



City of
Elliot Lake

**2026-2031
MULTI-YEAR
ACCESSIBILITY PLAN**

Building an Inclusive Future Together



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Land Acknowledgement

The City of Elliot Lake acknowledges that the land on which we live and work is the traditional territory of the Anishnaabeg of the Robinson-Huron Treaty, including the Serpent River, Mississauga, and Sagamok First Nations.

We offer our gratitude, saying *miigwech*, to honour Indigenous peoples for their stewardship of this land from time immemorial. We recognize our shared responsibility to treat this sacred land, its plants, animals, stories, and its Peoples with respect, care, and honour.

Introduction

This Accessibility Plan outlines the policies and actions to be implemented by the City of Elliot Lake over a five-year period to improve accessibility, remove barriers, and create more equitable opportunities for people with disabilities. Rooted in the principles of universal design, this plan aims to ensure that municipal programs, services, and spaces are inclusive and accessible to all residents and visitors.

The Multi-Year Accessibility Plan will be reviewed and updated on an annual basis. Annual review reports will be made available in digital format on the City of Elliot Lake's website and in print format at the front desk of City Hall upon request.

Guiding Legislation

In 2005, the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) was enacted. The AODA established a comprehensive framework for developing, implementing, and enforcing province-wide accessibility standards with the goal of achieving an accessible Ontario by 2025.

The AODA acknowledges “the history of discrimination against persons with disabilities in Ontario” and outlines two key objectives:

To develop, implement, and enforce accessibility standards that apply to goods, services, facilities, accommodation, employment, buildings, structures, and premises, and

To ensure the active involvement of persons with disabilities, the Government of Ontario, and representatives from various sectors of the economy in the development of those standards.

Accessibility standards have been established in the following five key areas:

- **Customer Service:** Focuses on ensuring that everyone can access goods and services provided by organizations.
- **Employment:** Addresses the accessibility of hiring practices, workplace information, and support for employees with disabilities.
- **Information & Communication:** Requires organizations to make their information and communication methods accessible to all.
- **Transportation:** Aims to make transportation systems and services easier for everyone to travel.
- **The Design of Public Spaces:** Focuses on making outdoor public areas, like sidewalks and parks, accessible.

The AODA applies to both public and private sector organizations across Ontario. Compliance requirements vary depending on the type and size of the organization but are mandatory for all designated sectors.

As of 2025, the goal of full accessibility by January 1, 2025, as outlined in the AODA, remains a driving force behind accessibility planning. While significant progress has been made, work continues to ensure that accessibility is embedded in the day-to-day operations, planning, and infrastructure of municipalities such as the City of Elliot Lake. The AODA ensures that people with disabilities are included in all aspects of society, with a focus on dignity, independence, integration, and equal opportunity.

Background Information

Elliot Lake is a City located in the Algoma District of Northern Ontario, midway between Sudbury and Sault Ste. Marie and north of Lake Huron. Known for its natural beauty and small-town hospitality, Elliot Lake combines the convenience of a compact, modern community with the services and amenities of larger urban centres.

Surrounded by hundreds of lakes and the rugged wilderness of Northern Ontario, the City offers year-round opportunities for outdoor recreation, arts, culture, and community connection.

While not all of Elliot Lake's outdoor areas, facilities, and programs are fully accessible at this time, the City is committed to creating a more inclusive and barrier-free community. Through the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan, Elliot Lake continues to identify, remove, and prevent barriers in the built environment, transportation, communication, customer service, and employment.

Accessibility is an ongoing journey — one that involves continuous learning, collaboration, and improvement. The City recognizes the importance of ensuring that everyone, regardless of ability, can participate fully in community life. By working together, Elliot Lake is building a more inclusive future where residents and visitors of all abilities can live, work, and play.

Mission Statement

The City of Elliot Lake is distinguished by its provision of modern urban services for all ages, while being located in the heart of a pristine natural environment. It is a community where the quality of life is continually enhanced through the interactions of a diverse population supported by engaged private and not-for-profit sectors. It is a place where affordability, health, and resiliency are more than just words, they are a way of life.

Statement of Commitment to Accessibility

The Corporation of the City of Elliot Lake is committed to the proactive identification, removal, and prevention of barriers to accessibility in all municipal services, programs, and facilities.

Our best practice is to exceed legal requirements. At minimum, we will fully comply with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), Accessible Canada Act (ACA), the Ontario Human Rights Code, the Canadian Human Rights Act, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD), the Ontario Building Code, and the principles of Universal Design.

We commit to:

- Allocating financial, human, and technological resources for accessible infrastructure and services;
- Consulting the Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC) on all new policies, by-laws, projects and major renovations in relation to accessibility before they are brought to Council (see **Appendix C: Accessibility Advisory Committee Structure and Mandate** for further details);
- Conducting regular accessibility audits and public consultations;
- Requiring each department to refer to the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan Action Items; and
- Reporting annually on progress toward accessibility goals.

This commitment recognizes that accessibility is a shared responsibility—and a vital part of making Elliot Lake a safe, inclusive, and welcoming community for all.

Definitions

Accessibility

A general term describing the degree of ease that something (e.g., space, service, system, or communication) can be accessed, used, and enjoyed by persons with disabilities. Accessibility requires conscious planning and inclusive design, and benefits everyone—including older adults and families with young children.

Barrier

A barrier is anything that prevents people with disabilities from fully participating in all aspects of society. Barriers may be:

- Attitudinal: Stereotypes, stigma, or assumptions
- Communication: Inaccessible language, documents, or technology
- Physical: Inaccessible buildings or infrastructure
- Policy-related: Procedures that exclude or overlook disability-related needs
- Programmatic: Poorly designed services or timeframes
- Transportation-related: Inadequate or inaccessible transit systems
- Social: Economic inequality, lack of education or employment

Disability

As defined under the Ontario Human Rights Code, a disability includes a broad range of physical, mental, developmental, or learning disabilities, visible or invisible, temporary or permanent.

Handicapped (for clarity and historical reference)

An outdated term previously used to describe people with disabilities. In current usage, “handicapped” may refer to social limitations—i.e., when a person’s full participation is prevented due to missing supports in the environment or society. The City of Elliot Lake does not use the term in service provision but includes it here for clarity and to acknowledge historic use.

