



Region of Waterloo
INTERNATIONAL
AIRPORT

Airport
Accessibility 2026 Progress Report

Region of Waterloo International Airport
1-4881 Fountain Street North
Breslau, Ontario
N0B 1M0

May 2026

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General

Contact

The Manager, Regulatory Affairs and Administration oversees accessibility-related passenger requests and issues at the airport and coordinates internally to ensure those requests are addressed. Feedback can be provided as identified below.

Feedback Process

The Region of Waterloo International Airport (YKF) invites feedback on the plan, or feedback on any barriers encountered during your journey. Feedback can be provided anonymously.

If you have any feedback associated with accessibility; wish to request an alternate format of the accessibility plan; or, want an alternate format of the description of the feedback process, please contact us directly as outlined below:

Email: regulatoryaffairs@regionofwaterloo.ca

Website: [Submit a Customer Feedback](#)

Phone: 519-575-4781 or Toll free 1-866-648-2256.

Deaf or Hard of Hearing (TTY): 519-575-4608.

If you would prefer to contact us in writing, please write to:

Region of Waterloo International Airport
1-4881 Fountain Street North
Breslau, Ontario, Canada
NOB 1M0

If you are at the Airport, you can visit us at our information desk located near the check-in area inside the main terminal building.

Please note that we will acknowledge receipt of feedback in the same way it was received, other than anonymous feedback.

2026 Progress

Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)

YKF uses digital tools and technology to help provide a barrier-free experience.

Goal	Status
<p>Ensure that social media and the airport website continue to be updated with accessibility in mind, to ensure that we meaningfully engage with members of the community with a barrier-free approach.</p>	<p>Completed.</p> <p>The Region of Waterloo’s Communications team ensures that social media and the airport website are accessible.</p> <p>Some members of the airport team will be taking new website training, which includes accessibility.</p> <p>The website underwent a redesign with accessibility being one key consideration.</p> <p>Website redesign completed and implemented in May 2026. Accessibility Information is far more prominent in the updated design. Reference Figure 1 and Figure 2.</p> <p>Target completion: August 2026 Completion: May 2026</p>
<p>Partner with airlines to ensure adequate visual messaging is provided on video screens.</p>	<p>In Progress.</p> <p>We have upgraded our gate information displays to allow for visual messaging. Airline training is in progress for visual messaging.</p> <p>A pilot program has been started with <i>Deaf AI</i> to explore implementation of a digital accessibility tool that</p>

	<p>provides real time sign language interpretation of boarding announcements on our gate screens.</p> <p>Target completion: July 2026</p>
<p>Investigate higher quality accessible parking payment options.</p>	<p>Completed.</p> <p>No solution identified but we will continue to work with other airports through the CAC to determine if there are viable solutions being developed and implemented at other airports that may fit YKF's needs.</p> <p>Completion: April 2026</p>
<p>Investigate the deployment of hearing loops.</p>	<p>Completed.</p> <p>As a result of investigating hearing loops, we proceeded with a trial installation at three locations in the airport terminal building in March 2025.</p>
<p>Public announcements can be provided audibly, and the televisions screens/Flight Information Display System (FIDS) can provide a scrolling text banner to provide visual messages.</p>	<p>In Progress.</p> <p>We have completed the upgrade to our public announcement system to allow for audio announcements throughout the airport terminal. The upgrade is completed to allow visual paging on our information displays. Training is in progress with airlines.</p> <p>Target completion: July 2026</p>

Communication, Other Than ICT

YKF has strategies to ensure respectful, accessible communications with persons with disabilities.

Goal	Status
<p>Investigate deploying pre-recorded messaging in the terminal building.</p>	<p>In Progress.</p> <p>Public announcement system upgraded to allow for audio announcements throughout the airport terminal.</p> <p>We have received updated audio files from the airlines, adding French, and have had challenges with the IT integration. Target completed delayed as a result.</p> <p>Target completion: September 2026</p>
<p>Work with airlines to ensure proper voice communication techniques over public announcement systems.</p>	<p>Completed.</p> <p>YKF installed a new microphone system, which was effective at eliminating feedback. The new system has addressed any issues with unclear verbal communication over the public announcement system and is considered to be effective.</p>

Procurement of Goods, Services, and Facilities

When procuring goods and implementing new services or opening new facilities, YKF ensures that the process remains respectful of and accessible to persons with disabilities.

