disabilities with respect to goods, services, facilities, accommodation, employment, buildings, structures and premises on or before January 1, 2025; and
- Providing for the involvement of persons with disabilities, of the Government of Ontario and of representatives of industries and various sectors of the economy in the development of the accessibility standards.

The *Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulations* of AODA requires municipalities to:

- Establish, implement, maintain and document a multi-year accessibility plan, which outlines the organization's strategy to prevent and remove barriers and meet its requirements under the Regulation;
- Post the accessibility plan on their website, and provide the plan in an accessible format upon request; and
- Review and update the accessibility plan at least once every five years.

### About West Nipissing

The Municipality of West Nipissing has enjoyed more than 20 years as an amalgamated community. In 1999, Cache Bay, Crystal Falls, Desaulniers, Field, Kipling, Lavigne, North Monetville, River Valley, Sturgeon Falls, Verner and 17 ½ unincorporated townships came together to form the vibrant Municipality of West Nipissing. With a population of approximately 14,364, West Nipissing is 1,993.63 square km in size.

The Municipality has 9 Fire Stations throughout the communities. Policing Services are provided by the Nipissing West OPP Detachment.

Municipal facilities include 1 Municipal Office, 5 Community Centres, 1 main Library with 4 branches, 1 Municipal Marina and 1 Museum. Additionally, the Municipality is responsible for 1 Indoor Recreation Pool, 2 Arenas, 6 Outdoor Rinks, 6 baseball diamonds, 4 tennis courts, 4 soccer fields, 3 public beaches, 1 walking trail, 1 skateboard park, 10 playgrounds, and 3 splash pads.



## ACCESSIBILITY GROUPS

### Accessibility Advisory Committee

The Accessibility Advisory Committee is comprised of volunteers from the community, with one Municipal Council Representative and one Municipal Staff Representative. Committee members have knowledge or a personal experience related to disabilities and/or accessibility. As such, they are able to provide a unique and important perspective on various accessibility issues.

The purpose of the Accessibility Advisory Committee is to review and advise the Municipality on the development of policies, renovations, purchases, etc. in an effort to remove barriers in all municipal facilities, in accordance with the *Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001*.

The activities of the Advisory Committee are to:

- Advise Council on the preparation, implementation and effectiveness of its Accessibility Plan;
- Review site plans and advise on accessibility issues relating to identified buildings within the Municipality;
- Advise Council on other accessibility related issues within the Municipality;
- Work closely with the Municipal Accessibility Operations Group.

### Municipal Accessibility Operations Group

The Municipal Accessibility Operations Group is comprised of the following staff members:

- Director of Economic Development Community Services;
- Chief Building Official;
- Director of Corporate Services;
- Manager of Public Works;
- Project Manager.

The Municipal Accessibility Operations Group, with the advice and guidance of the Accessibility Committee, will strategically identify, remove and prevent as many barriers as possible. The Group will identify priorities for the continual improvement of access to all municipal-owned facilities, properties and services for all people with disabilities. The group will review and implement the municipal Accessibility Plan and will meet at least twice every year.



## POLICIES AND STANDARDS

### **Accessible Customer Service Policy 2009/361**

The *Accessibility Standard for Customer Service* is the first standard under the AODA and has been set out as Ontario Regulation 429/07. It came into effect on January 1, 2008, in which public sector organizations needed to comply.

This *Accessible Customer Service Policy* was adopted by the Municipality on October 6, 2009. It establishes guidelines on providing goods and services to persons with disabilities. The Corporation of the Municipality of West Nipissing is committed to providing consistent customer service to persons with disabilities by putting into practice these four key principles: dignity; independence; integration; and equal opportunity.

### **Integrated Accessibility Standard Policy 2013/379**

The *Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation 191/11* (IASR) came into effect on July 1, 2011 under the AODA. This regulation established accessibility standards for each of the following: information, communication, employment and transportation.