(dis) Ability

A term used to emphasize the *ability* of individuals rather than focusing on limitations. The notation “(dis)” highlights that disability often arises from barriers in the environment, policies, or attitudes, rather than from the person themselves. “(dis)Ability” acknowledges the strengths, skills, and contributions of all community members and affirms commitment to creating an inclusive and accessible community.

Accessibility Highlights & Achievements

Since the adoption of the 2020–2025 Accessibility Plan, the City of Elliot Lake has made significant progress in removing barriers and improving access for residents and visitors. Achievements include:

- **Spruce and Spine Beaches:** Introduction of accessible beach mats and water wheelchairs to improve access to the water.
- **Kiwanis Park:** Splash Pad with a flat, level surface and water features at multiple heights.
- **Elliot Lake Arts & Heritage Centre:** Accessibility integrated into design plans from the outset of the project.
- **Mobility Charging Stations:** Installed at select City facilities to support users of mobility devices.
- **Public Transit:** A full Transit Review Study was completed, leading to a Transit Accessibility Working Group to address barriers and develop recommendations.

These recommendations include but are not limited to elimination of Spine Road on route, re-routing through Hospital Parking Lot and eliminating Spine Road bus stop, and procurement of new busses that are low floor, better seating (including priority seating), more floor to ceiling grab bars, and a move towards an on-demand conventional transit system.

- **Rogers Arena Renovation:** Accessibility incorporated into the redesign and construction process, with AAC consultation on architectural drawings to come.
- **Sensory Friendly Zone at annual Santa Claus Parade:** A designated low-sensory viewing area introduced to create an inclusive environment for individuals sensitive to noise, lights, or crowds—an important step in ensuring community events are welcoming for all residents.
- **Electronic Viewing of Advisory Committee Meetings:** Advisory committees are now viewable online, increasing transparency and allowing broader participation from residents with mobility or sensory barriers.
- **Streamlined Accessibility Auditing Processes:** Accessibility auditing checklists and procedures have been reviewed and standardized, improving the City's ability to track progress and address barriers efficiently.
- **Staff Knowledge and Training:** Accessibility awareness and AODA compliance training have been expanded across departments. Staff now have improved knowledge of accessibility standards, inclusive design, and communication practices—an ongoing process that continues to strengthen organizational culture and service delivery.
- **Ruben Yli-Juuti Centre:** Installation of a new pool lift and Splashy seat, and planning for a universal washroom/change room, with powered change table.

These actions reflect the City's proactive approach to identifying and removing barriers, while ensuring accessibility is considered at every stage of planning, design, and service delivery.

While progress has been made, there are areas that still require improvement. For example, accessible parking in front of the Arts and Heritage Centre could be enhanced to improve safety and convenience.

At Spruce and Spine Beaches, upgrades are still needed to the parking areas and washroom facilities to achieve full accessibility from arrival to water access. In addition, the current accessibility auditing process remains paper-based. Transitioning to an electronic system or software platform would greatly improve efficiency, data tracking, and follow-up across departments.

Public Transportation & Ongoing Improvements

- Transit Review and Study was completed by EXP, transit design and engineering, with key recommendations to improve our transit system.
- Transit Accessibility Review – Working Group: established to identify key transit barriers and develop recommendations based on EXP study and first hand knowledge from users of the transit system.

Employment and Accessibility Training

- The Accessibility Coordinator will ensure all employment policies and recruitment practices align with current accessibility legislation.
- Ensure accessibility-related training is current and delivered regularly.
- Designate an internal training lead to coordinate department head-level accessibility training, ideally through Rick Hansen Foundation (RHF) courses or other equivalent programs.
- Long-Term Goal = Explore hiring a person with lived disability experience to work as an Accessibility Specialist
- The Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC) has a responsibility to share information about available accessibility programs, services, and supports, as well as to communicate the lived experiences of people with disabilities within the community.

This includes helping to raise awareness among residents, City staff, and Council about local, provincial, and federal programs or resources that support accessibility and inclusion. By doing so, the AAC serves as a bridge between the community and the municipality, ensuring that the perspectives and needs of people with disabilities are considered in planning, service delivery, and decision-making. Additionally, members of the AAC contribute valuable insight through their lived experiences, helping to inform policies and practices that lead to a more accessible and inclusive city.

Design of Public Spaces

- The City of Elliot Lake will meet the Accessibility Standards for the Design of Public Spaces when it undertakes major modifications of its public spaces or when it builds new public spaces. Public spaces include:
 - Recreation trails and beach access routes
 - Outdoor public eating areas, such as rest stops and picnic areas
 - Outdoor play spaces, such as children’s playgrounds in municipal parks
 - Outdoor paths of travel, such as sidewalks, ramps, stairs, curb ramps, rest areas and accessible pedestrian signals
 - Accessible off-street parking
 - Service-related elements, such as service counters, fixed queuing lines and waiting areas.
- A master list of all City-leased spaces will be created and reviewed for accessibility compliance.
- Establish a timeline and formal procedure for reviewing and auditing leased and owned public spaces under the AODA Design of Public Spaces Standards. For example, prior to signing a lease have a clause within the lease relating to accessibility of space (referencing entrance/exit of the building, paths of travel, lighting, washroom facilities).

- Projects should integrate accessibility milestones into design, tender, and post-completion review phases. This process is outlined in **Appendix B: Embedding Accessibility from the Outset: A Framework for Municipal Projects**

Information and Communication

- The City of Elliot Lake is committed to meeting the communication requirements of people with disabilities. The City will consult with people with disabilities in order to identify their information and communication requirements.
- The City will continue to ensure that content on its municipal website conforms with accessibility standards.
- The City will ensure that existing feedback processes are provided to people with disabilities in an accessible format upon request, and that they are aware of the process to request.
- Communications will prioritize transparency around accessibility improvements and successes through social media, newsletters, and other public-facing materials.

Customer Service Commitments

- Maintain compliance with AODA Customer Service Standards and enhance responsiveness to accessibility-related service issues.
- Explore inclusion of individuals with lived disability experience in front-facing customer service roles or advisory roles in municipal services.

