A Roadmap to Accessibility
Part II: Public Spaces

prepared by
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on behalf of
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INTRODUCTION

In the summer of 2014 through Spring of 2015 four member agencies from the Ontario Land Trust Alliance (OLTA) participated in a review of accessible features they offer staff, volunteers and visitors in relation to meeting the requirements of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA). The review was conducted by an independent accessibility consulting firm, Sterling Frazer Associates (SFA), who worked with OLTA representatives and management from each of the participating agencies. Findings from the review was intended to serve as “A Roadmap to Accessibility” for other OLTA members to follow when assessing their own accessible features and compliance with the provincial legislation.

At the conclusion of the four member agencies completing the assessment, three additional documents were produced: (1) Built Environment; (2) Public Spaces; and, (3) Communication. Each highlights relevant information that was learned from the experience of the project. The reports also provide supplemental information that can be used to help other Ontario Land Trust Alliance member agencies evaluate their properties/programs as they relate to published standards for accommodating people with disabilities.

Part II focuses on outdoor spaces and therefore follows the requirements of the Design of Public Spaces accessibility standard. Additional information from the Canadian Standards Association B651-12 Accessible Design for the Built Environment and Parks Canada’s Design Guidelines for Accessible Outdoor Recreation Facilities (which is a supplemental document to the CSA B651-12) were used to address areas not covered by the AODA.

LEGISLATION:

ACCESSIBILITY FOR ONTARIANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (AODA)

In June 2005 the Province of Ontario passed into legislation the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA). The intent of the Act is to create an accessible Ontario for people with disabilities by identifying and removing barriers to accessibility. The expected deadline to reach this goal is 2025. While discrimination based on disability is covered under both the Ontario Human Rights Code and the Canadian Human Rights Act, they only serve to provide an avenue of
recourse when discrimination has occurred; whereas, the AODA is an attempt to create an accessible province for people to live, work and play.

The AODA has five standards. They are: (1) Customer Service; (2) Employment; (3) Information & Communication; (4) Transportation; and, (5) Design of Public Spaces (originally referred to as the Built Environment). Each Standard has various deadlines and requirements for compliance, depending on the number of staff employed by the organization. Four of the standards are grouped together under one regulation — the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR), which includes: Employment, Information and Communications, Transportation and Design of Public Spaces.

The AODA applies to every organization in Ontario with one or more employees. Some exemptions exist where organizations are under federal government jurisdiction; for example transportation services that also operate outside the province of Ontario, Federal Government departments, and/or banks, to name a few. In addition, portions of the Act makes provision to exempt smaller organizations with employees that range from 1 to 49. Each organization is responsible for knowing which portions of the Act apply to them and in knowing the deadlines that have been established by the Province of Ontario.

As of January 1, 2017, private and not-for-profit organizations with 50+ employees (January 1, 2018 for private and not-for-profit organizations with 1-49 employees) must consult with the public and persons with disabilities to ensure their needs are considered in the design of new or redeveloped recreational trails. This will include identifying the slope of the trail, the need for, and location of: ramps, rest areas, passing areas, viewing areas, amenities along the trail, and any other pertinent features that may affect accessibility.

[Note: consultation is not required when constructing or redeveloping beach access.]

When considering new designs do not assume that accessibility is only for a person using a wheelchair. AODA covers all types of disabilities including people affected by mobility, sensory and/or cognitive conditions. Therefore, consideration of a person who is blind who walks the trails is equally important as a person who uses a wheelchair, walker, cane, or crutch.

The Design of Public Spaces standard provides the minimum requirement for accessibility. Where possible organizations are encouraged to exceed the minimum requirements to increase accessibility for a broader group of individuals. However, making a space bigger does not necessarily make it accessible; following recognized published guidelines is critical to a design being useable for people with disabilities.
Ontario Human Rights Code

Under the Ontario Human Rights Code organizations are required to accommodate persons with disabilities to the point of undue hardship.

The AODA does not replace the obligation of an organization to accommodate a person with a disability. Where there are two or more laws that relate to accommodating a person with a disability, the section of the law that provides for the greatest benefit to the person with a disability will take precedence.

