



# Grand River Accessibility Advisory Committee (GRAAC) Agenda

Thursday, January 23, 2025, 1:30 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.  
Electronic Meeting

The Grand River Accessibility Advisory Committee shall assist the participating municipalities in fulfilling the purpose of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act by providing vision and advice regarding the removal of barriers.

People interested in participating in this meeting can email Administrative Coordinator, Janis McKenzie at Janis.McKenzie@kitchener.ca. Please refer to the delegation section on the agenda below for the registration deadline. Written comments received will be circulated to the Committee prior to the meeting and will form part of the public record.

\*Accessible formats and communication supports are available upon request. If you require assistance to take part in a city meeting or event, please call 519-741-2345 or TTY 1-866-969-9994\*

**Coordinating Municipality - Kitchener**  
**Co-Chairs - Tamara Cooper, Alyssa Clelland**

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Pages

**1. Commencement**

**1.1 Land Acknowledgement**

*We would like to begin by acknowledging the land on which we gather today, recognizing that the land in which we gather today is the traditional territory of the Haudenosaunee, Anishnawbe and Chonnonton peoples. We would also like to acknowledge the enduring knowledge, presence and deep-rooted traditions of the First Nations, Metis and Inuit who continue to enrich our community to this day.*

**2. New Committee Member Orientation**

45 m

3

Staff will lead the newly appointed members through a new Committee Orientation, anticipated at 45 minutes. It is optional to attend for pre existing members.

**3. Minutes for Approval**

**4. Disclosures of Pecuniary Interests**

*Members of Council and members of the City's local boards/committees are required to file a written statement when they have a conflict of interest. If a conflict is declared, please visit [www.kitchener.ca/conflict](http://www.kitchener.ca/conflict) to submit your written form.*

**5. Delegations**

*Pursuant to Council's Procedural By-law, delegations are permitted to address the Committee for a maximum of five (5) minutes. All Delegations must register by 10:00 a.m. on January 23rd, 2025, in order to participate in the meeting.*

**6. Discussion Items**

**6.1 Introductions** 15 m

**6.2 Accessibility Status Plan Update - North Dumfries** 15 m 40

Ashley Good, Clerk, North Dumfries, will provide a 10 minute presentation on this matter.

**6.3 Accessibility Status Plan Update - City of Waterloo** 15 m 49

Amy Ross, Accessibility Advocate, City of Waterloo will provide a 10-minute presentation on this matter.

**7. Recess and Reconvene** 10 m

**8. Discussion Items (Cont'd)**

**8.1 The Built Environment Sub Committee Report** 15 m  
No Updates.

**8.2 Albert McCormick Arena, City of Waterloo** 40 m 62

Mary Cathryn Lorentz, Project Coordinator and Heather Liddycoat, Manager, Capital Program and Project Management, City of Waterloo will provide a 30-minute presentation on this matter.

**9. Information Items**

**9.1 None**

**10. Adjournment**



# GRAAC

GRAND RIVER  
ACCESSIBILITY  
ADVISORY  
COMMITTEE

## Grand River Accessibility Advisory Committee New Member Orientation January 23<sup>rd</sup> 2025

# Territorial Acknowledgment

As we are gathered virtually, please take a moment to recognize the land that we are joining from together today. Territorial and Land Acknowledgements are part of Truth and Reconciliation and part of our own learning and our unlearning of the history and culture of First Nations, Metis and Inuit people. Acknowledging and understanding the Truth and then committing to personal and collaborative action can be one way of ensuring meaning and commitment to Territorial and Land Acknowledgements.

GRAAC – monthly meetings

# Welcome and Introductions

LoriAnn Palubeski, City of Kitchener

# Advisory Committee of Council

- 7 municipalities
- Legislated requirement under the AODA
- Advise 7 municipalities on municipal work (builds, services, plans)
- Advisory Committee NOT Advocacy Committee
- Designated Council reps attend monthly meetings

# GRAAC meetings

- Monthly for 10 months (no meetings in July & August)
- Meet the 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday of the month from 1:30-4pm (except for December)
- Zoom but piloting Hybrid
- Janis is the GRAAC Admin support (email GRAAC package 1 week prior to meeting which includes the meeting link)
- Meetings run by GRAAC Co-chairs (elections in Feb 2025)
- The chair will manage the order of speaking

# GRAAC Staff Reps

- Each municipality has a Staff Rep = Kit – Lolita/Lori, Wat – Amy R, North Dumfries – Ashley, Wellesley – Amy H, Wilmot – Kaitlin, Woolwich – Alex, Region of Waterloo, Emily
- The municipality you live in is your GRAAC Staff Rep (i.e., City of Kitchener = Lolita, City of Waterloo = Amy Ross, Woolwich = Alex)
- GRAAC Staff Reps attend monthly meetings (answer questions)
- Meeting accommodations



# Term of Reference

Amy Ross, City of Waterloo

# GRAAC Terms of Reference

- Mission: assist the participating municipalities in fulfilling the purpose of the AODA Legislation by providing vision and advice for the identification, prevention, and removal of barriers.
- GRAAC is an advisory committee that follows the procedures set out in the terms of reference.

# GRAAC Terms of Reference (continued 2)

- Duties and Functions:
  - Advise Councils about:
    - the preparation, implementation and effectiveness of the accessibility plans of the 7 municipalities.
    - the accessibility of buildings, structures or premises, or part of a building, structure or premise, that the municipalities lease, purchase, construct or significantly renovate.
    - accessibility of site plans and drawings described in Section 41 of the Planning Act, having regard to the approved barrier-free best practices of the 7 municipalities.

# GRAAC Terms of Reference (continued 3)

- Review and respond about municipal matters with advice as appropriate.
- Consult with persons with disabilities, community groups and organizations representing persons with disabilities to capture and communicate emerging issues.
- Refer issues, make recommendations or suggestions for action to appropriate groups, agencies, committees and organizations in the community to address barriers that affect persons with disabilities.
- Advice to address issues of inclusion from services provided by the 7 municipalities.
- Advice about government directives and regulations relating to the status of persons with disabilities including regulations for the Legislation.
- Advice on existing and proposed procurement processes for the purchase of goods or services with regard to accessibility for persons with disabilities.
- Liaise with other accessibility advisory committees such as Cambridge and Guelph.
- Provide feedback for these terms of reference and advise on changes if required.

