



Report
Staff Report
The Corporation of the City of Brampton
2/25/2025

Date: 2020-01-28

Subject: **2024 Ontario Building Code Changes - Accessibility Updates**

Contact: Sabrina Cook, Accessibility Coordinator, City Clerk's Office

Report number: Legislative Services-2025-106

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. That the report from Sabrina Cook, Accessibility Coordinator, City Clerk's Office, to the Accessibility Advisory Committee Meeting of February 25, 2025, re: **2024 Ontario Building Code Changes - Accessibility Updates**, be received.

OVERVIEW:

- **The Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing announced a new 2024 Ontario Building Code which came into effect on January 1, 2025.**
- **The new 2024 Ontario Building Code consists of several changes to accessibility requirements.**
- **Accessibility Office staff have identified seven updates to align the City's Accessibility Design Standards with the new Ontario Building Code requirements.**

BACKGROUND:

In the spring of 2024, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing announced a new 2024 Ontario Building Code which came into effect on January 1, 2025. The new 2024 Ontario Building Code (OBC) streamlines processes for Ontarians and increases harmonization with the 2020 National Building Code of Canada. The 2024 OBC has eliminated at least 1,730 technical variations between the provincial and national requirements and includes some changes to accessibility requirements.

A number of updates to accessibility requirements have been included in the new 2024 OBC:

Section 3.8 Accessibility

- Barrier-free application (Clause 3.8.1.1 (1)(a))
- Entrances (Sentence 3.8.1.2 (1))
- Areas Requiring Barrier-Free Path of Travel (Article 3.8.2.1)
- Barrier-Free Path of Travel to Building Entrances, Exterior Passenger Loading Zones, and Access to Parking Areas (Article 3.8.2.2)
- Accessibility Signs (Article 3.8.3.1)
- Exterior Walks (Sentence 3.8.3.(1))
- Doorways and Doors (Sentences 3.8.3.3 (1), (4.1), (5))
- Ramps (Article 3.8.3.4)
- Passenger Elevating Devices (Article 3.8.3.5)
- Assistive Listening Systems (Article 3.8.3.7)
- Showers and Bathtubs (Article 3.8.3.13)
- Service Counters (Article 3.8.3.14)
- Water Bottle Filling Stations (Article 3.8.3.16a)

The City of Brampton (The City) is providing a transition period, allowing permit applications to continue under the 2012 OBC until March 31, 2025, which will help prevent unnecessary delays and confusion, allowing projects to move forward smoothly. As of April 1, 2025, all new permit applications will adhere to the new 2024 OBC requirements.

CURRENT SITUATION:

2024 OBC Accessibility Changes

The following are changes to the accessibility requirements:

1. Barrier Free Application
Clarity provided about areas which are exempt from barrier-free design requirements. Exceptions include: detached houses, semi-detached houses, houses with a secondary suite, duplexes, triplexes, townhouses, row houses, and boarding or rooming houses with fewer than eight boarders or roomers.
2. Entrances
All pedestrian entrances into a barrier-free storey of a building must be barrier-free and connect to a barrier-free exterior path of travel.
3. Areas Requiring Barrier-Free Path of Travel
Clarity provided about floor areas that are required to have a barrier-free path of travel.

4. Barrier-Free Path of Travel to Building Entrances, Exterior Passenger Loading Zones, and Access to Parking Areas:

A direct barrier-free path of travel is required between a barrier-free building entrance to a designated barrier-free parking area, to an exterior passenger loading zone, and to a public thoroughfare.

5. Accessibility Signs:

Signs must be installed to indicate the location of barrier-free entrances, ramps, exterior passenger loading zones, barrier-free washrooms and showers, barrier-free elevators, barrier-free parking spaces, and to assistive listening systems or adaptive technologies. Signs must also include the international symbol of access or the international symbol of access for hearing loss and appropriate graphic or textural information, and tactile signs must have braille and tactile characters in accordance with CSA B651 standard "Accessible Design for the Built Environment".

6. Exterior Walkways:

Exterior walkways that are part of a barrier-free path of travel must have at least 1600 mm wide surface of a different texture to that surrounding it.

7. Doorways and Doors:

Every doorway located in a barrier-free path of travel must have a clear width of at least 850 mm. Every door that provides a barrier-free path of travel through a barrier-free entrance, including a vestibule, shall be equipped with an automated door opener, and doors equipped with a self-closing device shall be equipped with an automated door opener in locations where the doors are located in a barrier-free path of travel between the entrance of the building and the entrance doors to suites or rooms served by a public corridor or a corridor used by the public.

8. Ramps:

Ramps must have a minimum width of at least 1000 mm between handrails, and have a level area of at least 1700 mm by 1700 mm at the top and bottom of the ramps.

9. Passenger Elevating Devices:

Passenger elevating devices that are located in a barrier-free path of travel must have specific clear floor space and clear width entry doors and gates measurements. Clear floor space must be not less than 1500 mm long by 1000 mm wide. Door width must be not less than 850 mm in the open position if located on the short side of the passenger elevating device or be not less than 1000 mm in the open position if located at either end of the long side of the passenger elevating device.

10. Assistive Listening Systems:

At least one service counter is to be equipped with an assistive listening system.

11. Showers and Bathtubs:

At least one universal dressing and shower room is to be provided where showering facilities are provided.

12. Service Counters:

At least one section of the service counter is to be barrier-free and meet the following requirements: be not less than 800 mm long centered over a knee space conforming to Clause (c), have a surface not more than 865 mm above the floor, and when forward facing interaction with a person or a device is required, have a knee space underneath it that is not less than 800 mm wide by not less than 685 mm high by not less than 485 mm deep.

13. Water Bottle Filling Stations:

At least one water bottle filling station must be equipped with controls that activate automatically and should be located along the barrier-free path of travel.

Additional information is available at: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/2024-ontario-building-code>.

City of Brampton Updates

Accessibility Office staff reviewed the updated accessibility requirements in the 2024 OBC and have identified a number of updates required in the City's Accessibility Technical Standards. These updates will ensure that the City's accessibility design standards continue to meet or exceed the OBC requirements. The Accessibility Technical Standards document is currently being updated and will include the following changes:

- Clarity on where automated door openers are required;
- Clarity on where accessibility signage is required;
- A level area of at least 1700 mm by 1700 mm at the top and bottom of ramps;
- Service counters to have at least one assistive listening system in each location;
- Water bottle filling stations to have at least one be equipped with automated controls;
- Depth of knee space for accessible service counters to align with the OBC requirements; and
- Clarity on clear floor space for elevators/passenger elevating devices.

Staff anticipates that the updated Technical Standards will be published later this year; the Accessibility Advisory Committee will be informed once published.

Accessibility Office staff will use the 2024 OBC requirements when reviewing and advising on exterior accessibility of development/site plan applications.

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications: n/a

STRATEGIC FOCUS AREA:

This report achieves the Government & Leadership strategic focus area by ensuring that the City is committed to recognizing and removing existing barriers and enhancing and improving accessibility. Equitable access to City services, facilities, and goods is essential in providing increased opportunities for all residents of Brampton.

CONCLUSION:

Based on the new 2024 Ontario Building Code requirements for accessibility, City staff have made several changes to existing requirements in the Accessibility Technical Standards (design standards), in order to ensure alignment with the new regulations. Staff will continue using the Ontario Building Code, the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, and the Accessibility Technical Standards when reviewing and advising on City projects and development applications.

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