

**Multi Year Accessibility Plan
Corporation of the Township of Val Rita-Harty
2026-2031**



February 2026

Approved by Resolution No. 26-034

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Introduction

The Municipality of Val Rita-Harty (“the Municipality”) is pleased to introduce the 2026-2031 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan which represents an ongoing commitment to accessibility under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA)*.

The Plan reaffirms the Municipality’s strong commitment to accessibility, inclusion and full compliance with Ontario’s accessibility legislation. It sets out the Municipality’s actions and priorities for identifying, removing and preventing barriers that affect people with disabilities, ensuring that everyone can access and benefit from our programs, services and facilities.

We are committed to treating persons with disabilities in accordance with the principles of dignity, autonomy and integration, and we are committed to meeting the needs of persons with disabilities in a timely manner by eliminating and preventing obstacles to accessibility while respecting the requirements, as outlined in the Ontario accessibility legislation and the Human Rights Code.

As part of this commitment, the Municipality is embedding accessibility into its Asset Management Plan and incorporating accessibility considerations into future updates of municipal plans, policies and service delivery. By planning and integrating accessibility into how we manage, maintain and invest in municipal assets, we are working toward a more inclusive and barrier-free community over time.

Our goal is to ensure that all people—regardless of age or ability—can live, work and visit the Municipality of Val Rita-Harty with independence and dignity, maintaining the principles of equality, integration and respect for every individual.

This Multi-Year Accessibility Plan also applies to the: Val Rita-Harty Public Library.

Council’s commitment to accessibility

The Council for the Corporation of the Municipality of Val Rita-Harty is committed to providing equal access and opportunity for all people and ensuring that its services, programs and facilities are inclusive, accessible and welcoming.

The Municipality will:

- Treat all individuals in a manner that allows them to maintain dignity, independence and equality of opportunity.
- Identify, remove and prevent barriers that hinder accessibility in the workplace, in public facilities and in the delivery of municipal services.
- Ensure that accessibility considerations are integrated into all policies, planning, procurement and infrastructure decisions.
- Continue training new staff, summer student employees, Council Members and municipal volunteers on their responsibilities to provide accessible customer services pursuant to the customer service standards.

- Meet or exceed the requirements of Ontario’s accessibility laws, including the AODA, the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR), the Ontario Building Code and the Ontario Human Rights Code.

In accordance with the AODA, the Township of Val Rita-Harty is classified as a “small designated public sector organization” having 10 or less employees.

In accordance with the legislation, Val Rita-Harty Council is thus further committed to:

- Posting of the 2026-2031 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan on its website.
- Providing this Plan in an accessible format upon request.
- Reviewing and updating this Plan (as may be necessary) at least once every 5 years.
- Continuing consultations with persons with disabilities.

We welcome feedback from the public at any time. Input from residents, visitors and community groups helps us better understand accessibility challenges and continue removing barriers in our facilities, services and programs.

Legislative Framework

This plan is guided by key legislative requirements, as follow:

- Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001 (ODA);
- Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA);
- Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR)
- Ontario Human Rights Code;
- Ontario Building Code (Accessibility Standards).

Recent achievements in terms of accessibility

Prior to the ODA of 2001, the Municipality was active in the removal and prevention of physical barriers on municipal properties within the community, as well as the delivery of specialized services to disabled residents within the catchment area.

The most recent initiatives are listed below.

- 2022 – Community Hub renovations
- 2022 - Accessible front counter at the Administrative Offices
- 2024- Project ready, awaiting funding mechanism, washrooms in Community Hub Gym.
- 2026- IT Rita Kiosk, information availability. Budgeted for 2026

Identification of Barriers

A barrier is anything that prevents a person with disability from fully participating in all aspects of society because of his/her disability. The Municipality recognizes five primary forms of barrier:

- Physical and architectural Barriers, eg: stairs without ramps, narrow doorways or uneven surfaces.
- Information and Communication Barriers, eg: printed materials not available in accessible formats.
- Attitudinal Barriers, eg: assumptions or stereotypes about abilities.
- Technological Barriers, eg: websites or systems not compatible with assistive technology.
- Systematic Barriers, eg: policies or procedures that unintentionally create obstacles.