Resources

The Ontario Building Code and the Design of Public Spaces standard are the only documents that have legal jurisdiction over creating accessible spaces within the built environment or of public spaces, therefore they should be referenced through all new construction, renovation or redevelopment. However, there is no legislation that requires existing environments be modified as a proactive measure to increase accessibility for people with disabilities.

For the purposes of this project a number of published documents were used to evaluate the accessibility of both the interior and exterior spaces of the four partner agencies. The challenge in using multiple sources is they do not always agree with one another. For example, the accessible width of a door varies depending on the source. According to the updated Ontario Building Code (OBC) an accessible doorway has a clear opening of 850mm; Canadian Standards Association - B651-12 Accessible Design for the Built Environment (CSA B-651) recommends a clear opening of 810mm; the Facility Accessibility Design Standards (FADS) recommends a clear opening of 950mm and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) recommends a clear opening of 915mm.

As stated previously, where conflicting legislation/standards exists, the choice should be the option that provides the highest level of accessibility to a person with a disability. However, only the Ontario Building Code and the Design of Public Spaces standard have legal jurisdiction over the built environment.

Please note, it is not possible to make a physical space that is accessible to everyone. There will always be examples where a person faces a barrier even when the most current and relevant
accessible design features are included. The difference will be in the way that staff and volunteers interact with the person in order to accommodate their individual needs.

In a recent report to its members the International Association of Accessibility Professionals has stated that future development of new criteria for accessible design should be done with caution as it is becoming increasingly challenging for suppliers of products and services to meet the individual or unique requirements across various provinces, states, or countries.

Under the AODA, any municipality with 10,000 residents or more will have an accessibility advisory committee made up of representatives of the community; this may be a valuable resource when seeking advice from the disability community.

**PROJECT RESOURCE MATERIALS**

**Ontario Building Code** (Building Code Act, 1992 – Ontario Regulation 332/12): Came into effect on January 1, 2015. Pay particular attention to Section 3.8 Barrier-Free Design. OBC is required for all new construction or renovations that require a building permit.

**Design of Public Spaces** – AODA Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR): Came into effect on January 1, 2013. There are varying timelines for compliance depending on the size of the organization. Smaller organizations, with 1-49 employees, are exempt from certain sections of the legislation. Each organization must become knowledgeable on which sections apply and the dates that are required for compliance.

**Accessible Design for the Built Environment - B651-12** – Canadian Standards Association (CSA).* Published in 2012, this document provides a good overview of accessible design features that

Note: During the development of the Built Environment standard, the decision was made to enhance the existing Ontario Building Code (OBC) to include a more robust view of accessibility for interior spaces and to create a separate document, Design of Public Spaces (DOPS), to address areas not be covered under the Ontario Building Code. The updated Ontario Building Code took effect on January 1, 2015. It regulates accessibility features on the interior of buildings such as accessible washrooms and doorways, as well as exterior walkways, stairs and ramps that connect to the building’s entrance. Whereas the Design of Public Spaces standard (became law on January 1, 2013) focuses on areas that are primarily outdoors, such as parking spaces, outdoor eating areas, trails and paths. It also includes a limited focus on specific interior spaces, such as queuing lines and service counters.
generally exceed those required under the Ontario Building Code and Design of Public Spaces standard. The authors of this report use this document to evaluate the accessibility of existing buildings and public spaces.

**Facility Accessibility Design Standards** – City of London, Ontario.* Published in 2007. The City of London has created an accessibility standard that has quickly become one of the leading resources for accessible design across Canada. The publication (often referred to as the FADS) is free of charge and has been adopted by many municipalities across the country. This document is intended for renovations and new construction.

**Design Guidelines for Accessible Outdoor Recreation Facilities** – Canadian Heritage – Parks Canada.* Parks Canada developed this publication as an adjunct to the CSA B65-12. It builds on the criteria established by the Canadian Standards Association and applies them to outdoor spaces, trails and amenities. It provides useful information in areas of outdoor spaces that are not specified in the Design of Public Spaces.