The Municipality adopted its *Integrated Accessibility Standard Policy* on November 19, 2013. The Policy's purpose is to establish, implement, maintain and document a multi-year accessibility plan, which outlines the organization's strategy to prevent and remove barriers and meet its requirements under this Regulation.

### **Design of Public Spaces Standard**

On January 1, 2013, the *Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation* (IASR) was amended to include accessibility requirements for design of public spaces. The *Design of Public Spaces Standard* describes ways to make communal spaces more accessible. The standard applies to new spaces/constructions and buildings. It also applies to existing spaces undergoing major renovations. Most of the spaces it covers are outdoors.

For instance, there are requirements for accessible:

- Recreational trails and beach access routes;
- Outdoor public eating areas like rest stops or picnic areas;
- Outdoor play spaces, like playgrounds in provincial parks and local communities;
- Accessible parking (on and off street);



- Outdoor paths of travel, like sidewalks, ramps, stairs, curb ramps, rest areas and accessible pedestrian signals;
- Service-related elements like service counters, fixed queuing lines and waiting areas;
- Maintenance and restoration of public spaces.

Specific requirements under the various standards will be phased in between 2012 and 2025.

**Procedure for Preventative and Emergency Maintenance of the Accessible Elements in Public Spaces:**

- Staff will perform regular monitoring and checks of accessible elements in public spaces, and will report any findings to building operations management, for timely remediation and/or emergency maintenance, where necessary.
- In the event of any temporary disruptions affecting the accessible elements in the Municipality's public space, due to maintenance or otherwise, the Municipality will notify the public. The notice will include information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated duration and a description of alternative facilities and services that may be available.

The Municipality of West Nipissing will ensure that any new construction or redevelopment of public spaces that the Municipality intends to maintain, meet the requirements set out in section 80 of the IASR.



ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

## Committee Objectives 2021-2025

The Accessibility Plan describes the process and the measures that the Municipality will take in the coming years to identify, remove, and prevent barriers in all municipal facilities and through its services.

The Accessibility Advisory Committee will:

- Review the barriers that were identified in the previous years;
- Continue to conduct informal Municipal Site Reviews;
- Invite other agencies to share their Accessibility Plan;
- Continue to work with the Council and the department heads on identifying accessibility issues and gaps;
- Accessible/handicap parking – ensured that the by-law is enforced;
- Promote accessibility awareness and education;
- Foster good communication and engage local businesses about the importance of accessibility.

## Accessibility Barriers Update 2021

The Committee reviews the Barriers Report on a yearly basis.

Year	Reviewed	Removed	Newly identified	Remaining
2015-2018	32		15	47
2013/2014	35	3		32
2011	46	12		35
2010	58	12		46
2006	88	37	7	58
2003/2004			88	

In 2019, Council approved a Building Assessment Project in which accessibility was part of the component. The accessibility section of the first phase of the Building Assessment is identified in Appendix A.

Over the next several years, the focus will be on the barriers that have been identified in the Building Assessment. Barriers will be addressed based on priority, while keeping in mind budgetary restraints and feasibility.





## Barrier Identification Methodologies for 2021-2025

To identify barriers in municipal facilities, the Accessibility Advisory Committee and the Municipal Accessibility Operations Group will:

- Continue the Building Assessment of the remaining facilities;
- Continue Informal Municipal Site Visit by the committee;
- Increase accessibility awareness within the Municipality;
- Meet with various groups and associations for public awareness;
- Continue to work with different departments within the Municipality regarding accessibility;
- Ensure the enforcement of Handicapped Parking;
- Carry on staff training on accessibility.