# GRAAC Terms of Reference (continued 4)

- Committee Size and Composition
  - 11-15 voting members, appointed by the councils of 7 municipalities for maximum 8 year terms
    - a majority of members include persons with disabilities representing reflect the cross-disability nature of the definition of “disability”
    - Remainder of the committee include parents/caregivers of a person with a disability, who may also be persons with a disability; people interested in disability issues, who may also be persons with a disability; staff representatives from agencies related to disability issues.
    - Representation from all 7 municipalities
  - Non-voting
    - Council Liaisons
    - Staff Advisors

# GRAAC Terms of Reference (continued 5)

- Role of Staff
  - serve in an advisory/support capacity
  - advise on meeting procedural matters and Roberts Rules of Order
  - assist to identify issues that need review by the committee
  - provide resources
  - convey feedback to their respective municipality
  - agenda and minutes coordination

# GRAAC Terms of Reference (continued 6)

- Selection and Qualifications of Members
  - Annual recruitment and selection is a shared responsibility of the 7 councils.
  - Staff Advisor Group carry out a bias-free recruitment and selection process, recommended for appointments to their respective councils for approval.
  - Committee members are chosen for life experience with a disability and their knowledge of such and/or expertise in barrier-free initiatives or disability issues.
  - Agencies are accepted based on the agency's merit to represent persons with disabilities.
  - To avoid potential conflict of interest, employees of participating municipalities are not eligible to be voting members of the Committee.

# GRAAC Terms of Reference (continued 7)

- Co-Chairs
  - elected from among the committee members annually at the first meeting of the new Committee
  - preside over meetings and committee business
  - Co-Chairs may not chair sub-committees
  - work in consultation with Staff Advisors to set agenda for each meeting



# GRAAC Terms of Reference (continued 8)

- Sub-Committees
  - Established as needed
  - The Committee will approve terms of reference for each sub-committee created
  - Draw upon members from the committee and may also include individuals who are not members such as individuals or organizations with a particular area of expertise
  - Staff Advisors and Council Liaisons are non-voting members of sub-committees

# GRAAC Terms of Reference (continued 9)

- Meetings
  - Monthly schedule – 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday afternoon
  - No less than four (4) times each year
  - Meetings will be open to the public
- Quorum
  - majority of the Voting Members
    - If no quorum, the meeting may continue but no decisions may be made and no resolutions may be passed.
    - Any items on the Agenda requiring a decision or resolution of the Committee will be deferred to the next scheduled meeting.

# GRAAC Terms of Reference (continued 10)

- Voting

- consensus model for decision making; if not possible a simple majority vote will be held
- In the instance of a tie, the Co-chair chairing the meeting will break the tie
- The Co-chair may vote on any motion

- Delegations

- welcome to attend meetings for issues within the terms of reference.
- may address the Committee for five minutes, Committee may grant additional five minutes.
- Delegations will be approved by the Co-Chairs

# GRAAC Terms of Reference (continued 11)

- Reporting and Communication
  - Advice and feedback provided through the GRAAC Staff Advisor Group
  - The Co-Chairs or designate will be the official spokesperson to the media and the public
- Conflict of Interest
  - Subject to the Conflict of Interest Policy attached as Schedule “A” to these terms of reference.
  - All Voting Members, Staff Advisors and Council Liaisons shall abide by the policy.
- Absences
  - absent for three consecutive meetings without notice or justifiable reason, membership will be reviewed by the GRAAC Staff Advisor Group.

# GRAAC Terms of Reference (continued 12)

- Remuneration
  - currently no remuneration
  - accommodation expenses covered by the Staff Group
- Dissolution of the Committee
  - Triggered by any of:
    - Expiration of term
    - Completion of task or mandate
    - Resolution of issues
    - Legislative requirement no longer exists
    - Merger with another committee
    - Following the annual review process
    - Recommendation by the Committee, staff, or Council of the municipalities.

# Regional Government

Regional and municipal responsibilities

Emily Moore, Region of Waterloo

# Local Government

- Waterloo Region is a two-tiered municipality and consists of three cities and four townships
- Municipal governments
  - Cities of Kitchener, Waterloo and Cambridge
  - Townships of Wellesley, Wilmot, Woolwich and North Dumfries
- Region of Waterloo
  - Regional government
  - Services that are region-wide and for all residents

# Examples of Services

## Region of Waterloo

- Curbside garbage collection
- Grand River Transit (bus, ION, MobilityPlus)
- Community Services (Ontario Works, licensed childcare, community housing)
- Regional licensing and enforcement (e.g. taxis, lawn watering)
- Township libraries
- Major arterial roads and signals
- Paramedic Services (ambulance)
- Public Health, service and business inspections
- Region of Waterloo International Airport
- Water treatment

## Municipalities

- Parks, recreation and leisure
- Neighbourhoods, community centres, local roads
- Local licensing and by-law enforcement (e.g. noise)
- City libraries
- Fire departments
- Cemeteries
- Building inspections and permits
- Tax collection
- Vital statistics (e.g. births, marriage licenses, deaths)
- Water distribution



# Reference

- Please visit the Region's website for more details on the types of services offered by the Region of Waterloo and the local municipalities

<https://www.regionofwaterloo.ca/en/regional-government/regional-responsibilities---who-does-what-in-government.aspx>

