

# **Township of Asphodel-Norwood**



## **Multi-Year Accessibility Plan 2025-2026**

**Adopted: October 22, 2024**

For alternate formats of this document, please contact the Township of Asphodel-Norwood at 705-639-5343 or [info@antownship.ca](mailto:info@antownship.ca)

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# Executive Summary

The Township of Asphodel-Norwood (the Township) is dedicated to promoting barrier-free services and environment for employees, citizens, and everyone else who lives, works, visits, or invests in the Township. The Township strives to meet the needs of employees and residents with disabilities and are working hard to remove and prevent barriers to accessibility.

Although buildings are not a required component of the Accessibility Plan, the Township wishes to take action to provide the most access to its facilities for residents and visitors. As such, facilities and buildings will be covered in the Plan.

The Province has enacted several accessibility standards which set out specific rules and deadlines for government, businesses, non-profits, and public sector organizations to follow. There are staggered compliance dates to aid organizations in implementing the numerous changes to day-to-day operations, services, and facilities. The Township is committed to fulfilling the requirements under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act.

This Accessibility Plan outlines the steps the Township is taking to meet those requirements and to improve opportunities for people with disabilities.

## Statement of Commitment

The Township is committed to ensuring equal access and participation for people with disabilities. We are committed to treating people with disabilities in a way that allows them to maintain their dignity and independence.

We believe in integration, and we are committed to meeting the needs of people with disabilities in a timely manner. We will do so by removing and preventing barriers to accessibility and by meeting our accessibility requirements under Ontario's accessibility laws.

## Background

The Township of Asphodel-Norwood was established on January 1, 1998, through the amalgamation of the former Township of Asphodel and the Village of Norwood. Both municipalities have rich histories, with the Township of Asphodel being settled in 1820 and the Village of Norwood established in 1878.

Today, the Township of Asphodel-Norwood is home to nearly 5,000 permanent residents. Additionally, the population swells during the summer months as visitors inhabit the trailer

parks and cottages along the Trent River.

The Township of Asphodel-Norwood encompasses the Village of Norwood at its center, surrounded by rural farmland and the Hamlet of Westwood. The southern and eastern portions of the Township border the Trent River and the boundary between Peterborough and Northumberland County. Our extensive local road network spans approximately 298 kilometers, providing vital transportation routes for residents.

The Township offers a diverse range of services to its residents, along with shared services in partnership with the County of Peterborough. We operate two fire stations—one in Norwood and another in Westwood—and have a community center featuring an NHL-sized ice surface. Recently, a new splash pad was constructed in compliance with the Barrier-Free requirements of the Ontario Building Code.

The Township’s administration is organized into several departments, including Public Works, Environmental Services, Building and Planning, Library Services (through two libraries), Recreation, Economic Development, Fire Services, Community Emergency Preparedness, Administration, and Finance. Additionally, shared services with the County provide curbside recycling pickup, planning services, ambulance services, and administrative support. Policing services are delivered by the Ontario Provincial Police.

**Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001**

The Ontarians with Disabilities Act (O.D.A.), was enacted in 2001 to improve opportunities and access for persons with disabilities. This Act applies to all provincial and municipal governments, school boards, colleges and universities, and hospitals.

**The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA)**

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (A.O.D.A.) was enacted in 2005 and is a law intended to set out a process for developing and enforcing accessibility standards. The overall goal of the A.O.D.A. is to provide for the development of minimum standards to achieve accessibility for Ontarians with disabilities by January 1, 2025.

**Accessibility Standards**

To achieve this vision, the Province has issued a set of five (5) accessibility standards under the A.O.D.A. that will help organizations identify and remove barriers to improve accessibility for persons with disabilities.

**The Five Accessibility Standards**

- 1. Customer Service
- 2. Information and Communication
- 3. Employment
- 4. Transportation
- 5. Design of Public Space

**Customer Service**

The Township of Asphodel-Norwood introduced an Accessibility Standards for Customer Service Policy, By-law 2009-52, which outlines the Township’s commitment to the provision of accessible customer services for persons with disabilities.

