



# **Township of Melancthon**

## **Multi-Year Accessibility Plan 2026-2030**

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# STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

The Township of Melancthon is committed to ensuring that municipal programs, services, facilities, and information are accessible to all residents, visitors, and employees in a manner that respects dignity, independence, integration, and equal opportunity.

In accordance with the **Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA)**, the Township is dedicated to identifying, preventing, and removing barriers for people with disabilities. This commitment extends to compliance with all applicable accessibility standards and to the continuous improvement of accessibility across all areas of municipal operations.

Through the implementation of this multi-year accessibility plan, the Township will proactively work to enhance accessibility in the built environment, customer service, information and communications, employment practices, and transportation (where applicable). Accessibility considerations will be integrated into municipal policies, planning processes, procurement practices, and service delivery.

The Township of Melancthon values the input of people with disabilities and the community at large and will continue to consult, monitor progress, and report on achievements in order to create an inclusive and welcoming community for everyone.

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## MESSAGE FROM THE CAO/CLERK

The Township of Melancthon is committed to fostering an inclusive and accessible community where all individuals are treated with dignity, respect, and fairness. Accessibility is a shared responsibility, and we recognize the importance of removing barriers that may prevent people with disabilities from fully participating in municipal programs, services, and activities.

In accordance with the **Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA)**, the Township continues to work toward meeting and exceeding accessibility standards across all areas of municipal operations. This Multi-Year Accessibility Plan reflects our ongoing commitment to identifying, preventing, and removing barriers, while embedding accessibility considerations into our policies, planning processes, and service delivery.

We are committed to continuous improvement and value the feedback of residents, employees, and stakeholders as we work to create a more accessible and welcoming Township. By working together, we can ensure that Melancthon remains a community where everyone has the opportunity to participate fully and independently.

# INTRODUCTION

Based on the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR) under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA), the Township of Melancthon is required to develop a Multi-Year Accessibility Plan and to review the plan every five years. Providing an accessibility plan helps the Township identify measures needed to recognize, prevent, and remove barriers for persons with accessibility needs. The Multi-Year Accessibility Plan outlines the Township's actions to improve accessibility across municipal services, programs, facilities, and information, and demonstrates the Township's ongoing commitment to meeting accessibility requirements and improving access for residents, employees, and visitors.

# TOWNSHIP OF MELANCTHON

The Township of Melancthon was Incorporated on January 1, 1853 and is a rural community located in the northwest corner of Dufferin County. The Township is located north and west of the Town of Shelburne. Arterial Roads are County Road 124, Highway 10 and Highway 89. The Township encompasses approximately 31,264 hectares and has a road network of approximately 400 kilometers. Within the Township there are three Hamlets – Horning's Mills, Corbetton and Riverview. A well-known characteristic of the Township is the unique manner in which it was originally surveyed.





# Missions, Visions & Values

## MISSION

To support a progressive community by providing quality services that enrich the lives of our residents

## VISIONS

A vibrant & sustainable rural community for today and tomorrow

## VALUES



### Service-Oriented

A dedicated focus on delivering efficient, accessible, and sustainable services that prioritize and enhance the well-being of the community.



### Integrity

The commitment to upholding moral and ethical principles, guiding all community members toward honesty, fairness, and principled decision-making.



### Respect

Embodying a culture that values and honours each individual's contributions within the community through fostering an inclusive and supportive environment where differences are acknowledged, celebrated, and leveraged for collective growth.



### Accountability

Taking responsibility for the actions, decisions, and overall well-being of the community, fostering a culture of responsiveness, continuous improvement, and transparent governance.



### Teamwork

Fostering collaboration, transparent communication, diverse perspectives, and consistent integrity while working towards the sustained well-being of the community.

# LEGISLATION

The **Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA)** came into effect in 2005 and aims to create an accessible and inclusive Ontario where everyone can fully participate in everyday life within their community. The AODA establishes accessibility requirements in the following four areas:

1. **Customer Service:** Includes requirements such as establishing accessibility policies, accommodating service animals and support persons, providing notice of temporary disruptions, staff training, establishing a feedback process, and ensuring accessible formats of documents.
2. **Information and Communications:** Includes requirements related to accessible websites and web content, communicating the availability of alternative formats upon request, public safety information, and the provision of accessible formats and communication supports.
3. **Employment:** Includes requirements for policies that support employees with disabilities throughout the employment lifecycle, including recruitment, workplace emergency response plans, and individual accommodation plans.
4. **Design of Public Spaces:** Includes requirements for the design of exterior paths of travel, accessible parking, waiting areas, and service counters.

The **Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR), O. Reg. 191/11**, outlines requirements related to accessibility plans and annual reports, training, and the procurement of accessible goods, services, and facilities.

The **Ontario Human Rights Code (OHRC)** outlines the legal obligation to prevent and address discrimination against persons with disabilities. Under the OHRC, individuals have the right to equal treatment, including access to workplaces, schools, public transit, health and social services, restaurants, shops, and housing.