**Illustrated Technical Guide to the Accessibility Standard for the Design of Public Spaces** – Global Alliance on Accessible Technologies & Environments.* A supporting document to the AODA that includes both illustrations and photographic examples of accessible design with references to relevant sections of the Design of Public Spaces standard and identifies which organizations must comply.

*Resources recommended by Sterling Frazer Associates to supplement the OBC and AODA Design of Public Spaces.

Visit OLTA’s website (www.olta.ca) for a copy of their Naturally Accessible Resource Guide.

**PUBLIC SPACES**

The reference to “public spaces” captures a wide range of environments and impacts both interior and exterior spaces. In relation to this project (Roadmap for Accessibility) this report focuses on trails, walkways/paths, parking spaces, outdoor eating spaces and play grounds. Due to the extreme variances in terrain across the province the AODA strongly encourages participation from disability groups representative of the local communities and potential users of the facilities when considering modification or redevelopment of resources that affect accessibility.
**Recreational Trails**

A recreational trail is defined under the AODA as “a public pedestrian trail intended for recreational and leisure purposes.” The standard only applies to newly constructed or redeveloped recreational trails that an organization plans to maintain on a regular basis. Remote trails, such as back country trails, portage routes, or those areas that are created by repetitive use are typically found in remote areas and are intended to have little impact on the natural environment, as such, are not required to comply with the legislation.

Multi-purpose trails are required to comply with the AODA if one of the purposes is for pedestrian use. This is true regardless of the amount of time throughout the year it is used by pedestrians (for example, a walking trail only in the summer months). It also requires that the trail receives regular maintenance. It does not apply if the solely intended purpose of the trail is for cross-country skiing, mountain biking, or use of motorized vehicles such as snow mobiles or off-road vehicles.

The AODA requires that organizations consult with people with disabilities when new trails are being constructed or developed. Areas that should include community involvement include identifying the need for and location of ramps along the trail; the acceptable slope of the trail (running and cross slopes); or the need for and design of rest areas, passing areas, viewing areas and amenities along the trail.

**Technical Requirements of Trails**

The entrance to a recreational trail shall provide a clear opening between 850mm to 1000mm regardless of whether the entrance includes a gate, bollard, stone feature, fence or other entrance design.

A trail head sign shall provide information that provides visitors with information about:

- the length of the trail;
• type of surface which the trail is constructed;
• the average and minimum trail width;
• the average and maximum running and cross slopes;* and
• whether amenities are provided, including their location.

Including this information on the organization’s website and printed literature provides potential visitors the opportunity to determine in advance if they will be able to use the trail.

Signs should include pictograms for people who cannot read or for whom English is not their primary language. Text should be of high contrast to the background and use sans serif font (Calibri, Tahoma, Arial, or Verdana). As part of ongoing and regular maintenance, clear all vegetation from the sign to make it easily accessible.

Additional signage along the length of the trail provides important information for a person with a disability to determine where he/she is along the trail and to help determine the distance to the nearest rest area or service amenity.

A recreational trail must have a minimum clear width of 1000mm. This provides sufficient space for a wide range of people with disabilities who use assistive technologies such as wheelchairs,

*OLTA has identified the High Efficiency Trail Assessment Process (HETAP) as a potential resource when calculating the slope of a trail. The HETAP is a trail assessment device available through Simcoe County Trails. This machine collects information on length, grade, cross slope, width, surface type and an inventory of trail features, and records the data on a laptop to analyze and present the information.
scooters, canes, crutches, walkers. A space of 1500mm has the potential for two individuals to walk side by side or to pass one another without difficulty. Where possible, maintaining a clear shoulder that extends 500mm on either side of the trail provides added ability for different parties to pass one another and helps keep vegetation from affecting signs, and encroaching on the trail.

The trail surface shall be of a material that is flat and firm. There are many natural surfaces that can be used, including crushed gravel, wood chips, grass, or boardwalks. If a boardwalk is used, the wood must be positioned with the openings between each plank at a perpendicular angle to the main direction of travel. The distance between the planks must not exceed 20mm. This reduces the chance the tip of a cane will become lodged in the opening.