# Municipal Government

Township responsibilities

Ashley Good, Township of North Dumfries

Amy Harron, Township of Wellesley

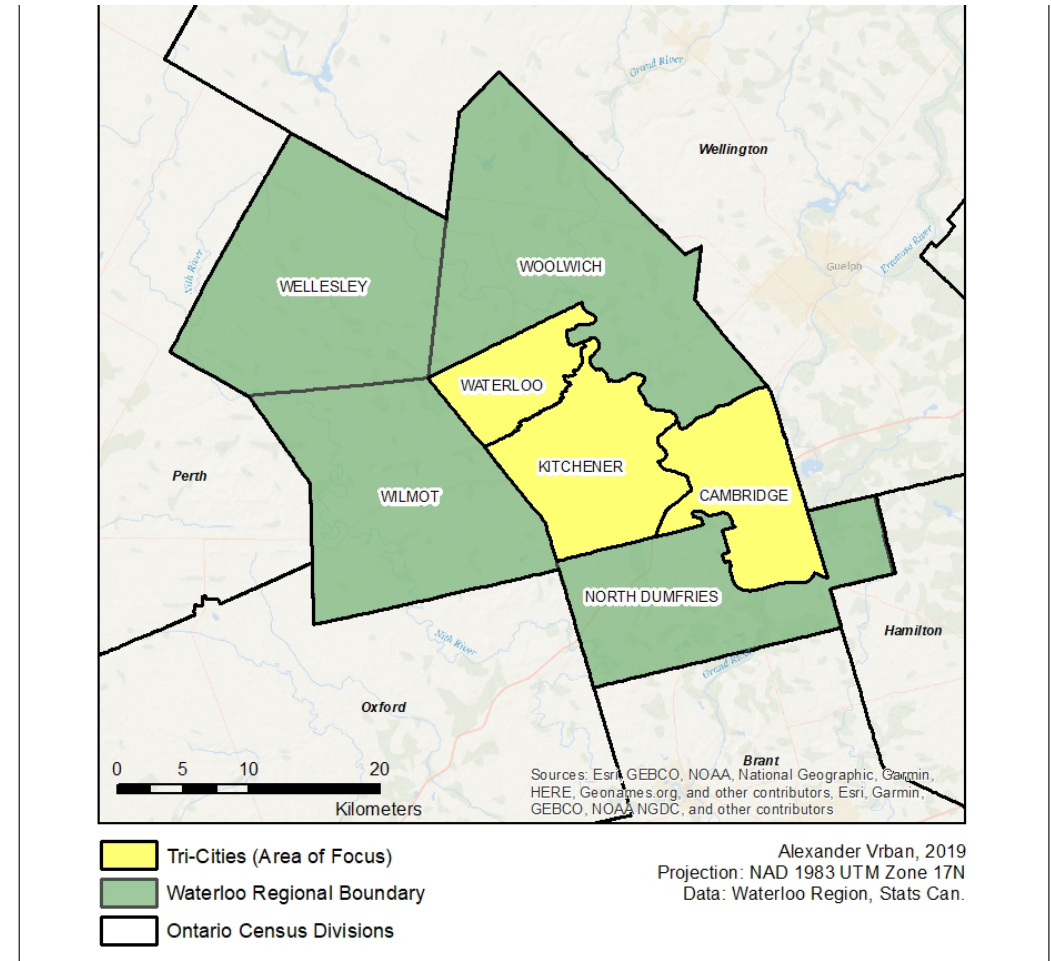
Kaitlin Bos, Township of Wilmot

Alex Smyth, Township of Woolwich

# Townships in the Region of Waterloo

There are four Townships within the Region of Waterloo highlighted green or darker in the image to the right.

- Township of North Dumfries in the Southeast
- Township of Wellesley in the Northwest
- Township of Wilmot in the West
- Township of Woolwich in the North



# Examples of Township Services

- Municipal roads
  - Asphalt paving
  - Dust control
  - Grading
  - Potholes
  - Sidewalks
  - Snow removal
  - Tree trimming
  - Traffic signs
- Permits
  - Building permit
  - Open fire burn permit
  - Entrance permit on municipal road
  - Road work permit
- Planning applications
  - Minor variance
  - Consent applications
  - Site plan control
- Emergency response
  - Fire department
- Licensing and registration
  - Dog licensing
  - Food trucks
  - Lottery
  - Vital statistics
- Enforcement
  - Property standards
  - Parking
  - Noise
- Community services
  - Parks
  - Arenas
  - Community centres
  - Trails

# GRAAC Election

Positions to be elected at the February 23<sup>rd</sup> committee meeting

- Chair
- Co-chair

# AODA Legislation

Amy Ross, City of Waterloo

# Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)

- Became law in 2005 replacing the ODA
- Goal is for Ontario to be accessible and inclusive by 2025
  - first Canadian province and one of the first jurisdictions in the world to enact specific legislation establishing a goal and time-frame for accessibility.
  - first jurisdiction to legislate accessibility reporting and to establish standards in areas like employment, transportation and the design of public spaces.
- **Accessibility standards**
  - laws that government, businesses, non-profits and public sector organizations must follow to become more accessible
  - help organizations identify and remove barriers to improve accessibility for people with disabilities in 5 areas of daily life.

# Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) continued 2

- Customer service standard

- helps remove barriers for people with disabilities so they can access goods, services or facilities.

- Integrated accessibility standards regulation guidelines

- Combination of Information and Communications, Employment, Transportation and Design of Public Spaces standards
- Will be **undergoing a review**. The existing accessibility standards and reporting deadlines will still apply during the review.



# Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) continued 3

- **Information and communications standard**
  - helps organizations make their information accessible to people with disabilities.
- **Transportation standard**
  - makes it easier for everyone to travel in the province.
- **Employment standard**
  - helps make hiring and employee support practices more accessible.
- **Design of public spaces standard**
  - Helps organizations make new and redeveloped outdoor public areas accessible such as as trails, beach access routes and exterior paths of travel.
  - Requirements do not include areas covered by the [Ontario Building Code](#) (OBC).

# Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) continued 4

- proposing new accessibility standards through the work of three [Standards Development Committees](#) in:
  - [health care](#)
  - [education for kindergarten to Grade 12](#)
  - [postsecondary education](#)
- compliance reporting
  - schedule by organization type
- [AODA reviews](#)
  - conducted every 4 years
  - [4<sup>th</sup> review currently underway](#)

# Built Environment Sub-Committee

Lori Palubeski, City of Kitchener

# GRAAC Built Environment Sub-Committee

- Run by the Chair (elections)
- Municipal builds go through the Chair first (Staff Rep contacts Chair)
- Chair has a standing agenda item (monthly meetings)
- Interior follow current OBC (barrier free), exterior AODA (DOPS)
- Follow the DOPS within the IASR within the AODA
- In-between GRAAC meetings Chair may invite members to site visits
- Chair is part of any new comment sheets or position papers related to Built Environment
- Also includes best practices, above and beyond legislation

# GRAAC Feedback and Position Papers

- Installation of Sidewalks (June 2014), Guide to intersections (1 page)
- Accessible parking (June 2015)
- Washroom Accessibility Comments for New Construction/Renovation
- Sidewalk Snow Removal position paper (Jan 2017)
- Rest Areas Accessibility Comments (Oct 2017)
- Outdoor Play Spaces/Playgrounds Accessibility Comments (Oct 2017)
- Recreational Trails Accessibility Comments (Oct 2017)
- Painted Crosswalks Accessibility Comments (Feb 2019)

# GRAAC Comment Sheets & Position papers continued...

- GRAAC position paper with Regards to Signage (Oct 2021)
- GRAAC position paper: In-Boulevard Shared Use Facilities (Sept 2021)

# Questions for staff

# Township of North Dumfries 2024 Annual Accessibility Status Report



*The TOWNSHIP of*  
**NORTH DUMFRIES**

Adopted by Council:

Accessible formats are available upon request.



## **Background and Purpose**

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In December 2001, the *Ontarians with Disabilities Act (ODA)* was passed by the provincial government to improve access and opportunities for persons with disabilities. Under the legislation, all municipalities, with a population greater than 10,000, are required to establish accessibility advisory committees. In addition, the legislation stipulates that the majority of committee members must self-identify as a person with a disability. As such, the Grand River Accessibility Advisory Committee (GRAAC) was established by Regional Council in 2003. This Joint Committee of the seven area municipalities (the Townships of North Dumfries, Wellesley, Wilmot, and Woolwich and the Region of Waterloo, the Cities of Kitchener and Waterloo) provides vision and direction to members of Council and staff as the participating municipalities develop plans to remove barriers and improve accessibility for people with disabilities.

In June 2005, the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)* was enacted into law. The Act is more comprehensive and prescriptive than the ODA and its requirements apply to the public, private, and not-for-profit sectors. The Act requires the development of accessibility standards, compliance deadlines, and administrative penalties for non-compliance. Moreover, the fundamental purpose of the AODA is to ensure that Ontario is universally accessible by 2025.