Procurement and Policy Review

- Accessibility will continue to be a key consideration in all procurement policies and practices.

- Include accessible procurement checklists and ensure training is fluid and continuous across departments, including onboarding and contract management. Create a flowchart for procurement process.
- Have a general statement in RFP's and for site visit process to address accessibility needs.

2026-2031 Accessibility Strategies

This Multi-Year Accessibility Plan outlines three different types of accessibility strategies:

1. Strategies that are required components of the plan, in accordance with the legislation;
2. Continuous improvement strategies; and
3. Strategies that are identified to meet future legislative requirements.

Appendix A of this plan outline the details of each strategy, such as the barrier that has been identified, the specific area that is responsible for implementation, the anticipated timeline for completion, as well as possible financial implications.

The City of Elliot Lake provides over 35 Municipal services and programs, and over 40 maintained properties. In each of those properties and services, accessibility must be a key value of the organization. These strategies define how we will strengthen the accessibility to our services in the areas of Customer Service and Program Delivery, Information and Communication, Procurement, Employment, Transportation, and the Design of Public Spaces. All relevant policies, including Human Resources policies, purchasing/procurement procedures, and departmental guidelines, will be reviewed and updated to embed accessibility.

Monitoring and Accountability Relating to this Plan

- A list of follow-up items and responsibilities will be maintained by the Accessibility Coordinator after each Accessibility Advisory Committee meeting.
- Departments will be required to report annually on their progress and challenges in meeting accessibility goals outlined in this plan.

Summary and Acknowledgements

The **City of Elliot Lake 2026–2031 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan** outlines our continued commitment to building an inclusive, accessible community for all residents and visitors. This plan reflects the City’s dedication to identifying, removing, and preventing barriers to accessibility in our services, facilities, and programs, in alignment with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA).

The development of this plan was a collaborative effort, shaped by the insight and expertise of many individuals and groups. The City of Elliot Lake extends sincere thanks to:

- **City Staff**, for their leadership, cooperation, and ongoing efforts to integrate accessibility into every department’s operations.
- **The Accessibility Plan Review Working Group**, for their thoughtful review of the City’s previous plan and valuable recommendations for future priorities.
- **The Transit Accessibility Review Working Group**, for their focused input on enhancing the accessibility and usability of Elliot Lake’s public transit system.
- **The Accessibility Advisory Committee**, for their guidance, advocacy, and dedication to ensuring accessibility remains at the forefront of municipal decision-making.

- **City Council**, for their ongoing support and commitment to advancing accessibility initiatives across the community.
- **Community members**, who shared feedback, experiences, and ideas that helped shape a plan grounded in lived experience and local perspective.

Together, these collective efforts have informed a plan that not only meets legislative requirements but also reflects our shared vision of **“Building an Inclusive Future Together.”**

Appendix A: Action Items

Required Components

There are certain legislative requirements that are required under the *Integrated Accessibility Standards* regulation, to be included in an organization’s Multi-Year Accessibility Plan, where they apply to that organization. In the following section there are the City of Elliot Lake’s requirements under the plan.

Transportation

Under the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR), municipalities must identify, remove, and prevent barriers in transportation services, including transit, specialized transit, and taxicabs. This section reflects current legislative requirements, best practices, and emerging service models.

Taxicabs

Department(s) Responsible	Barrier	Action	Timeline	Financial Impact	Completed (Yes, No, Ongoing)
CAO, Director of Clerks and Planning Services, Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC), Accessibility Coordinator	Organizational and Transportation	Regularly review Vehicle for Hire By-Law to determine the proportion of on- demand accessible taxi cabs, in consultation with taxi companies	2026- 2031		

Conventional Transit (Bus Service)

Department(s) Responsible	Barrier	Action	Timeline	Financial Impact	Completed (Yes, No, Ongoing)
CAO, Director of Public Works, AAC, Accessibility Coordinator, Director of Finance/Treasurer, Public Input	Transportation	Procurement of new busses that include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • low floor with fold out ramp option • 90 degree seating for all seats, and priority seating at front. • Anti-slip seating • Floor to ceiling grab bars • Ability for real-time bus tracking • Audio/Visual Announcements of upcoming stops • Stop request pulls at a lower height, or have buttons • Better placement of emergency button 	2026-2028		

Transportation – Bus Stops and Shelters

Municipalities offering conventional transit, such as busses, are required to consult with their Accessibility Advisory Committee, the public, and people with disabilities when developing design criteria for:

- New bus stops or shelters;
- Renovated or replacement of existing ones.

They must formally identify their plan and the steps they will take to create accessible bus stops and shelters in their multi-year Accessibility Plan.

Department(s) Responsible	Barrier	Action	Timeline	Financial Impact	Completed (Yes, No, Ongoing)
CAO, Director of Public Works, AAC, Accessibility Coordinator, Engineering Services, Director of Finance/ Treasurer	Physical	Work with stakeholders to consult with the AAC, the public and persons with disabilities on the development of accessible design criteria in the renovation and construction of bus stops and/or shelters	2026-2031		

Design of Public Spaces – Part 1

Under the Design of Public Spaces Standard, a municipality shall ensure that their Multi-Year Accessibility Plan includes a procedure for preventative and emergency maintenance of the accessible elements of public spaces, and the process for dealing with temporary disruptions when those accessible elements are not in working order.