Trail slopes that are steeper than 1:20 require that a ramp or stairs be installed. These will be addressed later in this document. (See section on Ramps)

A raised edge along the boardwalk, ramp or bridge shall be at least 50mm in height above the walking surface. This is used as a tactile guide for a person with a vision disability who uses a cane.
It also protects against the wheels of a wheelchair from rolling over the edge.

Areas that have poor drainage may become soggy when wet, providing a boardwalk or maintaining the trail to drain the water is important for visitors who use mobility devices. Making use of the slope along the trail is another natural way of draining excess water.

Where a trail is adjacent to water or a drop-off, the trail must have edge protection (curb) running the full length of the trail where the hazard exists. As with a boardwalk, the edge shall be at minimum 50mm above the surface of the trail, but should not impact the ability for proper drainage. If the drop-off from the trail exceeds 600mm, Parks Canada suggests that a structural guard be installed in addition to the raised edge to prevent accidental falls. The guard should be at a height of 1070mm. Since the average eye level of a person seated in a wheelchair ranges from 1100mm to 1300mm the guard should have little impact on the view.

Trails should be clear of overhead items such as tree branches. A minimum clearance of 2100mm from the trail surface provides sufficient space.

The Design of Public Spaces standard recommends incorporating an edge guard along the path of travel when there is a drop-off or water feature. The guard should range in height from 50mm to 75mm above the surface of the path. This provides a tactile cue for a person with low vision who may be using a cane for guidance, or to help prevent a person in a wheelchair from inadvertently rolling off the edge of the path, boardwalk, or ramp.
Sidewalks and walking paths used between buildings or on regularly maintained properties shall be a minimum of 1500mm wide. Surfaces shall be flat and made of a stable material; for example some commonly used surfaces include: concrete, asphalt, crushed stone, pavers (interlocking stones) or wooden planks. The surface and slope of the path shall provide good drainage to remove excess water.

Architectural features on the property enhance the esthetic experience providing they are maintained from a perspective that includes accessibility.

While challenging for the staff and volunteers, it is important that regular maintenance keeps pathways clear of debris and vegetation along pathways is kept in check.
Continuous maintenance is important for all walking surfaces. Uneven or unexpected changes to the elevation can create trip hazards for a person walking, or a tip hazard for a person using a wheelchair or scooter. Interlocking stones, while acceptable, are prone to shifting and creating uneven surfaces. Damaged or missing (paving) stones should be replaced as soon as possible.

When new cement sidewalks are created, consider using cut saw lines between sections of the cement rather than creating separate expansion joints. These joints help reduce the chance the cement will crack due to shifting soil conditions, however, expansion joints have a tendency to be difficult for a person using a wheelchair, in extreme cases the expansion joints have been known to be painful on a person’s back as he/she travels along the sidewalk.

Walkways shall be free of unexpected items, such as garbage cans, recycling bins, signs, or display racks. These items can easily be placed alongside the walkway without interfering with the natural path of travel and still be accessible.

**Benches and Rest Areas**

A rest area along a path or trail is an important feature for people with mobility or balance disorders. Placement of a bench at specific intervals along a path provide a place to rest before continuing on, or returning to the start of the trail. Benches installed at scenic areas provide an opportunity for a person to appreciate the view while resting.
Benches should be placed adjacent to paths and trails in such a way that they are not a barrier to pedestrian traffic (set back approximately 600mm from the flow of traffic). The ground under and surrounding a bench should be stable and flat.

Overhead clearance of 2100mm should be maintained. However, rest areas benefit if they are set under the canopy of trees to provide shade.

The appropriate height of a bench seat is 450mm to 500mm from the ground. Armrests that run the full length of the seat provide stability for a person as he/she sits or stands. A stable back provides a comfortable place to lean against. Clear open space under the seat creates a body posture that allows the feet to be placed directly below the buttocks, which gives greater strength as the person stands.

Multiple benches in a rest area should be laid out facing one another or in an L-configuration to accommodate conversation.