The Integrated Accessibility Standard Regulation (IASR) was created as part of the AODA. These standards are rules that businesses and organizations in Ontario have to follow to identify, remove and prevent barriers so that people with disabilities have more opportunity to participate in everyday life.

The IASR is broken down into five standards:

- General Requirements
- Information and Communication
- Employment
- Transit
- Design of Public Spaces

The purpose of this status report is to make the public aware of the Township of North Dumfries's progress with regards to our 2022-2026 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan. This plan will provide a summary of key accomplishments made towards inclusions in 2024, and look ahead to 2025. The Township of North Dumfries's 2022-2026 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan can be found on our website ([www.northdumfries.ca](http://www.northdumfries.ca)). Accessible formats are available upon request.

The Township of North Dumfries is dedicated to promoting a barrier-free Township for employees, citizens and all who live, work, visit, and invest in the Township. With this plan, the Township is proud to present its findings and report on the development of strategies to remove and prevent future barriers for people with disabilities and the aging population.

The 2024 Annual Status Report will be made available on the Township's website at [www.northdumfries.ca](http://www.northdumfries.ca). It will also be provided to anyone who requests a copy, in addition to providing accessible formats upon request.

## **The Township of North Dumfries**

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As the Township of North Dumfries continues to grow, Council and staff are committed to creating and maintaining an accessible and inclusive community for all residents.

The Township of North Dumfries consists of primarily rural areas, in addition to a variety of small villages including Ayr, Clyde, Branchton,

Reidsville and Roseville. The population of the Township of North Dumfries is approximately 11,500. The Council of the Township of North Dumfries is governed by a Mayor and four Ward Councilors.

In order to meet the needs of the Township's growing population, now, and in the future, the Council has established a Corporate Strategic Plan for the 2024 – 2026 time period.

The Vision Statement for the Strategic Plan – North Dumfries, a growing and welcoming rural community. The Mission Statement – Serving our community to enhance the quality of life in North Dumfries.

The Core Values and Behaviour as outlined in the Corporate Strategic Plan is the value statement of being inclusive. The Township as it makes decisions and conducts its activities will embrace the principle of *inclusiveness*. In this respect the Township will commit to welcome, listen, learn and understand, and, foster an environment of respect and a sense of belonging for all.

## **Organizational Structure**

The Township of North Dumfries is comprised of six Departments: Chief Administrative Officer, Corporate Services, Development Services, Engineering and Public Works, Leisure and Community Services; and Fire and Emergency Management.

## **Grand River Accessibility Advisory Committee (GRAAC)**

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The Grand River Accessibility Advisory Committee (GRAAC) is an advisory committee serving the Region of Waterloo and the respective Councils of the Cities of Kitchener and Waterloo and the Townships of North Dumfries, Wellesley, Wilmot and Woolwich. Staff representatives of each municipality participate in a joint recruitment process annually to fill GRAAC vacancies and each Council passes a resolution to appoint new members. GRAAC is made up of between 11 and 15 volunteers and advises the councils on accessibility issues including their annual accessibility plans.

## **Township of North Dumfries GRAAC staff representative:**

Ashley Good, Clerk  
106 Earl Thompson Road, 3rd Floor  
Ayr, Ontario N0B 1E0  
Phone 519-632-8800  
[agood@northdumfries.ca](mailto:agood@northdumfries.ca)

## **Highlights of 2024**

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- ❖ The Township purchased a new adjustable podium for in-person delegations to Council that is adjustable to accommodate those in a wheelchair.
- ❖ Form Builder was utilized to enhance online forms for by-law enforcement on the Township website.
- ❖ Resurfacing of the Victoria Park Tennis Court to improve mobility, overall usability of surface and reduce tripping hazards.
- ❖ Trail construction to improve mobility was completed – Nith River, Piper Glen Park, to Greenfield Road West
- ❖ Grant application has been completed to retrofit of the Ayr Community Centre community hall bathrooms to improve accessibility. Project is subject to grant approval.
- ❖ Opening of the new parkette, with an accessible trail, half multi-purpose court and play structure at the Freer/Challenger development was completed in Spring 2024.
- ❖ Opening of the new park in south Ayr, including walking paths, splash pad, shade structure, play structure, baseball diamond and multi-purpose court was completed in 2024.
- ❖ Construction at the Legacy/Broos subdivision park, that included a splash pad, junior ball diamond, two play structures (junior and senior), multipurpose court, swing set with accessible seat, asphalt pathway, shade structure and seating was completed in Spring 2024.
- ❖ A redesign of the Clyde Park was completed in May 2024. The new design included an accessible path to park amenities, resting benches

near the play structure, picnic tables with accessible seating and an accessible multi-purpose pad.

- ❖ The Township provided three season maintenance of park trails to help improve the overall usability of the surfaces.
- ❖ Park furniture was purchased for various locations, that includes picnic tables with accessible seating, benches with arms, and concrete pads that are accessible. This is expected to continue into 2025.
- ❖ Play equipment was replaced at the Branchton location.
- ❖ Sidewalk improvements to 335 metres of sidewalks were made to meet minimum maintenance standards, reduce tripping hazards and improve mobility.
- ❖ The Township service standards included snow clearing and salting of the full municipal sidewalk system (approximately 30 km) within the community.
- ❖ Renovation/construction was completed for the new the Public Works Depot and Fire Hall administration area, with various accessibility elements. The renovation / construction projects included construction of a universal barrier free washroom facilities and the installation of an automatic door opener at the main entry door combined with barrier free passage through the principal corridors / work stations.
- ❖ Provided ongoing training to current and new staff to include AODA training, Accessible Customer Service and Ontario Human Rights Code as it relates to people with disabilities.
- ❖ Annually, staff will continue to review policies and procedures respecting accessibility, for updates and improvements.

## Looking Ahead to 2025

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The Township of North Dumfries is committed to eliminating barriers and improving accessibility for persons with disabilities in a manner that respects dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity. The Township recognizes the diverse needs of all our residents and customers and will respond by striving to provide services and facilities that are accessible to all. The Township is committed to meeting the needs of people with disabilities in a timely manner, and will do so by preventing and removing barriers to accessibility and meeting accessibility requirements.

- ❖ Retrofit of a barrier free lift to be installed at the Ayr Community Centre. This will allow patrons with the ability to utilize the lift independently.
  
- ❖ The Township signed a contract in 2024 to complete an overhaul of the existing website to be completed in 2025. A key component of this update is to improve the website to align with AODA elements and introduce e-commerce where possible.
  
- ❖ The Township will continue with purchasing park furniture for various locations, that includes picnic tables with accessible seating, benches with arms, and concrete pads that are accessible.
  