Department(s) Responsible	Barrier	Action	Timeline	Financial Impact	Completed (Yes, No, Ongoing)
All service areas responsible for maintaining accessible elements in public spaces	Physical	Review the Maintenance of Accessible Elements procedure, as required under the Design of Public Spaces Standard. This is assisted through Auditing and “Report a Concern” through City’s website and telephone	Ongoing		

Continuous Improvement Strategies

Design of Public Spaces – Part 2

Department(s) Responsible	Barrier	Action	Timeline	Financial Impact	Completed (Yes, No, Ongoing)
CAO, Accessibility Coordinator, Director of Public Works, Director of Recreation & Culture, Digital & Media Coordinator	Physical	Establish a web-based information page that summarizes and provides links to design specifications followed by the City of Elliot Lake in the design of public spaces	Ongoing		

Department(s) Responsible	Barrier	Action	Timeline	Financial Impact	Completed (Yes, No, Ongoing)
CAO, Director of Public Works, Accessibility Coordinator, AAC	Physical	Enhance existing sidewalk accessibility through the identification and construction of accessible features, such as curb cuts, curb drops and missing building links to sidewalks or pathways. Create a priority list to refer to each year	Ongoing		
CAO, Director of Public Works, Director of Clerks & Planning Services, Accessibility Coordinator, AAC	Physical	Convert school crosswalks into accessible pedestrian crossovers, where possible. This includes a marked crosswalk identified by signs and pavement markings, including rectangular rapid flashing beacons, and sound indicator	2026-2031		

Department(s) Responsible	Barrier	Action	Timeline	Financial Impact	Completed (Yes, No, Ongoing)
CAO, Director of Public Works, Director of Clerks & Planning Services, Accessibility Coordinator, AAC	Physical	Include accessible on-street parking spaces as part of new roadway construction or the redevelopment of roadways. Consult with the AAC on the need and location of on-street parking as part of the roadwork planning process. For example, Ontario Avenue or Elizabeth Walk, redevelopment of bus drop off areas or park parking lots	Ongoing		
CAO, Digital and Media Coordinator, Director of Public Works, Director of Recreation & Culture, Accessibility Coordinator, AAC	Information and Communication	Enhance City processes for managing and communicating temporary sidewalk and exterior path disruptions, including improvements to the Permit of Approved Works process, pedestrian-focused traffic control training for staff, and public notifications via the accessibility platform	2026-2027		

Department(s) Responsible	Barrier	Action	Timeline	Financial Impact	Completed (Yes, No, Ongoing)
CAO, Director of Clerks and Planning Services, Director of Public Works, Accessibility Coordinator, AAC	Physical, Organizational	Review the Site Plan process, to identify opportunities to build in accessible pedestrian connections (such as sidewalks, accessible pedestrian crossovers) through the construction of new sites	2026-2028		
CAO, Director of Recreation & Culture, Director of Public Works, Accessibility Coordinator, AAC, Stakeholders, Public Input	Physical	Continue to improve accessibility at community parks in consultation with the AAC, and key stakeholders, based on the availability of resources. Key areas to consider are Westview Park, Kiwanis Park, and Nordic Park (community garden)	2026-2031		
CAO, Director of Recreation & Culture, Director of Public Works, Accessibility Coordinator, AAC	Physical	Renovate or rebuild park washrooms to meet accessibility standards, prioritizing sites based on need	2026 and ongoing		

Department(s) Responsible	Barrier	Action	Timeline	Financial Impact	Completed (Yes, No, Ongoing)
CAO, Director of Clerks & Planning Services, Accessibility Coordinator, AAC	Physical	Incorporate wording into the Traffic and Parking By-Law that addresses obstructions which prevent appropriate access to accessible parking spots and aisle ways. Consult with the AAC before any parking/design changes	2026-2027		
CAO, Director of Recreation & Culture, Director of Public Works, Accessibility Coordinator, AAC	Physical	Retrofit and enhance existing pathways and networks in parks, to provide recreational and social opportunities for all	2026-2031		
CAO, Director of Recreation & Culture, Director of Public Works, Accessibility Coordinator, AAC	Physical	Upgrade existing outdoor eating areas to become more accessible, including accessible picnic tables, pathways, etc.	2026-2031		

Department(s) Responsible	Barrier	Action	Timeline	Financial Impact	Completed (Yes, No, Ongoing)
CAO, Director of Recreation & Culture, Director of Public Works, Accessibility Coordinator, AAC	Physical	Continue the renovation of existing outdoor playgrounds with improved accessibility features, such as rubber surfacing, curb drops, pathways, transportation, etc.	2026-2031		
CAO, Accessibility Coordinator, AAC, Directors & Managers	Organizational, Physical	Biannual continued and prioritized accessibility maintenance inspections using the completed audit checklists	Ongoing		
CAO, Director of Public Works, Accessibility Coordinator, AAC, Director of Finance/Treasurer	Physical, Organizational	Implementation of a Service Counter Retrofit Program, where existing counters are prioritized and retrofitted on an ongoing basis to meet the newest level of accessibility standards. Examples of accessible service counters can be found at City Hall and the Library	2026-2031		

Department(s) Responsible	Barrier	Action	Timeline	Financial Impact	Completed (Yes, No, Ongoing)
CAO, Director of Public Works, Director of Recreation & Culture, Accessibility Coordinator, AAC	Physical, Organizational	Create inventory of accessible features at City of Elliot Lake public buildings, such as community and recreation centers. Building managers to post this information publicly	2026		
CAO, Director of Recreation & Culture, Director of Public Works, Accessibility Coordinator, AAC	Physical, Organizational, Communication	Create a prioritized list of accessibility enhancements required at City of Elliot Lake buildings	2026-2027		
CAO, Director of Recreation and Culture, Accessibility Coordinator, AAC	Physical, Communication & Information	Seek additional public input into planned accessibility improvements to existing and new playground upgrades/installations in City parks	Ongoing		

Department(s) Responsible	Barrier	Action	Timeline	Financial Impact	Completed (Yes, No, Ongoing)
CAO, Director of Finance/Treasurer, Director of Recreation & Culture, Accessibility Coordinator, AAC	Organizational	Identify budget gaps affecting playground upgrades in City parks and develop a strategy to inform Council and address these gaps through future budget processes	2026-2029		
CAO, Director of Recreation and Culture, Accessibility Coordinator, AAC	Organizational	Add “Annex H” inspection (accessibility requirements under CSA standards) to our current playground inspection by staff or third party when playgrounds are being built/upgraded	2026		
CAO, Director of Recreation and Culture, Accessibility Coordinator, AAC	Organizational, Communication	If the City is developing a Conservation Master Plan for Environmental Significant Areas (ESAs), and/or creating Guidelines for Management Zones and Trails within those ESAs, then the City should seek input from the AAC			