A space measuring at least 850mm wide and 1200mm deep should be created beside a bench to allow a person seated in a wheelchair to rest with a person seated on the bench.

Design rest areas to include a set back of at least 600mm from the main path/trail. A space within the rest area beside the bench allows a person who uses a wheelchair to sit next to a person on the bench, or, provides the space to transfer from their wheelchair and sit on the bench.

Where possible, placing two benches at 90° to each other provides a more convenient arrangement for someone with a hearing disability to be part of the conversation.
STAIRS

The surface of stairs should be enclosed. Stairs with open risers create visual confusion for a person with vision related disabilities. For example, a person with low vision may be distracted by images that are beyond the surface of the stairs. Open risers also create a potential hazard for a person using a mobility device such as a cane or crutch that can slide through the opening and potentially damage the assistive device or injure the person using it.

Stair surfaces should be made of slip-resistant materials. Risers should transition smoothly to each tread; for example, square bull nosing with an abrupt underside creates a potential trip hazard as a person ascends the stairs.

Stairs shall be constructed with consistent height between each of the risers (distance between steps). Unexpected changes in height may cause a person to trip when his/her foot does not land where it is anticipated based on their experience with previous steps in the flight. A rise of 180mm is comfortable and can be achieved by a wide range of people regardless of age, physical ability or size if the individual. The surface of the step (tread) shall be deep enough for safe/secure foot placement. A depth of 280mm meets the requirements for the majority of the population.

Detectable warning pads at the top of stairs provide tactile cues for a person with low vision or who is blind that a drop in elevation is about to occur. Warning strips on each stair provides additional tactile and visual cues of each stair edge.

Handrails on both sides of the stairs provide a place for a person to grasp onto and provide balance. The handrails must extend by 300mm beyond the last step at both the top and bottom of the staircase.

The rise of each stair must be consistent.
A tactile indicator shall be placed at the top of a flight of stairs. The indicator is to assist a person with low vision or who is blind to identify the change in elevation. The indicator pad should be permanently fixed to the floor set back the distance of one stair tread. It should run the full width of the stairs and extend back approximately 600mm to 650mm.

Create a visual or tactile difference between the stairs and the horizontal path of travel. This can be achieved by using different materials on the stairs from the main path.

A contrasting color strip shall be included along the entire front edge of each tread. This helps to visually separate each step within the flight of stairs. Stairs that are the same color without edging blend together when viewed from above. The color yellow is vibrant and easy to identify against most other background colors. Yellow is suitable for an aging eye.

Handrails (railings) are required to assist a person by providing support for balance or mobility. See the section on Handrails.

**Ramps**

A ramp is a sloping walkway leading from one level to another and is required if the transition between the two levels is 13mm or higher. The preferred rise to run ratio for a ramp is 1:20 (e.g. 20 inch length for each inch of elevation). However, various standards reference different ratios; which usually is dependent upon the environment where they are used. Existing structures have far more physical restrictions when ramps are added as an afterthought to the construction. Where possible, a 1:12 ratio should be considered the minimum slope for interior spaces, but there are times when a steeper slope may be used.

The OBC requires ramps to have a minimum width of 900mm. A flat clear space measuring 1670mm by 1670mm of flat ground at both the top and bottom of the ramp. If the length of the ramp exceeds 9000mm, a landing shall be created to provide a flat area of rest measuring 1670mm in length and the same width of the ramp. If the ramp changes direction a landing shall be used to provide space to accommodate the turning radius (1670mm by 1670mm) required for most mobility devices.

Ramps that are not bordered by walls may require either a handrail or a raised edge, or both. The recommended height of the raised border according to the Design of Public Spaces is 50mm (CSA B-651 recommends 75mm). This helps prevent wheelchair wheels from slipping over the edge, and/
or it helps a person with a vision related disability to physically identify the edge of the ramp using a cane.

When railings are used, the railings shall be installed on both side of the ramp. This helps a person using a mobility device to use the railing to aid in moving along the length of the ramp, or as a way to keep from rolling backwards if they take a rest along the sloped section of the ramp. Additional information about the design criteria for handrails can be found below.