- ❖ A redesign and installation of improvements at Browns Community Subdivision Park is expected that will include an accessible path around the park, resting benches around the path, shade and picnic tables with accessible seating and an accessible multi-purpose pad.
  
- ❖ The 2025 Capital Budget includes funding for improvements to audio/visual systems at the township Council Chambers to better serve residents and improve meeting accessibility.
  
- ❖ Pending grant approval, construction is scheduled to begin for the NDCC twin pad project. This addition will include accessible elements.
  
- ❖ Pending grant approval, AODA upgrades are scheduled for the Roseville Community Centre. The scope of work contemplates elements such as the installation of a ramp to the main building entrance; the installation of an exterior automated door; installation of automated doors in the interior of the building; and, the construction of a universal barrier free washroom; and the necessary design work associated with designated substance studies, design drawings, etc.

- ❖ Play equipment will continue to be reviewed and replaced on a yearly basis, as required. Recommendations are made by staff for which play structures are priority for the following year. For 2025, the replacement of the Playground Equipment at Victoria Park is anticipated.
  
- ❖ Refurbishment of the Walking Path from Stanley Street to Watson Pond. This project contemplates removing the existing asphalt surface, repairing the surface, replacing and extending the handrail, and, applying 50 mm of new asphalt surface on the trail.
  
- ❖ Design & Construction of a Pump Track at Schmidt Park is expected in 2025. The 2025 phase of the workplan contemplates the design of the facility, and, the construction of the pump track. The project will include any accessible elements, where possible.
  
- ❖ An installation at Browns Community Subdivision Park, that will include resting benches around the path picnic tables with accessible seating and an accessible multi-purpose pad/pickleball court.
  
- ❖ Trail construction and improvements to improve mobility continues to be pursued.
  
- ❖ Sidewalk improvements to meet minimum maintenance standards, reduce tripping hazards and improve mobility will continue. The 2025 budget includes funding for approximately 625 metres of sidewalk.
  
- ❖ The Township service standards will continue to include snow clearing and salting of the full municipal sidewalk system (approximately 30 km) within the community.
  
- ❖ LED Streetlight replacement of the existing top post fixtures will be undertaken to improve sidewalk visibility.

- ❖ The Township will continue design of public spaces compliant with the Barrier Free requirements as regulated by the Ontario Building Code and accessible parking pursuant to the Township Zoning by-law.
  
- ❖ Annually, Township staff and Council will:
  - review policies and procedures as they pertain to accessibility and update and/or make changes if required.
  - Provide ongoing training to staff and provide required training to any new hires.
  - Continue to seek GRAAC's input on matters where required.

## **Conclusion**

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Council and staff continue to work towards creating a universally accessible community by systematically removing barriers for persons with disabilities.

Feedback on the accessibility of Township facilities, programs, and goods and services is always welcome. Please contact the Corporate Services department to provide any feedback.



2024

# The Corporation of the City of Waterloo Status Update

Presented by:

**Amy Ross (she/her)**, Accessibility Advocate

January 23, 2025

# Accessibility Plan

- Get READI Plan approved by Council  
December 16
- Detailed set of actions in an implementation plan that specifies timelines, accountability and fundings is pending

# Training

- Barriers in the Built Environment tours continue for Staff, Leadership and Council

# Information and Communications Standards

- Reported non-compliance with the AODA website requirements for:
  - Waterloo.ca
  - lumenfestival.ca, generationpark.ca, winterloofestival.ca
- Current workplan toward compliance in 2025 includes:
  - Migration to Govstack (Content Management System)
  - Content Accessibility Training
  - Document Remediation Training
  - User experience testing with diverse audiences
  - Remediation/Removal of remaining 25 Non-Compliant PDFs
  - Launch new waterloo.ca website with WCAG 2.1 Level AA compliance
  - Monitoring and Feedback
  - Compliance reporting

# Employment Standards

- Supported Employment Program pilot continues

# 2024 Involvement from GRAAC

- City Hall Universal Washroom implementation
- Button Factory Arts Centre Universal Washroom design
- Council Chamber Refresh
- City Hall 3rd Floor Renovation design
- Automatic Door Openers at RIM Park
- Eby Farm Playground phase 2
- Blue Beech Link neighbourhood and Eastbridge Green neighbourhood spray pad plans
- ramp from the Community Pavilion to Luther Village on the Park
- White Elm Park and Rummelhardt Park playgrounds
- Facility Accessibility Design Standards

# 2024 Involvement from GRAAC (continued)

- Indoor Community Space Plan
- Consolidated Engineering Landscape Manual (CELM)
- Laurel Greenway
- Assisted Snow Clearing Program
- Copper Street Leash Free Park design
- Accessibility around affordable housing initiatives on City-owned lands/Inclusionary Zoning
- Accessible and Inclusion in Recreation and Leisure Programming
- TTY
- Get READI Plan

# 2024 Involvement from GRAAC (continued 2)

- Audits of the Waterloo Park Splash Pad, Fire Station 1: 216 Weber Street North, Fire Station 3: 150 Northfield Drive West, park washrooms including Green lab, Solstice Pavilion, Lexington Park, Hillside Park, Westmount Sports Park, Waterloo Park East, and Waterloo Park West
- Barriers in the built environment tours offered to staff, leadership and Council
- letters of support for a park washroom grant and an employment tool development grant



# Planned items for 2025

- Finalizing Facility Accessibility Design Standards
- Albert McCormick Community Centre Renovation Phase A and B
- Accessibility Policy Review
- Waterloo Memorial Recreation Complex sliding doors
- City-wide signage and wayfinding standards
- Washroom fixture reconfigurations at RIM Park, Moses Springer Community Centre, and City Hall
- St. Moritz and Margaret Ave Park designs
- Alternative Snow Clearing working group
- READI Community Conversation
- Sport, Rec, and Leisure Strategy
- Westside Lands

2024

## The Corporation of the City of Waterloo Status Update on Accessibility

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The City of Waterloo Get Reconciliation, Equity, Accessibility, Diversity and Inclusion (READI) Plan (2025-2030) includes the focus areas for the Corporation to continue to prevent and remove accessibility barriers. A detailed Implementation Plan is pending in 2025.

This Status update outlines the progress on accessibility the City has been working on. Highlighted below are the 2024 updates.

### **General Requirement Commitments:**

#### **Accessibility Policy**

- The City of Waterloo Accessibility Policy (2017) is currently under review.
- The existing Accessibility Policy is available to the public on the city website.

#### **Accessibility Plan**

- In 2024, Council approved Waterloo's first Get READI Plan (2025-2030) which embeds accessibility work. A detailed Implementation Plan is pending in 2025 which will specify timelines, accountability and funding is pending. The Plan is available to the public on the city website.
- The annual status update is presented to the City of Waterloo's Accessibility Advisory Committee each year.
- The annual status update is available to the public on the city website.