Feedback forms and processes were put in place to ensure that processes were accessible for persons with disabilities and included various methods for providing feedback. As part of the accessibility training process, staff hired to provide services on behalf the Township are required to complete an accessibility training session when starting work.

To enhance accessibility and better serve our residents, the entrance to the Municipal Office was upgraded with automatic doors and the reception desk was reconfigured to meet accessibility standards. Additionally, Council meetings are held at the fully accessible Community Centre, which offers ample space and parking for attendees.

When developing the Public Consultation Strategy, approved by Council in September 2024, the Customer Service Standard was considered.

**Information and Communication**

In 2018, the Township of Asphodel-Norwood launched a new website, allowing for control over its appearance, functionality, and content. All changes to the website were mindful of accessibility and access to available information, documents and data.

The Township provides residents with access to information through multiple channels, including its website, mobile app, social media platforms, in-person communications, and printed materials. As outlined in the Communications Policy, social media enhances access to information for a diverse range of Township users, ensuring that residents stay informed and engaged.

When developing the Public Consultation Strategy, approved by Council in September 2024, the Information and Communication Standard was considered.

## **Employment**

The Township of Asphodel-Norwood is an equal opportunity employer. Accessibility is covered in the Emergency Management Plan, Human Resource Policies, and Recruitment Policies. These policies were all reviewed and updated as required to ensure compliance is continued to be met.

All new staff are trained on accessible customer service and Human Rights. This is part of our ongoing practice for all new staff who join the organization.

## **Transportation**

The Township of Asphodel-Norwood does provide accessible transportation services by issuing a license to taxi companies which meet the required accessibility standards.

On going advocacy work is being done to support transportation needs in the Township.

## **Design of Public Spaces**

Although the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act does not apply to buildings, the Township is committed to being inclusive and is including plans to make all owned facilities accessible to residents and visitors. This is why the Township implemented a Procurement Policy which ensures compliance with the Accessibility Plan guidelines and Accessible Customer Service Standards Policy when acquiring new properties and tendering for facility upgrades.

### **Township of Asphodel-Norwood Municipal Office**

- Automatic door openers were installed for the main entrance ways to the Municipal Office.
- A designated accessible parking space was marked with the appropriate loading zone area for access to the township building.
- The Municipal Office reception counter was also reconfigured to meet accessibility standards.

### **Township of Asphodel-Norwood Town Hall**

- There is a ramp leading to the front entrance of the Town Hall building.
- The main entrance was retrofitted with an automatic door opener in 2019.
- The accessible washroom on the main floor of the hall was fully upgraded in 2019 to meet accessibility standards.

#### Former Asphodel-Norwood Medical Centre (31 King St.)

- The old Norwood Medical Centre has designated accessible parking space, appropriately marked to meet accessibility standards.
- There is a ramp, from the parking area, leading to the automatic door to the building.
- The main door to the building meets accessibility standards.
- The building also has accessible counters and washrooms.

#### New Asphodel-Norwood Medical Center (17 Spruce St.)

- The new Norwood Medical Centre has designated accessible parking space, appropriately marked to meet accessibility standards.
- The main door to the building meets accessibility standards.
- The building also has accessible counters and washrooms.

#### Township of Asphodel-Norwood Library – Norwood Branch

- The Norwood Library has an elevator installed, allowing for accessibility to both floors of the building.

Note: This building is being considered for relocation, renovation or rebuild. At that time any accessibility compliance issues will be considered in conjunction with the Ontario Building Code requirements.

#### Township of Asphodel-Norwood Library – Westwood Branch

- The Westwood Library has marked, designated accessible parking.
- A ramp and automatic door opener have been installed to the main entrance of the building.
- The main door to the building meets accessibility standards.

#### Township of Asphodel-Norwood Community Centre

- The Community Centre has several designated accessible parking spaces, appropriately marked to meet accessibility standards.
- Automatic door openers have been installed at the main doors to the building
- There are several accessible washrooms and an accessible viewing area in the arena.