## Accessibility Accomplishments

- A new municipal website was launched in November 2020, designed and developed in accordance with accessibility standards (WCAG 2.0 AA and AODA).
- Cache Bay / Library washroom upgrade.
- Sturgeon River House Museum, washroom upgrade and new ramp rear deck.
- Cache Bay Playground Park Accessibility Equipment.
- Side walk upgrade with Tactile panels as per OPSS:
  - Sturgeon Falls (Hwy 17 Coursol to No Frills)
  - Verner (Principal Street East)
  - Cache Bay (Waterfront)
  - Sturgeon Falls Nipissing Street (Salter to Levis)
- Developed the Customer Service and Integrated Accessibility Policy.
- Trained all municipal staff on the Integrated Accessibility Standard Policy.
- Attended Accessibility Fairs.
- Installed automatic doors:
  - Tourist Information Centre
  - Public Library/Community Centre in Cache Bay
  - Verner arena
  - Sturgeon Falls Recreation Centre (Pool & Hall)
  - Sturgeon Falls Library
  - Verner Municipal Building
- Conducted public surveys.
- Completed sidewalk access on Coursol Road in Sturgeon Falls.
- New accessibility equipment at the library.
- Braille signs were installed at Town Hall.



- Communication between our committee and local businesses regarding compliancy with AODA standards.
- Funding partnership with the Ministry of Health Promotion for accessibility equipment for the Recreation Pool.
- Created additional handicapped parking spaces at the Recreation Centre and downtown Sturgeon Falls.
- Coordinated public presentation on Accessibility.
- Developed a progress report and inspection sheet to help facilitate the review and assess barriers identified from previous years.
- New By-law was approved by Council in partnership with the Ontario Court of Justice regulating Accessible Parking in the Municipality of West Nipissing.

## Barriers to address in 2021-2025

Over the next five years, the Committee will address the barriers that were identified in the Building Assessment Report, Appendix A, and:

- Continue to work with community groups and Council to ensure all new construction of public facilities and services are accessible;
- Carry out the restoration/renovation barriers;
- Continue working with the Municipality in addressing the specific requirements of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act*.

## Review and Monitoring

This plan will be reviewed not less than once every five years, allowing Council, staff and the public to monitor the barriers identified and the direction to which the Municipality is moving to remove all barriers under the *Ontarians with Disabilities Act*.

## Communication Plan

Once adopted by Council, the Accessibility Plan 2021-2025 will be available to the public in an accessible format on the municipal website and can be provided upon request.

As per the *Accessible Customer Service Policy*, The Municipality has established a process for receiving and responding to feedback about the manner in which it provides goods or services to persons with disabilities. The Accessibility Feedback form can be found on the Accessibility page of the municipal website and can be provided upon request.

## Appendix A / Annexe A

AODA Maintenance Projects / Projets de maintenance LAPHO	
New Barrier Free Parking Type A and Type B / Nouveau stationnement sans obstacle de type A et type B	
Sturgeon Falls Town Hall / Bureau Municipal	
Sturgeon Falls Recreation Centre / Centre communautaire et récréatif	
Verner Arena / Aréna	
Sturgeon Falls Arena / Aréna	
Musée Sturgeon River House Museum	
Cache Bay Community Centre / Centre communautaire	
New Pedestrian Crossing / Nouveau passage pour piétons	
Sturgeon Falls Town Hall / Bureau Municipal	
Musée Sturgeon River House Museum	
Main Entrance Door Repairs / Réparation de la porte d'entrée principale	
Sturgeon Falls Town Hall / Bureau Municipal	
Sturgeon Falls Recreation Centre / Centre communautaire et récréatif	
Repair Existing Service Kiosk and Counters / Réparer le kiosque et les comptoirs de service existants	
Sturgeon Falls Town Hall / Bureau Municipal	
Sturgeon Falls Recreation Centre / Centre communautaire et récréatif	
New signage and wayfinding system / Nouveau système de signalisation et d'orientation	
Sturgeon Falls Town Hall / Bureau Municipal	
Sturgeon Falls Recreation Centre / Centre communautaire et récréatif	
Verner Arena / Aréna	
Sturgeon Falls Arena / Aréna	
Musée Sturgeon River House Museum	
Cache Bay Community Centre / Centre communautaire	
Repaint Washroom Doors / Repeindre les portes des toilettes	
Musée Sturgeon River House Museum	
Remove Protruding Objects / Retirer les objets saillants	
Cache Bay Community Centre / Centre communautaire	
Repair Stair Handrails / Réparation des rampes d'escaliers	
Sturgeon Falls Town Hall / Bureau Municipal	
Verner Arena / Aréna	
Sturgeon Falls Arena / Aréna	
New Universal Washroom and Repair Existing / Nouvelle salle de bain universelle et réparer les existantes	
Sturgeon Falls Town Hall / Bureau Municipal	
Sturgeon Falls Recreation Centre / Centre communautaire et récréatif	
Cache Bay Community Centre / Centre communautaire	