Ongoing consultation

The success of this plan depends upon consultation with persons with disabilities and other persons offering support services in the community on a continuous basis. Regular assessment of public infrastructure and spaces, as well as proposed municipal by-laws, policies and services to meet accessibility standards, will ensure that the Municipality remains inclusive for all. Through these processes, accessibility barriers will be identified, and recommendations will be brought to Municipal Council, who will select priorities based on the budget.

Monitoring the Multi-Year Plan and Policies

This Multi-Year Accessibility Plan will be reviewed and updated at least once every five years, with annual progress reports made available to the public and Municipal Council.

Training

The Municipality will ensure that all employees, volunteers, Council members and policy developers receive training on:

- The AODA and the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR); and
- The Ontario Human Rights Code as it pertains to people with disabilities.

Training records will be maintained, and refresher training will be provided as needed to reflect legislative or procedural changes.

Customer Service Standards

The Municipality is committed to providing equitable, respectful and accessible customer service to all residents and visitors

Action Taken:

- Staff trained in Accessible Customer Service.
- Accommodation provided upon request.
- Accessible municipal elections conducted with post-election accessibility report.

Action Planned:

- Solicit and act on public feedback, including from persons with disabilities.
- Maintain accessibility accommodations as needs evolve.
- Review customer service policies and practices periodically.
- Regularly review policies to remove systematic barriers and ensure inclusion in service delivery.
- Strengthen the formal feedback process for accessibility concerns.

Information and Communication Standards

The Municipality will ensure that information and communications are clear, accessible, and available in multiple formats when requested.

Actions Taken:

- Publicized availability of accessible document formats and communication supports.

Action Planned:

- Develop procedures to provide alternative formats promptly upon request.
- Train staff in accessible document creation and digital accessibility.
- Upgrade municipal website to implement and maintain compliance with WCAG 2.0 Level AA standards for web content.
- Provide emergency and safety information in accessible formats.

Employment Standards

The Municipality is committed to accessible and inclusive employment practices, ensuring fair and equitable treatment throughout recruitment, employment, and accommodation processes.

Action Taken:

- Implement accommodation procedures for employees with disabilities.
- Job postings include accommodation statements.

Actions Planned:

- Regularly review accommodation and back-to-work policies.
- Maintain accessible hiring and interview processes.
- Review and update emergency and accommodation plan annually.

Design of Public Spaces Standards

The Municipality is committed to ensuring that all newly constructed or significantly renovated public spaces – including parks, trails, recreational facilities and parking – are designed and maintained to meet or exceed accessibility standards.

Actions Taken:

- Community Hub renovations, with exception of washrooms at gym, are completed and include:
 - ✓ Accessible universal washroom with safety features.
 - ✓ Sensor operated automatic main entrance doors that allow individuals using mobility aids to enter and exit independently.

- ✓ Accessible main entrance doors, entry and hallways.
- ✓ Motion s lighting in the gym washrooms.

Actions Planned:

- Identify funding opportunities to support accessibility upgrade to gym washrooms.
- Identify funding opportunities to support additional accessibility upgrades across public spaces and parklands.
- Remove aging or unsafe play structures.
- Add features such as accessible seating and/or rest areas.
- Continue to integrate accessibility into all infrastructure and facility projects.

Transportation Standards

The Municipality does not operate/provide public transportation services.

Maintenance of Accessible Elements

In accordance with Section 80.44 of the IASR, the Municipality has procedures in place for the inspection, repair, and maintenance of accessible elements in public spaces and municipal facilities.

These include the following:

- Scheduled monthly inspections with documentation and tracking for all accessibility features.
- Proactive replacement of worn or damages components.
- In terms of Emergency Maintenance -- response within 4 hours for reported issues, prioritize repairs impacting access or safety and communicating updates to affected individuals and staff.
- In terms of temporary disruptions – reasonable advance notice is provided through notice on the website, direct communication and signage which includes details about duration, reason and available alternatives, where possible provide interim accommodations, log and review all disruptions for improvement.

Feedback

The Municipality welcomes feedback from the public on accessibility policies, programs and services to help identify and address barriers. Feedback will be acknowledged and reviewed promptly.

Contact:

Administration, Corporation of the Township of Val Rita-Harty

Telephone: 705-335-6146

Email: clerk@valharty.ca

Availability of the public plan

This Multi-Year Accessibility Plan are available at the Municipal Office and the Public Library. The Plan will also be available on the municipal website, which is in a format accessible by persons using a reading software for computers. The Plan is available in alternate formats, upon request.