**Handrails/ Railings**

Round rails provide a more natural and comfortable grip. A person with limited dexterity may have difficulty holding onto a square or rectangular railing; therefore, avoid using construction 2x4’s as handrails. Regular maintenance of wooden handrails is important. A person with a disability who relies on handrails when using stairs or ramps will slide his/her hand along its surface. Cracked or splintered rails can cut or splinter into the skin of a person. Someone, for example, who has diabetes or uses blood thinners may have a severe reaction to what most people would consider a minor annoyance such as a sliver. Therefore, when selecting materials for use along trails/ walkways chose materials that are smooth and/or not affected by exposure to the weather.
Handrails are required to be on both side of ramps and stairs. This accommodates a person as he/she travels up or down the stairs and is of benefit for a person who may only have use of one hand/arm.

Railings shall be mounted between 860mm and 920mm from the ground. An extension at the top of each flight of stairs shall protrude horizontal to the floor for 300mm prior to the first step. This serves as advance warning of the change in elevation and provides time and space for a person to prepare him/herself to descend the stairs. At the bottom of each flight of stairs the handrail shall continue its slope the distance equal to one full tread and then extend an addition 300mm horizontal extension. This allows a person to gain his/her balance or breath before letting go of the railing.

Provide strong color contrast between the walls and the railings as a way of enhancing its placement for ease of grasping. This is helpful if a person needs to grab the railing unexpectedly.

**Outdoor Public Use Eating Areas**

Twenty percent (minimum of 1) of all outdoor eating spaces must be accessible. The ground surface leading to and under the tables should be level, firm and stable.

To accommodate movement around the table the areas should include a clear space of 1500mm around all sides of the table.
The appropriate height of a table should be between 710mm and 865mm from the ground. A clearance height of 680mm and 480mm deep below the table surface allows enough space for a person who uses a wheelchair to pull up and place his/her legs under the table.

Provide a variety of accessible seating options for rest, recreation and eating. Connect amenities to pathways and trails.

The average person seated in a wheelchair requires a minimum clearance of 680mm under a table/counter surface and 480mm in depth to sit comfortably.
OUTDOOR PLAY SPACES

The Design of Public Spaces standard does not provide specific requirements for creating an accessible outdoor play space. The standard does recommend that people with disabilities, specifically parents of children with disabilities be a part of any planning process to develop an accessible play space. It is important to note that at times, creating an accessible play area is for the benefit of a parent with a disability who may need access to his/her child.

A few points to consider include:

- Play spaces should have firm stable ground surrounding the play area. They should connect directly to an accessible path of travel and there should be no major change in elevation along the path into the play space unless there is an accessible ramp.

- Incorporate sensory activities that make use of tactile functioning. Use bright colors to provide visual stimulation, and include audio interaction. If the area is maintained, include fragrant plant life.

- Provide a raised play area that is accessible to a child to transfer from his/her wheelchair onto the structure. Include grab bars to assist with independent transferring on and off the space.

- Incorporate play stations that are raised at table height (760mm max from the ground) to allow a child seated in a wheelchair to reach items without having to leave his/her wheelchair. For example, a raised table that incorporates a sand box. The underside of the table must be at least 610mm from the ground and clear of all obstructions by a depth of at
least 480mm.

- In areas where safety from falls is a concern, use small wood chips to cover the ground. Small wood chips will pack down and allow a wheeled device to travel across.

Raised play stations allow a child to remain seated in his/her wheelchair and have access to some of the play activities.

Adjust the height of the table so that it is appropriate for a child.

Parking Lots

Parking lots used for general parking are required to include a minimum of one designated accessible parking space. The number of spaces depends on the total number of parking spaces within any lot. For example, a lot of 12 spaces is required to have one designated accessible space whereas, lots with 13 to 100 parking spaces must designate 4% of its parking spaces.