The **Ontario Building Code (OBC)** includes accessibility requirements for the built environment that go beyond AODA standards. The OBC regulates most aspects of building construction in Ontario. These requirements generally apply to new construction and major renovations and do not apply to existing buildings where no work is planned. Most accessibility requirements do not affect houses.

# DEFINITIONS

As per the AODA standards, the Township of Melancthon strives to ensure that the definitions are understood by all individuals and are as follows:

**“Disability”** means,

- a) Any degree of physical disability, infirmity, malformation or disfigurement that is caused by bodily injury, birth defect or illness, and without limiting the generality of the foregoing, includes diabetes mellitus, epilepsy, a brain injury, any degree of paralysis, amputation, lack of physical co-ordination, blindness or visual impediment, deafness or hearing impediment, muteness or speech impediment, or physical reliance on a guide dog or other animal or on a wheelchair or other remedial appliance or device,
- b) A condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability,
- c) A learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language,
- d) A mental disorder, or
- e) An injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997

**“Barrier”** means, anything that prevents a person with a disability from fully participating in all aspects of society because of their disability, including a physical barrier, an architectural barrier, an information or communications barrier, an attitudinal barrier, a technological barrier, and/or a policy or practice.

## **Barrier Identification**

Barriers can include:

**Physical Barriers:** A physical barrier is an obstacle that hinders one’s access, including environmental, structural or geographical challenges.

**Communications Barriers:** Obstacles for processing, interpreting or transmitting information.

**Attitudinal Barriers:** An attitudinal barrier is an obstacle from pre-conceived judgements that directly or indirectly discriminate against a person or group.

**Technological Barriers:** A technological barrier is when technology cannot be modified to support a person’s needs such as assistive devices and/or software.

**Systemic Barriers:** A systemic barrier occurs within organizations, policies, practices and procedures which do not consider or incorporate accessibility needs/requirements.

# PAST ACHIEVEMENTS TO REMOVE AND PREVENT BARRIERS

## PAST ACHIEVEMENTS TO REMOVE AND PREVENT BARRIERS

The Township of Melancthon has undertaken the following accessibility initiatives, including the development and implementation of accessibility policies:

- Council approved 2022-2025 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan
- Assessed requirements and drafted a plan for conducting an accessible municipal election and successfully conducted an accessible municipal election
- Reviewed IASR Accessibility Policies
- Conducted Accessibility and Ontario Human Rights refresher training for staff
- Live streaming of Council meetings without the requirement to be physically present
- Accessible document training provided to key staff
- Ensure access to goods, services, facilities and events are available to people with disabilities
- Video recordings of Council meetings are posted to the Township website after meetings
- Provide accommodations during the interview process and for employees if required





# STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

## Customer Service

The Township is committed to providing accessible customer service to people with disabilities. This means that we will continue to provide goods, services and facilities to people with disabilities with the same high quality and timeliness as others.

## Design of Public Spaces

The Township will continue to collaborate and engage with the County of Dufferin Accessibility Advisory Committee when developing new initiatives or projects.

## Procurement

The Township is committed to fair and accessible procurement practices. Ensure accessibility criteria is incorporated into tender requests and accessibility criteria is used during evaluation.

## Other

The Township is committed to ensuring that Municipal Elections are accessible to all residents and candidates. Accessibility is a key consideration throughout the election process to ensure that barriers are removed to provide equal opportunities for participation. The Township will implement various objectives to ensure equal opportunity for all electors and candidates. These objectives include: that persons with disabilities are able to independently cast their vote and verify their selection, that persons with disabilities have full and equal access to all information on where and when to vote and on eligible candidates, that persons with disabilities can fully participate in the Municipal Election as an elector, candidate, or election official and that the Voter Help Centre is held at an accessible facility.

## Information and Communications

The Township is committed to making our information and communications accessible to people with disabilities, and we will continue our duty in providing accessible formats to members of the community upon request. We will continue to review forms on our website to ensure they are accessible and fillable.

## Training

The Township is committed to providing training on the requirements of Ontario's accessibility laws, Ontario Human Rights Code and Township Accessibility Policies as it applies to people with disabilities. Staff and volunteers will be required to receive accessibility training.

## Employment

The Township will continue with its recruitment practices, ensuring the public is made aware that the Township will provide accommodation for applicants with disabilities in its recruitment, assessment, and selection process including:

- Ensure applicants are made aware that upon request, they will have access to accommodation and support.
- Provide support for employees with disabilities and procedures that provide job accommodation.

# PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT AND FEEDBACK

Removing barriers and enhancing accessibility is an ongoing commitment. As we plan for improvements to our services, programs, and facilities through 2030 and beyond, we're inviting community members to share their ideas and feedback. Your input is valuable in helping us create a more inclusive and accessible Melancthon for everyone. Feedback can be submitted through by email, or contacting the Clerk's Department directly.

# COMMUNICATION OF THE ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

The approved Multi-Year Accessibility Plan will be posted on the Township's website and will be provided in an alternative format if requested.



## CONTACT US

For more information on this Accessibility Plan please contact the Township of Melancthon's Clerk's Department.

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