

2025
The Corporation of the City of Kitchener
Status Update on the Accessibility Plan (2023 to 2027)

The City of Kitchener Accessibility Plan for 2023-2027 establishes the Corporation's commitment to identifying, preventing and removing barriers to accessibility. This report provides a 2025 status update on the actions undertaken, progress achieved, and ongoing efforts to advance the goals and priorities outline in the plan.

Accessibility Standards Review:

The Province of Ontario regularly reviews accessibility standards and may introduce revisions to existing standards or new accessibility requirements with associated compliance deadlines. The City of Kitchener monitors these changes and reports on any resulting actions through its annual accessibility status updates. No changes to the accessibility standards were introduced by the Province of Ontario in 2025.

The following highlights summarize key accessibility initiatives and accomplishments for 2025.

1.0 General Requirements Commitments:

1.1 Accessibility Policy

- The City of Kitchener Accessibility Policy, updated in May 2017 and continues to be reviewed and updated as required.
- The Accessibility Policy is available to the public on the city website.

1.2 Accessibility Plan

- In 2023, Council approved The City of Kitchener Multi-Year Accessibility Plan for 2023-2027. The Accessibility Plan is available to the public on the city website.
- The annual status update is presented to the City of Kitchener's Accessibility Advisory Committee at the end of each year.
- The annual status update is available to the public on the city website.

1.3 Procurement

- Staff at the City of Kitchener are provided with the Guide to Accessibility Requirements and the Guide for Purchasing Goods, Services for the City of Kitchener available to them on the staff intranet.
- Staff can contact procurement with questions or request 1-1 training. Procurement 101 training is planned to be revised and offered "on demand".
- All applicable purchasing documents include an AODA clause.
- Project Managers incorporate accessibility design criteria and features in project specifications, where applicable.

1.4 Training

- Mandatory eLearning accessibility training is provided to all new staff.
- New "Kitchener specific" training modules will be created in 2027 to replace the current.

- Training brochures are provided for staff and volunteers.
- Training brochures will be updated in 2027.
- Continue to update and provide new resources for staff on the intranet.
- Providing the training brochures for staff leads to distribute to city affiliates and volunteers.
- Accessibility staff leader will send a bi-annual email to all staff as a refresh on the AODA.

2.0 Standards Commitments:

2.1 Information and Communications Standards

- Continue to provide staff with resources on the staff intranet.
- Continue to identify vendors for staff and consultants to hire to create accessible documents.
- Include an accessibility clause in RFPs to ensure documents prepared by consultants are delivered in an accessible format.
- Continue to use quality assurance question and answer tool to identify accessible issues.
- Working on a plan for ongoing staff training, including annual training and on-demand training.

2.2 Employment Standards

- City of Kitchener job postings notify employees and the public about the availability of accommodation for applicants with disabilities in its recruitment processes.
- Inform all current and new employees through the IASR training brochure and through the mandatory accessibility eLearning module of procedures used to support employees with disabilities.
- Accessible formats and communication supports are available for all employees, upon request.
- Continue to provide individualized workplace emergency response information to employees who have a disability. Implemented prior to 2013, posted on the staff intranet and part of AODA training.
- Continue to have in place a written process, for the development of documented individual accommodation plans for employees with disabilities through the Corporate Workplace Accommodation Program.
- Continue to have in place a return-to-work process and plan for employees who have been absent from work due to a disability through the Corporate Workplace Accommodation Program.
- Management staff are trained and updated in policies and practices with respect to recruitment, hiring and interviewing. A refresh version of hiring at Kitchener for all leaders was launched in October 2023.

2.3 Design of Public Spaces Standards

- City of Kitchener staff consult with GRAAC, before constructing new or redeveloping existing municipal recreational trails, outdoor play spaces, outdoor recreational amenities, public washrooms, and exterior paths of travel, rest areas and on-street parking spaces. GRAAC has developed an accessibility comments sheet for each of these areas to help staff with accessibility considerations.
- City of Kitchener public consultations are open to all members of the public.