Department(s) Responsible	Barrier	Action	Timeline	Financial Impact	Completed (Yes, No, Ongoing)
CAO, Director of Recreation & Culture, Director of Public Works, Accessibility Coordinator, AAC	Physical	As boardwalks and trails are replaced for life cycle renovations in ESAs, ensure they are updated to meet the latest accessibility design standard	Ongoing		
CAO, Director of Recreation & Culture, Director of Public Works, Accessibility Coordinator, AAC	Communication and Information	Implement new accessibility signage in ESAs as new trails are created or existing trails are significantly redeveloped	Ongoing		
CAO, Director of Recreation & Culture, Accessibility Coordinator, AAC	Information and Communication, Physical	Conduct focus groups in consultation with the AAC and members of the public on inclusive outdoor play equipment design	Ongoing		

Department(s) Responsible	Barrier	Action	Timeline	Financial Impact	Completed (Yes, No, Ongoing)
CAO, Director of Recreation & Culture, Director of Public Works, Accessibility Coordinator, AAC	Physical, Information and Communication	Work with the AAC and stakeholders on accessibility solutions in heritage-designated buildings or sites, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Miners' Memorial Park - Fire Tower Lookout - Uranium Symbol - W.H. Collins Hall Centre 	2026-2031		
CAO, All Directors, Accessibility Coordinator, AAC	Physical, Information and Communication, Organizational	Develop and implement a formal Maintenance of Accessible Elements procedure for all public spaces, ensuring preventative and emergency maintenance, as well as timely management of temporary disruptions. Review and update the procedure annually	2026 and ongoing		
CAO, Economic Development Manager, Accessibility Coordinator, AAC	Physical, Information and Communication	Incorporate accessibility into all tourism assets, services, and promotional materials	2026 and ongoing		

Transportation

Department(s) Responsible	Barrier	Action	Timeline	Financial Impact	Completed (Yes, No, Ongoing)
CAO, Director of Public Works, AAC, Accessibility Coordinator, Conventional Transit Contracts, Public Input	Transportation	Plan and have a phased approach to an on- demand conventional transit system	2026- 2031		
CAO, Director of Public Works, AAC, Accessibility Coordinator, Specialized Transit Contract, Public Input	Transportation	Review plan and procedures for specialized transit with contractor	2026- 2027		

Department(s) Responsible	Barrier	Action	Timeline	Financial Impact	Completed (Yes, No, Ongoing)
CAO, Director of Public Works, AAC, Accessibility Coordinator, Specialized Transit Contract	Transportation	Identify and plan how the specialized transit can be utilized in gap areas. For example, Council meetings or special events	2026-2027		
CAO, Director of Public Works, AAC, Accessibility Coordinator, consultation with transit drivers	Transportation/Physical	Identify optimal and most efficient transit routes and stops. This includes elimination of Spine Road on route and having a bus stop at front entrance of City Hall. Create a priority list, and consider a route/stop on Willoughby	2026-2028		
CAO, Director of Public Works, AAC, Accessibility Coordinator, Stakeholders	Transportation/Physical	Review alternate route and stop through Hospital parking lot and eliminate route and stop on Spine Road	2026-2027		

Department(s) Responsible	Barrier	Action	Timeline	Financial Impact	Completed (Yes, No, Ongoing)
CAO, Director of Public Works, AAC, Accessibility Coordinator, Digital & Media Coordinator	Organizational/Transportation	Update transit maps and information. Have available in print and electronic format. Have maps available at key locations, including on busses and at bus stops. Break map into 4, 1 route per map with directional arrows	2026-2031		

General Accessibility Policies and Initiatives

Department(s) Responsible	Barrier	Action	Timeline	Financial Impact	Completed (Yes, No, Ongoing)
CAO, All Directors, Accessibility Coordinator, AAC, Working Groups and Public Input	Organizational	Develop the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan	2025-2026		

Department(s) Responsible	Barrier	Action	Timeline	Financial Impact	Completed (Yes, No, Ongoing)
CAO, All Directors, Accessibility Coordinator, AAC	Organizational	Develop the Annual Status Update Reports on the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan	Annually		
CAO, Accessibility Coordinator in conjunction with appropriate departments, AAC	Organizational	Maintain corporation-wide accessibility policies, practices as required under Bill C-81 ACA and AODA. Review and amend the policies as needed or when the legislation changes	Ongoing		
CAO, All Directors, Accessibility Coordinator, AAC, Ad Hoc Budget Committee	Organizational	Provide training and outreach to ensure that the City budget is developed with an accessibility lens	Ongoing		

Department(s) Responsible	Barrier	Action	Timeline	Financial Impact	Completed (Yes, No, Ongoing)
CAO, All Directors, Accessibility Coordinator, AAC	Organizational	Integrate inclusion best practices, principles and apply an accessibility lens to all major City of Elliot Lake strategic plans, master plans, community reports, etc.	Ongoing		
CAO, Accessibility Coordinator, AAC, Digital & Media Coordinator, Members of the Public	Organizational	Develop a plan to recognize key accessibility awareness dates, to promote inclusion for persons with disabilities and accessibility in Elliot Lake	2025		
CAO, HR Manager, Accessibility Coordinator, All Directors	Organizational	Develop, improve and promote improved educational resources and learning tools for City of Elliot Lake staff about accessibility and supports available for all	2025-2027		

Procurement

Department(s) Responsible	Barrier	Action	Timeline	Financial Impact	Completed (Yes, No, Ongoing)
CAO, Director of Finance/Treasurer, Accessibility Coordinator, AAC	Organizational	Review Procurement Initiation Approval Form and Informal Quote process to enhance opportunities for accessible procurement	2026-2027		
CAO, Director of Finance/Treasurer, Accessibility Coordinator	Organizational	Conduct Accessible Procurement Training for Buyers and City Staff	2026-2027 and ongoing		
CAO, Accessibility Coordinator, Director of Public Works, Director of Recreation & Culture, AAC	Physical	Review of Supply Services, including service counters	2026		
CAO, All Directors, Accessibility Coordinator, AAC	Organizational	Amend site visit process for potential bidders to include accommodations and accessibility notifications (include a general statement to this effect)	2026-2028		