#### **Procurement**

- One on one Procurement training with new Project Managers has includes a section highlighting accessibility in the training.
- The City of Waterloo Buyer's Guide that is distributed to all new staff includes accessibility requirements to follow.
- The Purchasing By-Law (2019) also references the need to incorporate accessibility requirements.
- All City of Waterloo Request for X's (RFX) include an AODA clause.
- Project Managers are requested to include accessibility requirements in the Request for Proposal (RFP) and Request for Tender (RFT) on a project specific basis.

#### **Training**

- New staff receive mandatory accessibility training through corporate orientation or through e-learning modules.
- Part-time and seasonal staff receive mandatory accessibility training through an e-learning module created specifically for City of Waterloo staff.

- The Corporate accessibility training brochures (2017) are provided to staff and volunteers. These materials are currently under review.
- The City of Waterloo is providing training for staff in reconciliation, equity, accessibility, diversity and inclusion (READI) and has a variety of learning tools for all staff along including webinars, experiential learning days, and workshops throughout the year.

## **Standards Commitments:**

### **Information and Communications Standards**

- The City of Waterloo has statements on the website informing people that accessible formats and communication supports are available upon request.
- Staff are trained to provide accessible formats and communication supports upon request. Resources to assist staff are posted on the City of Waterloo intranet.
- Given the amount and complexity of websites that municipalities manage, the City of Waterloo was not in a position to report compliance with the AODA requirements for websites in 2021 or 2023. A comprehensive review completed in December 2021 indicated a 90/100 score for WCAG AA compliance for the main website, Waterloo.ca and subsequent reviews identified issues with lumenfestival.ca, generationpark.ca, and winterloofestival.ca. The largest issue has been technical PDF content that may not be perceivable or operable for all users. The city's plan to work toward compliance in 2025 includes:
  - Migration to Govstack (Content Management System)
  - Content Accessibility Training
  - Document Remediation Training
  - User experience testing with diverse audiences
  - Remediation/Removal of remaining 25 Non-Compliant PDFs
  - Launch new waterloo.ca website with WCAG 2.1 Level AA compliance
  - Monitoring and Feedback
  - Compliance reporting

### **Employment Standards**

- Policies and practices are reviewed on an ongoing basis with respect to recruitment, hiring and interviewing as per the requirements under the employment standards.
- The City of Waterloo job postings advise applicants that accommodations are available through all stages of the recruitment process and candidates who are selected for an interview are advised again when invited for the interview.
- The City of Waterloo notifies successful applicants of accommodations available to them through the offer of employment letter.
- The City of Waterloo notifies all employees through mandatory staff accessibility training that if they do require an accommodation or accessible formats/communication supports to do their job that this can be available to them and that employees need to

let their supervisor know. The supervisor and staff person work together towards an accommodation plan.

- Individualized workplace emergency response plans are created for employees with disabilities.
- The City of Waterloo has 2 procedures to support the early and safe return to work of employees recovering from non-occupational or occupational injury/illness (Sick Leave and Medical Accommodation Procedure and WSIB Return to Work Procedure).
- New READI working groups will launch in 2025 to continue to review current practices and procedures related to accessing policies, procedures and to address systemic and structural barriers.
- In 2020, The City of Waterloo introduced the Respect in the Workplace Policy and Program which sets expectations of respectful behaviour and to prevent disrespectful, harassing, or discriminatory workplace behaviours.
- Development and implementation of accommodation plans continue to be informed by the Human Rights Accommodation procedure which outlines the process for requesting, reviewing and implementing accommodations and supports.

### **Design of Public Spaces Standards**

- City of Waterloo staff consult with GRAAC, before constructing new or redeveloping existing municipal recreational trails, outdoor play spaces, 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 Waterloo public consultations are open to all members of the public.
- The City of Waterloo Accessibility Standards document (2016) assists in implementing the Design of Public Spaces Standards, and is used under the City of Waterloo's Site Plan Approval process and shared with developers. This document is currently being updated alongside the development of new facility accessibility design standards.
- Annually review and update the chart, the City of Waterloo 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.

### **Customer Service Standards**

- The customer service standards are included in the Accessibility Policy.
- The corporate 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 Province of Ontario reviews all standards, which may require updates to existing policies, training, manuals, bylaws etc. Because of the reviews, revisions to current standards or new standards may be introduced which will include new requirements and compliance deadlines.

Those revisions and any actions related to them will be captured in the City of Waterloo annual status update. No revisions to the current standards were introduced in 2024.

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

As municipal projects arise, the Grand River Accessibility Advisory Committee reviews site plans and provides suggestions on how to best improve and achieve accessibility. In 2024, Members of GRAAC advised on/participated in:

- City Hall Universal Washroom implementation
- Button Factory Arts Centre Universal Washroom design
- Council Chamber Refresh
- City Hall 3rd Floor Renovation design
- Automatic Door Openers at RIM Park
- Eby Farm Playground phase 2
- Blue Beech Link neighbourhood and Eastbridge Green neighbourhood spray pad plans
- ramp from the Community Pavilion to Luther Village on the Park
- White Elm Park and Rummelhardt Park playgrounds
- Facility Accessibility Design Standards
- Indoor Community Space Plan
- Consolidated Engineering Landscape Manual (CELM)
- Laurel Greenway
- Assisted Snow Clearing Program
- Copper Street Leash Free Park design
- Accessibility around affordable housing initiatives on City-owned lands/Inclusionary Zoning
- TTY
- Accessible and Inclusion in Recreation and Leisure Programming
- Get READI Plan
- Audits of the Waterloo Park Splash Pad, Fire Station 1: 216 Weber Street North, Fire Station 3: 150 Northfield Drive West, park washrooms including Green lab, Solstice Pavilion, Lexington Park, Hillside Park, Westmount Sports Park, Waterloo Park East, and Waterloo Park West
- Barriers in the built environment tours offered to staff, leadership and Council
- letters of support for a park washroom grant and an employment tool development grant



# Albert McCormick Community Centre (AMCC) Renovation

## Introduction to Team:

- Project Manager, Heather Liddycoat
- Project Coordinator, Mary Cathryn Lorentz
- Consultant, Ward 99 (*ESBL Consultant*)
- Contractor, to be determined



## Projects for Discussion:

- **AMCC Renovation, Phase A - Energy and Accessibility Retrofit**
  - Construction Start May 2025
  - Construction Completion March 2026
- **AMCC Renovation, Phase B - McCormick Branch Library and AMCC Renovation and Expansion Project**
  - Construction Start, April 2026
  - Construction Completion, Summer 2027