Repair Entrance Doors / Réparer les portes d'entrée	
Verner Arena / Aréna	
Sturgeon Falls Arena / Aréna	
Musée Sturgeon River House Museum	
Cache Bay Community Centre / Centre communautaire	
Repair Existing Service Kiosk and Counters / Réparer le kiosque et comptoirs de service existants	
Verner Arena / Aréna	
Sturgeon Falls Arena / Aréna	
Musée Sturgeon River House Museum	
Ramps & Designated space for wheelchairs / Rampes et espace désigné pour les fauteuils roulants	
Verner Arena / Aréna	
Sturgeon Falls Arena / Aréna	
Repair Existing Washrooms / Réparer les toilettes existantes	
Sturgeon Falls Recreation Centre / Centre communautaire et récréatif	
Musée Sturgeon River House Museum	
Cache Bay Community Centre / Centre communautaire	
Verner Arena / Aréna	
Repair interior doors and replace non compliant hardware / Réparer portes intérieures et remplacer quincaillerie non confor	
Verner Arena / Aréna	
Sturgeon Falls Arena / Aréna	
Repair Kitchen Counter / Réparation de comptoir de cuisine	
Musée Sturgeon River House Museum	
Repair existing service counter / Réparer le comptoir de service existant	
Cache Bay Community Centre / Centre communautaire	
Increase ramp width, provide proper guard / Augmenter la largeur de la rampe, fournir un garde adéquat	
Sturgeon Falls Town Hall / Bureau Municipal	
Repair Kitchen Counter / Réparation de comptoir de cuisine	
Sturgeon Falls Town Hall / Bureau Municipal	
Chairlift for Wading pool and Hot Tub, Sauna repairs / Télésiège pour pataugeoire et bain, réparations de sauna	
Sturgeon Falls Recreation Centre / Centre communautaire et récréatif	
Repair existing washrooms / Réparer les toilettes existantes	
Sturgeon Falls Recreation Centre / Centre communautaire et récréatif	
Sturgeon Falls Arena / Aréna	
Elevating Device / Appareil élévateur	
Sturgeon Falls Arena / Aréna	

Repair interior doors and replace non compliant hardware / Réparer portes intérieures et remplacer quincaillerie non confor	
Musée Sturgeon River House Museum	
Cache Bay Community Centre / Centre communautaire	
New Universal Washroom / Nouvelle salle de bain universelle	
Musée Sturgeon River House Museum	
Cache Bay Community Centre / Centre communautaire	
Repair interior doors and replace non compliant hardware / Réparer portes intérieures et remplacer quincaillerie non confor	
Sturgeon Falls Recreation Centre / Centre communautaire et récréatif	
Cache Bay Community Centre / Centre communautaire	
New Universal Washroom / Nouvelle salle de bain universelle	
Verner Arena / Aréna	
Sturgeon Falls Arena / Aréna	
Repair interior doors and replace non compliant hardware / Réparer portes intérieures et remplacer quincaillerie non confor	
Sturgeon Falls Town Hall / Bureau Municipal	
Sturgeon Falls Arena / Aréna	
Cache Bay Community Centre / Centre communautaire	
Repair interior doors and replace non compliant hardware / Réparer portes intérieures et remplacer quincaillerie non confor	
Sturgeon Falls Recreation Centre / Centre communautaire et récréatif	
Musée Sturgeon River House Museum	
Elevating device serving 2nd floor / Appareil élévateur 2e plancher	
Cache Bay Community Centre / Centre communautaire	