Department(s) Responsible	Barrier	Action	Timeline	Financial Impact	Completed (Yes, No, Ongoing)
CAO, Director of Finance/Treasurer, Accessibility Coordinator, AAC	Information and Communication	Review Tender and RFQ/RFP document template, Procurement Policy update for language and updates related to accessibility (include a general statement to this effect)	2026-2027		
CAO, Director of Finance/Treasurer, Accessibility Coordinator, AAC	Information and Communication	Develop tools and resources to assist employees in considering accessibility during the procurement process, such as a flow chart	2026-2027		

Information and Communications

Department(s) Responsible	Barrier	Action	Timeline	Financial Impact	Completed (Yes, No, Ongoing)
CAO, Accessibility Coordinator, Director of Information Technology, Digital & Media Coordinator	Information and Communication	Website and web content to meet the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0 Level AA by 2021 as outlined under Section 14 of the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation	2026- 2027		
CAO, Accessibility Coordinator, Director of Information Technology	Information and Communication, Organizational	Develop Web Audio/Visual Content Communication Corporate Standard	2026- 2028		

Department(s) Responsible	Barrier	Action	Timeline	Financial Impact	Completed (Yes, No, Ongoing)
CAO, Accessibility Coordinator, Director of Information Technology, Digital & Media Coordinator	Information and Communication	Review Corporate Identity Guidelines and Community Meeting Guidelines in consultation with stakeholders and AAC	2026-2027		
CAO, Accessibility Coordinator, Director of Information Technology, Digital & Media Coordinator, Applicable staff	Information and Communication	Provide education and training for Communications employees on accessibility best practise in Communications. For ex., Rick Hansen Foundation training for heads of departments.	2026-2027 and ongoing		
Accessibility Coordinator, All departments uploading documents to City's website	Information and Communication	Create public web content to be accessible, including documents, videos, media, etc.	Ongoing through 2026-2031		

Department(s) Responsible	Barrier	Action	Timeline	Financial Impact	Completed (Yes, No, Ongoing)
CAO, Director of Information Technology, Accessibility Coordinator, Digital & Media Coordinator	Information and Communication	Develop and publish clear instructions on how members of the public can use their web browser's translation features to view the City's website in languages other than English	2026		
Director of Information Technology, Accessibility Coordinator, AAC, Director of Recreation & Culture, Digital & Media Coordinator	Information and Communication	Identify and implement options to provide real-time captioning and/or interpretation services at live municipal events to ensure accessibility for all participants	2026-2027		

Employment

Department(s) Responsible	Barrier	Action	Timeline	Financial Impact	Completed (Yes, No, Ongoing)
CAO, Human Resources Manager, Accessibility Coordinator, AAC	Organizational	Create an HR Accessibility guide to be used when selecting locations for HR meetings, including those for recruitment, hiring, grievance, arbitration, job evaluation, benefit, etc. Include the opportunity and process for employees to request specific accommodations throughout any of these processes	2026-2027		
CAO, Human Resources Manager, Director of Information Technology, Accessibility Coordinator	Information and Communication	Provide in-person support and access to a computer station or tablet station at City Hall to assist applicants applying for positions with the City of Elliot Lake	2026		

Department(s) Responsible	Barrier	Action	Timeline	Financial Impact	Completed (Yes, No, Ongoing)
CAO, Human Resources Manager, Accessibility Coordinator	Organizational	Build partnerships with community agencies to share best practices and implement solutions to assist candidates of all abilities to gain employment with the City of Elliot Lake	Ongoing		
CAO, Human Resources Manager, All Directors/Department Heads, Accessibility Coordinator	Information and Communication	Provide information about the City's accessibility practices throughout the recruitment and employment process. Be more transparent and have information readily available	2026		
CAO, Human Resources Manager, Accessibility Coordinator	Organizational	Conduct an ongoing Workforce Employee Census to understand our employees better and to build a more inclusive and supportive workplace	2026-2028		

Department(s) Responsible	Barrier	Action	Timeline	Financial Impact	Completed (Yes, No, Ongoing)
CAO, Human Resources Manager, All Service Areas, Accessibility Coordinator, AAC	Organizational	Work to build and support an Employee Resource Group specific for persons with disabilities in consultation with workplace parties. Strategy, audits, resources	2027-2028		
CAO, Accessibility Coordinator, All Directors/Department Heads, AAC	Organizational	Develop the Equity and Inclusion Lens tool, which includes a component addressing the dimension of persons with disabilities	2027-2028		
CAO, Human Resources Manager, Accessibility Coordinator, AAC	Attitudinal	Develop and implement “Intercultural Competency” training for City employees, with a specific module pertaining to persons with disabilities. This highlights duty to accommodate and cultural humility	2027-2028		

Department(s) Responsible	Barrier	Action	Timeline	Financial Impact	Completed (Yes, No, Ongoing)
CAO, Human Resources Manager, Director of Finance/Treasurer, Accessibility Coordinator	Organizational	Review and update the Return-to-Work and Employee Accommodation Programs to ensure clarity, consistency, and compliance with legislative requirements. The updated programs will include explicit wording that employees receiving government disability benefits (e.g., ODSP, CPP-D) can be accommodated without any impact on their existing benefits	2026-2027		

Department(s) Responsible	Barrier	Action	Timeline	Financial Impact	Completed (Yes, No, Ongoing)
CAO, Human Resources Manager, All Directors/Department Heads, Accessibility Coordinator	Organizational	Review and improve opportunities in labour relations processes, to ensure accessibility for employees with disabilities. Regular review of labour documents, collective agreements, and meeting times/locations/venues will take place to ensure improved accessibility	Ongoing		
CAO, Human Resources Manager, All Directors/Department Heads, Accessibility Coordinator	Organizational	Develop accessible employee resources to understand and participate in the job evaluation process; understand and identify any barriers to diversity and inclusion that may be embedded in job design or descriptions. Have explicit wording for accommodations	2026-2027		

Department(s) Responsible	Barrier	Action	Timeline	Financial Impact	Completed (Yes, No, Ongoing)
CAO, Human Resources Manager, Accessibility Coordinator	Organizational	Work with service providers to improve benefits administration processes and options that are accessible to employees with disabilities	2026-2027		
CAO, Human Resources Manager, All Directors/Department Heads, Accessibility Coordinator	Organizational	Review job description criteria, to continue to identify and remove barriers to employment for persons with disabilities. Very specific language and job duties (avoid “other duties as assigned”)	2026-2027		
CAO, Human Resources Manager, Accessibility Coordinator, Departments Administering Training	Organizational	Include accessibility and accommodation statements throughout learning and development training programs and processes	2026		