#### Township Building – Westwood Heritage Centre

- A ramp has been installed to the main entrance of the Heritage Centre building.

#### Fire Station One – Norwood Branch

- This building is not open to the public and therefore does not require any considerations for accessibility compliance.

Note: This building is being considered for relocation, renovation or rebuild. At that time any accessibility compliance issues will be considered in conjunction with the Ontario Building Code requirements.

#### Fire Station Two – Westwood Branch

- This building is not open to the public and therefore does not require any considerations for accessibility compliance.

#### Public Works Garage

- This building is not open to the public and therefore does not require any considerations for accessibility compliance.

#### Parks

- Asphodel Heights Park
  - Accessible outdoor play spaces
- Asphodel Park
  - Accessible picnic tables/benches
  - Accessible sheltered picnic area
  - Accessible outdoor play spaces
  - Accessible washrooms
- Community Centre Park
  - Accessible picnic tables/benches
  - Accessible sheltered picnic area
  - Accessible outdoor play spaces
  - Accessible washrooms
- Lions Park
  - Accessible sheltered picnic area
- Mill Pond Butterfly Garden
  - Accessible sheltered picnic area
- Mill Pond Forest Trails
  - Accessible picnic tables/benches
- Norwood Park
  - Accessible picnic tables/benches
  - Accessible outdoor play spaces

- Westwood Park
  - Accessible picnic tables/benches
  - Accessible outdoor play spaces

### **AODA Compliance Requirements 2020-2023**

- File an Accessible Compliance Report for December 31, 2023: Completed.

### **2025-2026 Accessibility Action Plan**

#### **A.O.D.A Legislation**

The Township is committed to working toward implementing all requirements of the A.O.D.A. In 2026, the Township will:

- Submit Provincial Accessibility Report, the next reporting deadline is December 31, 2026.

Moving forward, the Township will review the accessibility legislation and this plan when creating new public spaces, making any renovations to Township property and when building new infrastructure. The Township is committed to identifying and removing barriers for persons with disabilities.

#### **Customer Service Standard Priorities**

The Township has not received any Accessibility Customer Feedback Forms from residents or users of its services and/or facilities. To ensure no barriers are preventing feedback, the Township will be using an Online Form Builder to make all forms and applications available in different formats to meet a variety of different accessibility requirements.

#### **Information and Communication Priorities**

The Township of Asphodel-Norwood will continue to ensure its website and web content are accessible. Any contents shared by the Township that are not accessible, such as diagrams and maps, will be provided in an accessible format when requested.

The Township will provide notice to the public of the availability of alternate formats and supports, upon request. To ensure these requests are received by the Municipality, the public feedback process will be reviewed and updated to ensure it's available in a variety of formats.

**Employment Priorities**

The Township of Asphodel-Norwood will continue to support and refresh plans throughout the employment cycle as necessary. All policies and practices will be reviewed regularly to ensure applicants and employees with disabilities receive the support they require. Staff will be provided with updates and/or notifications regarding any upgrade or changes in accommodation for people with disabilities.

**Design of Public Space Priorities**

The Township is committed to establishing policies and directives that will continue to strengthen and grow its community. This can only be done by ensuring all services and facilities are inclusive and accessible for all users.

**Transportation Priorities**

The Township is dedicated to advocating for improved public transportation in Asphodel-Norwood. We recognize the challenges faced by individuals without access to personal vehicles and understand the critical role public transportation plays in supporting our post-secondary students and seniors.

**Commitment**

Township staff will monitor the progress made on the actions contained within the plan which will be shared and discussed with the Council on a regular basis.

The Township will develop a new accessibility plan every four (4) years tied to the term of Council, with the understanding, that as legislative requirements change, the priorities contained within the Plan may also change. Should changes be necessary, staff will identify them through the annual status report to Council.

The Multi-Year Accessibility Plan will be posted on the Township’s website and copies will be available as requested.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION**

For more information regarding the Township of Asphodel-Norwood’s Multi-Year Accessibility Plan or to receive this document in a different format, please contact the Municipal Office at 705-639-5343 or info@antownship.ca.