- The City of Kitchener’s ‘Accessibility Standards for the Built Environment’ document, approved by council in May 2017, was prepared to assist in implementing the Design of Public Spaces Standards, and is used under the City of Kitchener’s Site Plan Approval process.
- Annually review and update the City of Kitchener procedures for preventative and emergency maintenance of the accessible elements in public spaces and procedures for dealing with temporary disruptions when accessible elements are not in working order.

2.4 Customer Service Standards

- The customer service standards are included in the Accessibility Policy.
- The training brochures for staff and volunteers include the customer service standards.
- The mandatory accessibility training for staff includes the customer service standards.
- Staff resources related to customer service standards are available on the staff intranet.
- The City Hall Service Centre serves 30,000 customers annually.
- Main floor access to subject matter experts (1:1) for any city hall service, drop in or pre-booked.
- An on-demand multi-language interpretation system enables staff to offer support in 200+ languages, including ASL.

Consultation with the Grand River Accessibility Advisory Committee (GRAAC):

As municipal projects arise, the Grand River Accessibility Advisory Committee review site plans and provides suggestions on how to best improve and achieve accessibility.

In 2025, GRAAC advised on:

- 2022 Post Election Accessibility Plan and Considerations for 2026
- 20th Anniversary Update and Feedback
- Mill Courtland Community Centre Addition and Expansion Update
- Draft GRAAC Terms of Reference
- Hybrid Model GRAAC Members Feedback
- Portable lift at Harry Class Pool
- Community Engagement Review
- Long Term Parking Strategy
- Staff Lunch ‘N Learn “Accessibility Benefits Everyone” 2 Kitchener GRAAC members on Panel
- National Accessibility Week
- Data for Equity Standards and Guidelines
- Kitchener’s New Indoor Recreation Centre update
- Upper Canada Park parking lot and washroom building
- Rosenberg Library indigenous artwork
- Kitchener’s New Indoor Recreation Centre gym
- Victoria Park Master Plan
- Promotional video for Kitchener’s New Indoor Recreation Centre re: accessibility
- Elections Accessibility Plan (including accessible voting machines and voting locations)
- Integrated Stormwater Plan
- Pedestrian crossing in front of the Auditorium
- GRAAC Terms of Reference update
- Website Refresh
- Kitchener’s 2051 Official Plan Update

Update on the Design of Public Spaces Standard

The Design of Public Space Standard (DOPS) addresses accessibility in public access spaces. Items addressed include recreational trails, outdoor public use eating spaces, outdoor play spaces, exterior paths of travel (e.g., sidewalks), on and off-street parking, service counters and fixed queuing guides. The DOPS includes technical specifications, public consultation, and maintenance requirements.

The Design of Public Spaces Standard, section 80.44, maintenance of accessible elements states that multi-year accessibility plans shall include procedures for preventative and emergency maintenance of the accessible elements in public spaces and procedures for dealing with temporary disruptions. The chart below addresses all sections within the DOPS.

City of Kitchener
Design of Public Spaces Standard
80.44 - Maintenance of accessible elements

Section(s) #	Maintenance of accessible elements	Procedures for preventative maintenance	Procedures for emergency maintenance and Procedures for dealing with temporary disruptions
80.8, 80.9, 80.11, 80.12, 80.13, 80.14, 80.15	Recreational trails (Means public pedestrian trails that are intended for recreational and leisure purposes)	Procedure for preventative maintenance of recreational trails involves the following general activities: - Routine scheduled maintenance activities carried out, as required. - Specific maintenance work associated with inspection findings. - Planned capital upgrades carried out. - Work repairs generated by customers and staff reported complaints. - Annual inspection program for recreational trails.	Procedure for emergency maintenance/temporary disruptions of recreational trails involved: - Trail section and limit of work zone cordoned off to secure construction area. - Signs posted indicate closure of trail if closure is more than one (1) day. - Temporary closures, more than one (1) day, communicated via City of Kitchener website and social media. - Repair work carried out to appropriate standards. - Trail reinstated following completion of work.
80.21, 80.22, 80.23, 80.24, 80.25, 80.26,	Exterior paths of travel (Are outdoor sidewalks or walkways designed and constructed for pedestrian travel and are	Procedure for preventative maintenance of exterior paths of travel of sidewalks or walkways involves the following general activities:	Procedure for emergency maintenance/temporary disruptions of exterior paths of travel of sidewalks or walkways involve:

Section(s) #	Maintenance of accessible elements	Procedures for preventative maintenance	Procedures for emergency maintenance and Procedures for dealing with temporary disruptions
80.27, 80.29, 80.30, 80.31	intended to serve a functional purpose and not to provide a recreational experience)	- Annual inspection of sidewalks to meet the MMS (minimum maintenance standard). - Annual inspection of sidewalks or walkways leading to the entrance of city facilities. - Work repairs generated by customers and staff reported complaints. - In accordance with the City of Kitchener Snow Removal By-law, the City will clear sidewalks in front and to the side of City owned properties as well as rear lot properties. - Sidewalks in the downtown area maintained by the City and funded through special by-law taxation to downtown properties. - Winter maintenance of sidewalks adjacent to private properties is the responsibility of the property-owner.	- Areas closed off and identified until work is complete. - Signs posted indicate closure of sidewalk or walkway. - Repair work carried out to appropriate standards. - Sidewalk or walkway reinstated following completion of emergency work.
80.18, 80.19, 80.20	Outdoor play spaces (Consists of an area that includes play equipment, where the equipment or features are designed and placed to provide play opportunities and experiences for children and caregivers)	Procedure for preventative maintenance of outdoor play spaces involves: - Playground inspections as per CSA Standards and City guidelines. - Work repairs generated through customers and staff reported complaints.	Procedure for emergency maintenance/temporary disruptions of outdoor play spaces involve: - Follow the CSA Standards and City guidelines for removal of damaged equipment and signage guidelines (i.e., unsafe equipment removed, new piece of equipment installed, and post sign if the park or play structure is closed). - Temporary closures, more than one (1) day communicated via City of Kitchener website and social media channels.
80.16, 80.17,	Outdoor public use eating area (Consists of tables that are found in public areas, and are specifically intended for use by the public as a place to consume food)	Procedure for preventative maintenance of outdoor public use eating areas involves: - Annual inspection of tables at municipal outdoor public use eating areas. - Routine scheduled maintenance activities carried out, as required. - Specific maintenance work associated with inspection findings. - Work repairs generated by customers and staff reported complaints.	Procedure for emergency maintenance/temporary disruptions of outdoor public use eating areas involve: - Unsafe tables removed and repaired/replaced.

Section(s) #	Maintenance of accessible elements	Procedures for preventative maintenance	Procedures for emergency maintenance and Procedures for dealing with temporary disruptions
80.32, 80.33, 80.34, 80.35, 80.36, 80.37, 80.38, 80.39	Accessible parking – off-street parking facilities, accessible parking spaces, access aisles, signage, on-street	Procedure for preventative maintenance of accessible off-street and on-street parking involves: - Routine maintenance activities carried out, as required for off-street municipal parking lots (i.e., repainting lines). - Planned capital upgrades carried out. - When severe snowfall is expected, a public notification is issued regarding a parking ban to clear the roads and no on-street parking is permitted so the roads can be cleared. - On-street parking is inspected through Operations Roads & Traffic’s Road patrol program and maintained in accordance with the Municipal Act’s Minimum Maintenance Standards.	Procedure for emergency maintenance/temporary disruptions of accessible off-street and on-street parking involve: - For (paid) municipal off-street parking lots when work is going to be done. Permit holders are notified. - For (no charge) municipal off-street parking lots when work is going to be done signage would be posted. - For on-street parking during emergency maintenance work, the parking spot would not be available for use and signage would be posted.
80.40, 80.41, 80.42, 80.43	Obtaining Services (Requirements for obtaining services in respect of service counters, fixed queuing guides and waiting areas apply whether the services are obtained in buildings or out-of-doors)	Procedure for preventative maintenance of municipal facility service counters, fixed queuing guides and waiting areas involve: - Work repairs generated by customers and staff reported complaints. - Planned capital upgrades carried out.	Procedure for emergency maintenance/temporary disruptions of municipal facility service counters, fixed queuing guides and waiting areas involved: - Areas closed off and identified until work is complete. - Alternate service areas identified. - Repair work carried out to appropriate standards. - Area reinstated following completion of work.