The location for accessible parking spaces is ideally placed near the intended service, i.e. building, eating area, beach, trail, etc. A person with a disability who uses a mobility device should not have to travel behind parked vehicles to access the main walkway from their vehicle as they (persons using wheelchairs or scooters) are less visible to drivers as they back out of parking spaces.
Signage directing visitors to accessible parking spaces assist first time visitors locate the designated parking spaces. This is important if the accessible spaces are located in an area that does not follow the natural traffic flow on the property; for example, when a parking area is designated specifically for accessible parking separate from general parking.

The Design of Public Spaces standard requires that two separate accessible parking spaces are included in public parking. Type A spaces are for people who use mobility devices and need more space for deployment of ramps or lift mechanisms. These vehicles are generally larger, such as modified vans. Type B spaces are for people who use canes, crutches, walkers and do not need extra space.

Type A parking spaces require a minimum width of 3400mm and Type B spaces require a minimum width of 2400mm. In addition, accessible parking spaces are required to have a designated access aisle running the full length of the parking space. An access aisle ensures a minimum width of 1500mm unused space is available to assist a person with a disability in getting in or out of a vehicle and to travel to the nearest accessible walkway. Two accessible parking spaces can share a single access aisle – this helps reduce the overall square footage designated for accessible parking.

Parking lots with an asphalt surface must identify the accessible parking areas with painted lines to include (1) the accessible parking space, and (2), the access aisle. Access aisles are marked with diagonal lines, which discourages drivers from parking in the space. CSA B651-12 recommends that the international symbol for accessibility (wheelchair) be painted on the parking lot surface -- approximately 1525mm by 1525mm.
Type B parking spaces are for people who use canes, crutches or walkers and do not need the extra space for the vehicle. However, Type B parking spaces also have the advantage of the 1500mm accessible aisle to ensure there is sufficient room for a person to get in and out of a vehicle and to walk safely to the nearest path or sidewalk.

Type A parking spaces are for vans for people who use mobility devices such as wheelchairs and scooters. These individuals require additional space to deploy ramps and lift mechanisms.

Signage for Type A parking spaces should be marked as “van accessible”. However, it does not prevent other vehicles from being parked in the space provided they have the accessible parking permit.
Pavement markings (signage and access aisle) can be either white or yellow. However, yellow is a stronger color for a person who is color blind or someone with an aging eye. Plus, yellow stands out more in the winter months when snow is on the ground.

Each accessible parking space must have its own vertical sign positioned in the centre of the front edge of the parking space. The sign should measure at least 300mm wide by 450mm high. The sign should have strong tonal contrast between the images and font from its background. Signs are to be mounted on a single pole at a height ranging from 1500mm to 2500mm from the ground to the middle of the sign. They should not be mounted on buildings or fences. Type A spaces should have signage identifying it is a space that is suitable for van parking.

Parking lots that are not paved should designate specific areas for vehicles used by people with disabilities. Vertical signage indicating the accessible spaces is important. Use gravel that will compact (such as crushed gravel), as this accommodates, to some extent, the use of mobility devices.

Overhead clearance of 2750mm free from tree limbs, signs and building overhangs.

**Outdoor Amenities**

**Privy (Outhouse)**

A privy will have many of the same accessible design criteria as a public washroom. This section is based on the criteria set out in the Parks Canada, Design Guidelines for Accessible Outdoor Recreation Facilities.

A free standing privy requires a minimum interior dimension of 1700mm by 1700mm with a door that swings outward. The door must have a clear opening of at least 850mm; this means there is no hardware protruding into the space. A D-shaped door handle should be installed on the outside and inside of the door. The inside door handle should be positioned near the hinge side of the door to allow a person to remain within the interior space and be able to pull the door shut. Any lock mechanism used should be a sliding lock. When choosing hardware, consider how the item would operate if the user only was able to manipulate it using a flat open hand or a closed fist.
The toilet must be positioned so that its halfway point measures between 460mm and 480mm from the side wall. On the clear side of the toilet, an unobstructed space of 900mm provides for placement of a wheelchair to accommodate transferring onto the toilet.

A horizontal grab bar should be mounted behind the toilet at a height ranging from 750mm to 850mm from the floor. In addition, an L-shaped grab bar must be mounted on the side of the toilet that is nearest to the wall. The horizontal portion of the bar should be mounted at 750mm to 850mm from the floor. The vertical portion should be placed along the wall so that it is approximately 150mm in front of the front edge of the toilet. Grab bars should not be placed on an angle as this increases the potential for a person to fall during the transfer.