Department(s) Responsible	Barrier	Action	Timeline	Financial Impact	Completed (Yes, No, Ongoing)
CAO, Human Resources Manager, Accessibility Coordinator, Departments Administering Training	Organizational	Adopt the Universal Instructional Design principles to maximize the learning experience for internal training programs	2026-2028		
CAO, Human Resources Manager, Accessibility Coordinator, Departments Administering Training, AAC	Organizational	Conduct review of internal training facilities and implement accessibility enhancements (use of audit checklists)	Ongoing		

Customer Service and Program Delivery

Department(s) Responsible	Barrier	Action	Timeline	Financial Impact	Completed (Yes, No, Ongoing)
CAO, Director of Clerks & Planning Services, Accessibility Coordinator, AAC	Organizational	Develop and implement the 2026 Accessible Election Plan. The plan identifies barriers to voting for persons with disabilities, as well as candidates, and strategies to actively reduce or eliminate those barriers	2025-2026		
CAO, Human Resources Manager, Accessibility Coordinator	Information and Communication	Training for Customer Service Representatives to assist with communicating with persons with disabilities	Yearly and upon hiring		
CAO, Accessibility Coordinator, AAC	Information and Communication	Create a resource tool for residential groups, outlining best practices for making neighbourhood groups and events more accessible	2026		

Department(s) Responsible	Barrier	Action	Timeline	Financial Impact	Completed (Yes, No, Ongoing)
CAO, Accessibility Coordinator, Director of Recreation and Culture, AAC	Physical	Support the Age-Friendly Network, to expand opportunities for the lending of assistive devices to support people living with disabilities in participating in recreation and informal social gatherings	Ongoing		
CAO Accessibility Coordinator, Human Resources Manager, All Directors/Department Heads	Attitudinal	Provide training for front facing customer service staff on disability awareness/sensitivity training, including dementia-awareness training	2026 and ongoing		
CAO, Director of Emergency Services, Accessibility Coordinator, All Directors/Department Heads	Physical and Organizational	Develop an emergency plan for all buildings, to assist persons with disabilities in the event of an emergency. Ensure staff is trained, they understand the emergency plan and have a duty to follow it. Promote Vulnerable Persons Registry	2026 and annual review of plan by all staff		

Department(s) Responsible	Barrier	Action	Timeline	Financial Impact	Completed (Yes, No, Ongoing)
CAO, Human Resources Manager, Accessibility Coordinator, All Directors/Department Heads	Attitudinal	Develop and roll out enhanced mental health awareness training for staff	2026 and ongoing		
CAO, Human Resources Manager, Director of Recreation & Culture, Accessibility Coordinator, AAC	Attitudinal	Certify Recreation supervisors to become trainers of autism-spectrum specific training and dementia training, to complement any existing Non-Violent Crisis Intervention (NVCI) training programs in place. Supervisors will then roll out the training to all staff	2026 and ongoing		
CAO, Human Resources Manager, Director of Recreation & Culture, Accessibility Coordinator, AAC	Attitudinal	Awareness training for all summer casual staff, to foster social inclusion within the community for all children, including those with disabilities	Ongoing		
CAO, Accessibility Coordinator, AAC	Organizational	Form new partnerships with accessibility/inclusion service providers and agencies	Ongoing		

Department(s) Responsible	Barrier	Action	Timeline	Financial Impact	Completed (Yes, No, Ongoing)
CAO, Required service areas, Accessibility Coordinator, Human Resources Manager, AAC	Physical, Attitudinal	Review and enhance lift and transfer training for staff, to support persons with disabilities (ex. Arts Centre emergency exits, Pool)	2026 and ongoing		
CAO, Human Resources Manager, Director of Recreation & Culture, Director of Finance/Treasurer, Accessibility Coordinator, AAC	Organizational	Improve processes for families who have members with disabilities within the City of Elliot Lake (e.g., Support persons recognition for things like Street Dance entry, Pool, Transit, etc.)	2026-2027		
CAO, Director of Recreation & Culture, Accessibility Coordinator, AAC	Physical	Source and pilot new accessible equipment to be used for programs for persons with disabilities (ex. Self adjusting ramp for events)	2026-2031, and ongoing		
CAO, Director of Recreation & Culture, Director of Public Works, Accessibility Coordinator, AAC	Organizational	Investigate options to increase camping/RV spaces for persons with disabilities at Westview Trailer Park (ex. 1 or 2 concrete pads, upgraded accessible washrooms)	2026-2031		

Department(s) Responsible	Barrier	Action	Timeline	Financial Impact	Completed (Yes, No, Ongoing)
CAO, Economic Development Manager, Accessibility Coordinator, AAC, Stakeholders	Attitudinal, physical	Develop strategies and partnerships to support local organizations and businesses in promoting accessibility, inclusion, and enhanced guest services within the private sector (e.g., through collaboration with stakeholders such as ELNOS)	2026-2031		
CAO, Director of Recreation & Culture, Accessibility Coordinator, Director of Public Works, AAC	Physical	Expand and enhance accessible outdoor seating areas, to improve access and the number of residents who can enjoy the outdoor space	2026 and ongoing		

Department(s) Responsible	Barrier	Action	Timeline	Financial Impact	Completed (Yes, No, Ongoing)
CAO, Accessibility Coordinator, AAC	Information and Communication	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Awareness of our population (autism, dementia, etc.) 2. Identify existing resources available to support persons with disabilities and identify gaps 3. Improve awareness and availability of services and supports for persons with disabilities 	2026 and ongoing		

Future Legislative Requirements

Information and Communication

Department(s) Responsible	Barrier	Action	Timeline	Financial Impact	Completed (Yes, No, Ongoing)
CAO, Accessibility Coordinator, All Directors/Department Heads	Information and Communication	Have an alert system in place that alerts City staff of upcoming legislative requirements	Ongoing		

Appendix B: Embedding Accessibility from the Outset: A Framework for Municipal Projects

The purpose of this section is to ensure accessibility is proactively embedded into municipal projects from the planning stage onward, aligning with the principles of universal design and the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA). This framework is intended to supplement the formal review role of the Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC) by offering early-stage guidance to project teams, planners, and contractors.