# Phase A - Energy and Accessibility Retrofit

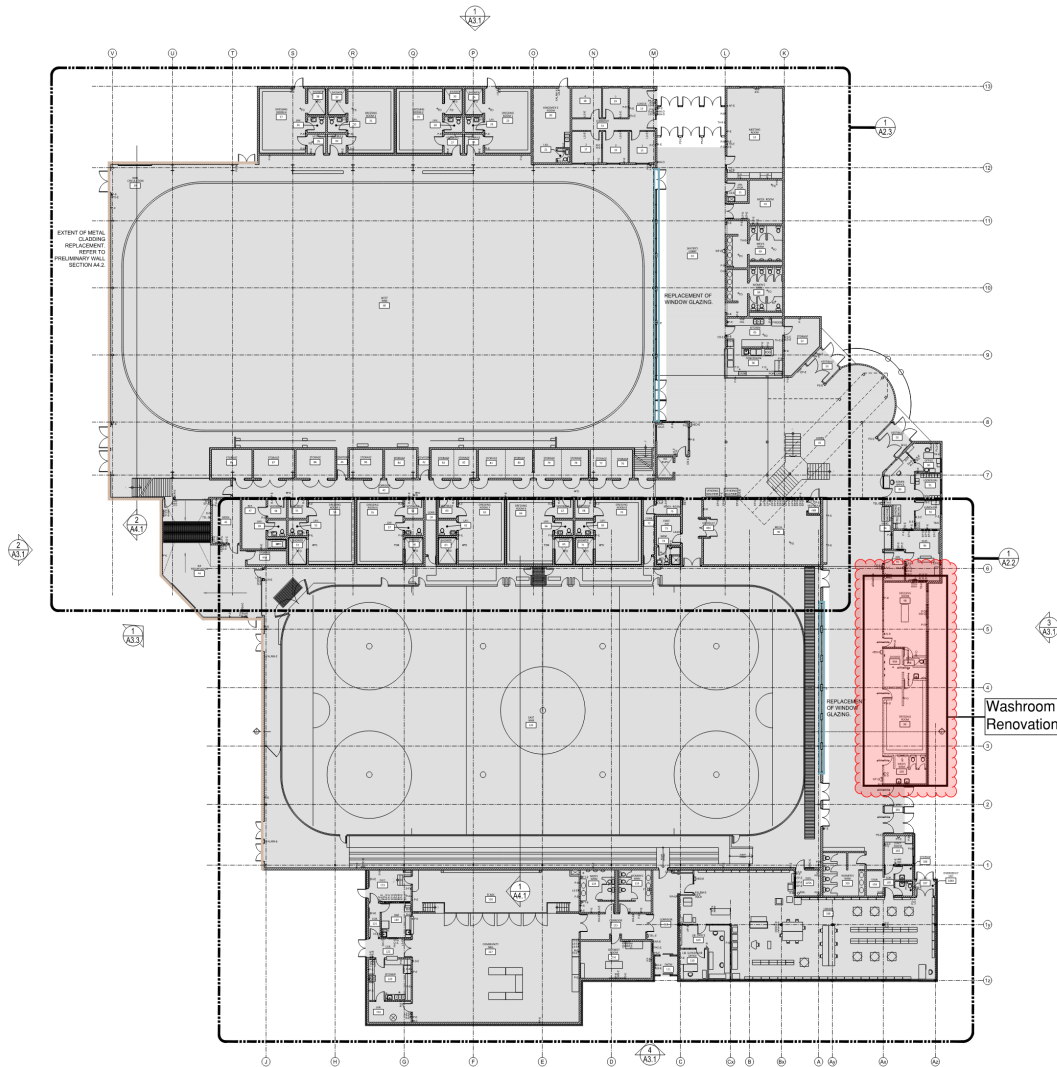
## Project Focus:

Improve energy efficiency & reduce greenhouse gas emissions:

- **Key upgrades:**
    - Building enclosure improvements
    - Enhanced controls
    - Dehumidification systems
    - LED lighting installation
    - Refrigeration upgrades
    - Electrification of heating systems
    - New washroom corridor
  - **Accessibility Enhancements:**
    - Addition of a universal washroom
    - Updates to existing changerooms
-



# Phase A - Energy and Accessibility Retrofit Location





## Phase A - Accessibility Retrofit Overview

- Renovation of the East corridor, including the washroom, changeroom, office, and entrance.
- Upgrading interior doors and windows between the ice rinks and community areas to improve thermal performance and accessibility.
- Construction of 12 new single-occupant washrooms, including 2 barrier-free washrooms.
- Addition of 1 new universal washroom/changeroom, featuring:
  - Ceiling lift
  - Adult change table
  - Accessible shower
- Modifying changerooms to create 2 new gender-neutral changerooms with showers.
- Installing new tactile to enhance accessibility.





## Phase A - Accessibility Retrofit (Tactile)

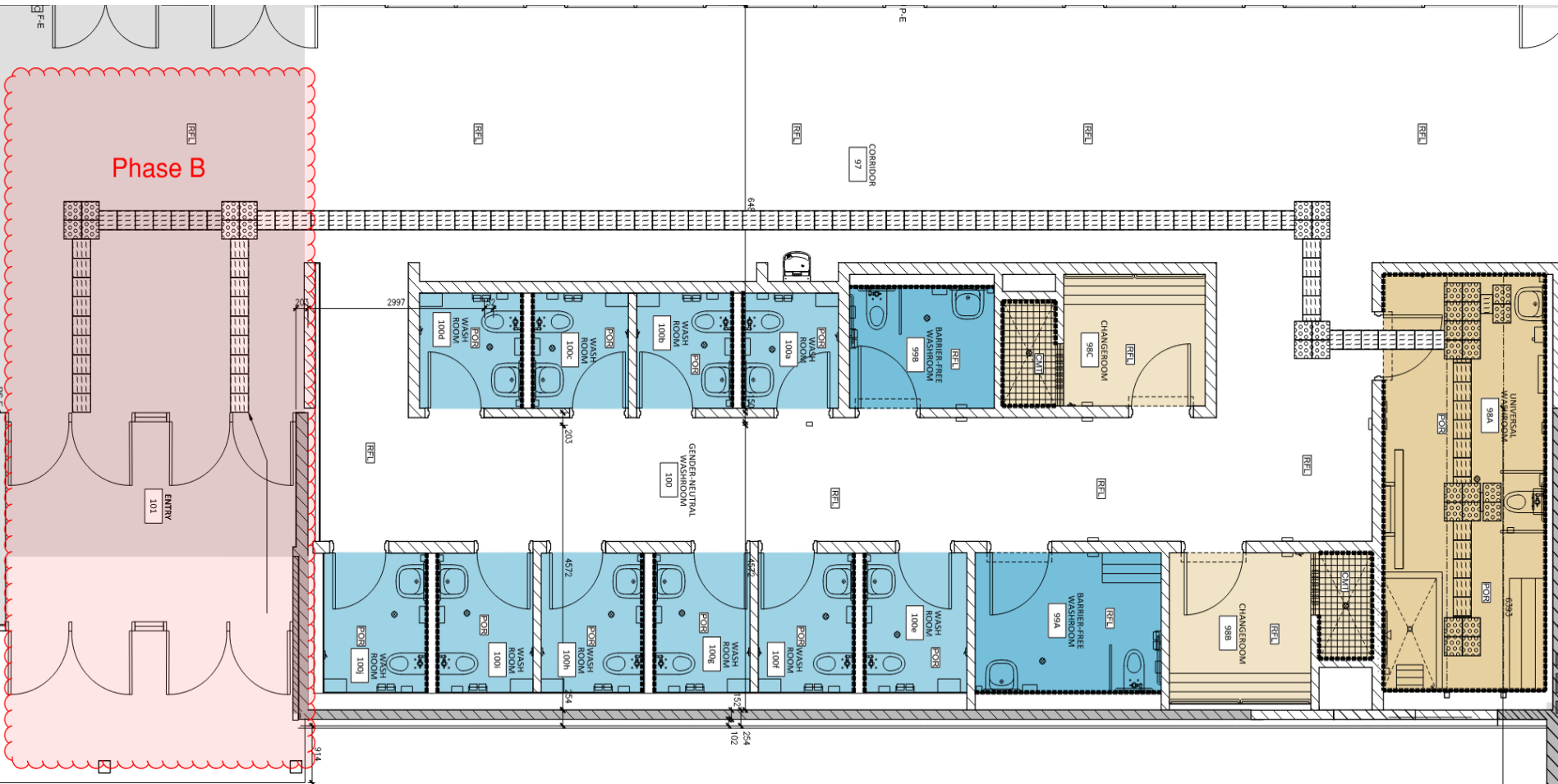
### Installing New Tactile to Enhance Accessibility:

- New tactile pathway from East vestibule to Universal Washroom/Changeroom.

### Questions for GRAAC:

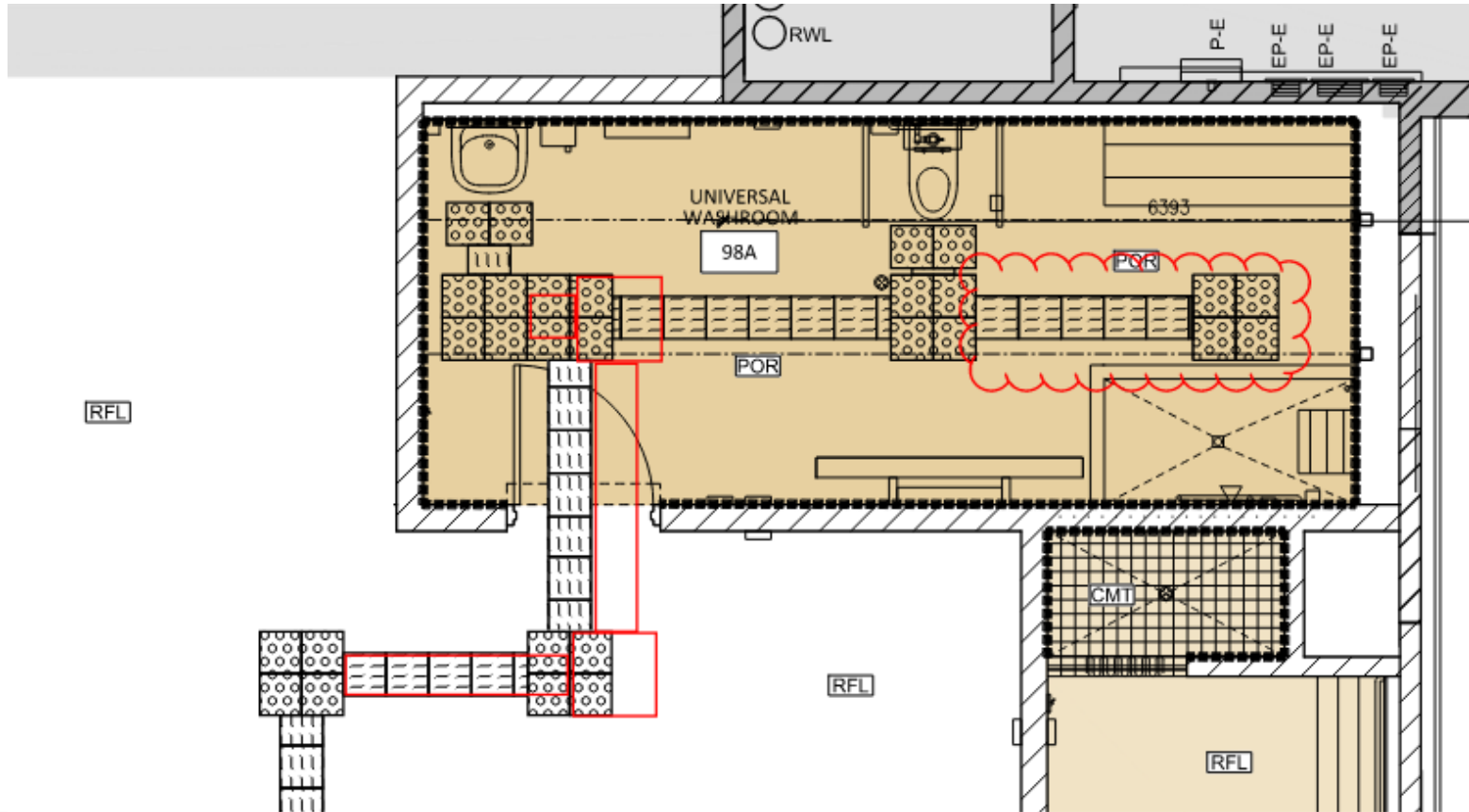
- Should tactile included to shower area?
- Should tactile be added to water fountains?
- Review tactile layout within washroom space to avoid cramping of decision trees.

# Phase A - Accessibility Retrofit (Tactile Wayfinding)





# Tactile in Universal Washroom





## **Phase B - McCormick Branch Library and AMCC Renovation and Expansion Project**

### **New City Community Room:**

- Expanded and modernized double-height space for recreational activities, camps, sports, and large gatherings.
- Community room will include hearing loops.
- Barrier free washroom centrally located between community room and Library.

### **New City Barrier Free Commercial Kitchen & Servery:**

- Fully-equipped commercial kitchen with direct access to the community room
- Features: barrier free design, refrigerators, freezer, induction ranges, triple sink, dishwasher, and ample counter space.



## **Phase B - McCormick Branch Library and AMCC Renovation and Expansion Project continued**

### **WPL Library Addition & Renovation:**

- Welcoming entrance with a foyer connecting the library to the Community Centre.
- Double-height open library entry with lounge, mobile displays, and self-checkout stations.
- Spacious layout for library collection, children's area, computers, and business centre.
- New glass-enclosed library program room.





**Questions?**

**Thank you!**