The toilet tissue dispenser should be mounted at a height of 600mm from the floor and 150mm from the front edge of the toilet.

Previous versions of the Ontario Building Code permitted straight grab bars to be mounted at a 45° angle along the wall beside the toilet, however, recent changes to the code include using a grab bar that is L-shaped. This provides enhanced stability as the person transfers onto the toilet and provides a vertical hand placement to assist in pulling the individual into a standing position.
Placement of the privy should connect directly onto an accessible path of travel. There should be a smooth transition between the path and the cement pad where the privy is placed. This may require that ramp be installed or the ground altered to accommodate the smooth transition.

In order for a person seated in a wheelchair to be able to open a door (that swings towards them) there must be a flat firm surface that measures approximately 1600mm wide and 1525mm deep. This requires approximately 600mm of clear space at the side of the door opposite the hinge.

**Outdoor Trash Receptacles**

Openings into trash or recycling receptacles should be placed at a height ranging from 750mm to 900mm from the ground. Containers that have openings on the side are easier to access than containers with openings on the top.

Outdoor trash containers may require a lid to keep animals from reaching the garbage; where possible use inward swinging trash lids and avoid any designed with lids that must be lifted. A person should be able to access the receptacle using one hand.

Place trash and recycling containers along an accessible path of travel.

**Barbecue Grills and Fire Pits**

Fire pits should have a clear space of 1500mm surrounding the pit or barbecue, the ground should be firm and flat. Access to these amenities should be via an accessible pathway.

The height of a fire pit grill should be 600mm from the surrounding ground area and barbecue grills should be between 800mm and 920mm from the ground.
**Water Taps**

Taps and water spouts should be mounted at a height between 750mm and 900mm from the ground. A lever style tap control is required as it can be manipulated by using one hand and does not require a person to grasp or twist to operate.

**Docks**

Docks must be located along an accessible pathway. As with all exterior paths of travel, there must be a minimum width of 1000mm. A wooden dock must have its floor boards placed perpendicular to the main path of travel on the dock so that there is no opening greater than 20mm.

A raised edge of at least 50mm to 75mm must surround the outer edge of the dock to provide a tactile cue for a person with low vision and/or to prevent mobility devices from rolling off.

Along the walking surface of the dock only a 6mm variation in height is considered accessible. Areas that have a change in elevation between 7mm to 13mm must be bevelled along the path of the ground surrounding fire pits and barbecues should be firm and flat. A minimum clearance of 1500mm unobstructed space allows a person using a mobility device to move around without coming too close to the source of heat.
travel. When there is a change in elevation of 14mm and 200mm, the area must be sloped at a grade of 1:12 and anything over 200mm must be designed as a ramp (see section on RAMPS).

Floating docks are acceptable in areas where the water level fluctuates. Although, the maximum allowable ramp slope (1:12) should be maintained when water is at its known low level.

Where the dock is provided as an observation area, a barrier at the height of 1070mm from the surface should surround the dock. If the dock is used for fishing, the guard can be lowered to a height ranging between 810mm and 860mm. Where the dock is used as a loading zone for boats where large crowds gather (tour boats) a gate with a clear width of 850mm should be provided with a flush transition from dock to boat. Where the dock is used for smaller, personal crafts, the dock may be open on the side where the transfer will occur. A grab bar at a height between 750mm and 850mm should extend outwards beyond the edge of the dock by 450mm.
Information contained in this document is not to be considered legal advice. Always consult with your legal counsel in areas that may involve the Ontario Human Rights Code.

At the time of writing this report there are no requirements to proactively modify the built environment to become accessible to people with disabilities. However, creating an accessible Ontario is the goal of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA).

At such time as renovations or new construction is being considered please check with the latest requirements in the province of Ontario or your local jurisdiction governing such matters.

The AODA is law in Ontario. Learn how it affects your organization and understand the timelines for compliance.