Guiding Principles:

1. **Proactive Planning** – Accessibility considerations must begin at the concept and design phase, not as a retrofit or post-review correction. Create a power point/presentation for departments/committees to have so that they know when and how to come to the AAC.
2. **Universal Design** – Projects should be designed to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation.
3. **Consultation** – Engage the AAC, subject matter experts, and community members with disabilities early and often. Have the AAC be able to sit at other committees when consultation is requested.
4. **Continuous Evaluation** – Integrate accessibility checkpoints at key phases: planning, design, procurement, and implementation.
5. **Documentation** – Accessibility impacts and decisions should be documented and publicly available wherever possible to promote transparency.
6. **Future Planning** – Things that are coming through legislation be considered for future planning.

Accessibility Integration List (for Project Leads):

- Has the project team reviewed AODA Design of Public Spaces Standards or the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR)?
 - In accordance with Section 80.45 of the AODA IASR, the City of Elliot Lake will ensure that all third-party groups providing goods, services, or programs on behalf of the municipality through a Memorandum of Understanding are made aware of, and required to follow, the City's accessibility policies and procedures. This will include the inclusion of a standardized accessibility clause in all MOUs for activities on City property.
- Have persons with disabilities or the AAC been consulted?
- Are accessibility features included in the budget?
- Does the design support multiple forms of mobility (e.g. wheelchairs, walkers, strollers)?
- Are wayfinding, signage, lighting, and communication supports part of the scope?
- Are timelines and phasing designed to minimize barriers during construction?

Case Example Framework

1. OPP Station Ramp and Entryway

- Issue: Inaccessible grade, width and entry door for mobility users.
- Action: Accessibility was included in the early design process to ensure proper slope, tactile surface indicators, and power door operators are part of the final design.
- Consultation: AAC engaged in reviewing preliminary drawings.

- Outcome: Barrier-free access prioritized before tendering the work.

2. Bus Stop at the Hospital

- Issue: Current stop lacks adequate surfacing, and connection to hospital entry.
- Action: Options include relocating to a compliant alternative or upgrading the current stop to meet AODA.
- Integration: Hospital administration and transit users consulted; stop to include accessible shelter, clear path of travel, and seating.
- Next Step: Cost-benefit analysis with accessibility as a core criterion.

3. Transit System Phased Approach

- Issue: New on-demand system and bus procurement must serve all users equitably.
- Action: Include accessible booking options (phone, app), ensure buses are low-floor or lift-equipped, and assess affordability impacts.
- Outcome: Each phase of implementation will include a review of accessibility impacts and AAC recommendations.

4. Westview Park Redevelopment

- Issue: Historical lack of accessible infrastructure (ex. washrooms, pathways, seating).
- Action: Accessibility integrated as a core component of concept planning. Features to include accessible playground components, lit paths, better parking area, and inclusive seating.
- Public Engagement: Surveys and open houses to gather input from seniors and persons with disabilities.
- Result: Accessibility will be a condition in any design/build tender.

5. Automatic Doors at Municipal Facilities

- Issue: Inconsistent access for mobility device users at public buildings.
- Action: Audit of all publicly accessible entrances conducted. Locations prioritized based on public use and identified barriers.
- Funding: Budgeting through accessibility reserves and capital planning.
- Integration: AAC to provide site-specific feedback and confirm effectiveness post-installation.

6. City Hall Entryway Improvements

- Issue: Confusing drop-off layout and inadequate signage.
- Action: Design a clearer drop-off zone with visual/tactile cues and update directional signage. Consider improved lighting and rest area from parking lot.
- Integration: Project team to conduct accessibility site walkthrough with AAC.
- Goal: Improved first impression and barrier-free experience for all City Hall visitors.

Monitoring and Accountability

- A staff member from each department will be designated to liaise with the Accessibility Coordinator during project planning.
- Accessibility Integration Reports will be completed at project milestones.
- Annual updates will be provided to the AAC on progress, challenges, and lessons learned.

Appendix C: Accessibility Advisory Committee Structure and Mandate

Section 29 of the **Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), 2005** mandates that municipalities with 10,000 or more residents must establish an Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC) to:

- Advise municipal council on the identification, removal, and prevention of barriers for people with disabilities;
- Review accessibility plans and policies; and
- Make recommendations on municipal facilities, programs, services, and built environment accessibility.

The purpose of an AAC is to:

- Advise on the municipality's Multi-Year Accessibility Plan
- Review proposed or existing facilities, parks, and services for accessibility barriers
- Promote awareness and compliance with accessibility standards
- Engage community members with disabilities in decision-making processes

Background

As part of the City of Elliot Lake's ongoing commitment to accessibility, community engagement, and inclusive decision-making, the structure and leadership of the Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC) is being reviewed.

Currently, the AAC's Terms of Reference specify that the Chair must be a member of Council. While this approach provides Council oversight, it can limit opportunities for community-led leadership within the Committee.

Exploring a Volunteer Chair Model

The City is considering, as a potential future option, allowing a **volunteer member of the community** to serve as Chair of the AAC. This consideration is part of a broader effort to enhance community participation and ensure that the Committee reflects the perspectives and expertise of people with lived experience of disability.

Key elements under exploration include:

- Ensuring **Council oversight** and continuity through potential Vice-Chair or advisory roles for Council members.
- Maintaining accountability while **empowering community leadership** in accessibility planning and initiatives.
- Exploring the impact on **meeting flexibility and engagement** by enabling a Chair drawn from the AAC membership.

Rationale

Exploring this option supports the City's accessibility goals by:

- **Encouraging broader community participation** in municipal decision-making.
- **Highlighting lived experience leadership** in accessibility initiatives.
- Strengthening the **relationship between the City and the community** through active, collaborative engagement.

Next Steps

The City will continue to explore the potential for a volunteer Chair model as part of its ongoing work to improve accessibility and community engagement. Any changes would be considered carefully with input from the AAC, the City Clerk, and Council, and aligned with best practices in Ontario municipalities.