Goal	Status
Monitor projects to ensure that the Region’s accessible procurement guidelines are followed.	May 2027
Provide CAC Accessibility training to all personnel contracted by YKF (Security, custodial, vendors)	<p>Completed.</p> <p>The training is integrated into our LMS and is launched to all companies contracted by the RMOW. Airlines have their own training, but this is launched to them as part of their onboarding at YKF. Completion: December 2025.</p>

Design and Delivery of Programs and Services

When designing and delivering new programs and services, YKF ensures that the process remains respectful and accessible to persons with disabilities.

Goal	Target Completion
<p>Investigate incorporating therapy dog service.</p>	<p>Completed.</p> <p>We reviewed and determined that the airport is not busy enough to warrant therapy dogs at this time. We will review this again as passenger volumes rise and we have more consistent passenger traffic.</p> <p>When requested, we encourage individuals and organizations to bring service animals to the airport for familiarity tours. This has rolled out as an ad hoc service, provided upon request. Most inquiries are for familiarization tours for groups or organizations that train dogs. We typically conduct these twice a year.</p>
<p>Investigate implementing the Sunflower lanyard program.</p>	<p>In Progress.</p> <p>Update for 2026:</p> <p>Previously identified as completed after identifying in the 2025 progress report: <i>“We have investigated the program and have chosen to defer implementation until more inquiries are received or demand from the public warrants roll out of the program by airport staff.”</i></p> <p>However, organization-wide, the Region of Waterloo has decided to roll out the Sunflower lanyard program across all modes of service, including the airport. Once formal approval is</p>

	<p>given by municipal senior leadership, the airport will be the first department to launch the program.</p> <p>Target completion: September 2026.</p>
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Transportation

YKF is committed to ensuring that transportation is accessible.

Goal	Status
<p>Investigate identifying the curbside edges of terminal exterior sidewalks with yellow paint to improve visibility of transit areas and the leading edge of pedestrian paths along vehicular routes;</p>	<p>Completed.</p> <p>Curbside and sidewalk painting was completed adding visual contrasts with yellow paint to identify pathways and curbs.</p> <p>Completion: September 2025.</p>
<p>Designating pedestrian pathways between accessible parking stalls and lobby entrances using cross-hatching and colour contrasting for increased safety and easier wayfinding.</p>	<p>In Progress.</p> <p>Implementation has begun. Operational challenges associated with slipperiness of paint are being worked through.</p> <p>A groundside redesign is being investigated, which could change or delay implementation.</p> <p>Target completion: September 2026.</p>
<p>Explore the use of stop signs, paint markings, speed bumps, and lighting to more clearly define passenger pathways and crossings from parking lots to the terminal.</p>	<p>Completed.</p> <p>Update for 2026:</p> <p>Although already identified as completed in the 2025 progress report, additional work has been completed.</p> <p>Temporary speed bumps installed in summer 2025 were effective and a more permanent speed bump solution has been installed as of May 2026.</p> <p>Completed: May 2026.</p>

Built Environment

The YKF Air Terminal Building was built to municipal, provincial, and national building code standards. Particular to accessibility, the terminal was designed to be compliant with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) legislation, which was a precursor to the Federal legislation that is applicable to Transportation Service Providers (terminal building).

Goal	Status
<p>Incorporate accessibility practices and principles into the optimization and redesign of any YKF buildings</p>	<p>In Progress.</p> <p>Ongoing.</p> <p>Target completion: December 2026</p>
<p>Continue auditing YKF facilities for accessibility, prioritizing facilities with highest occupancy and public visitors.</p>	<p>Completed.</p> <p>External gap analysis conducted by Rick Hansen Foundation (RHF) in 2024. This external gap analysis is considered a completion of the initial audit of YKF facilities for accessibility.</p> <p>Internal checklists have been developed.</p>
<p>Investigate the construction or provision of sensory areas or quiet spaces.</p>	<p>In Progress.</p> <p>Engaged with the CAC and National Research Council as the NRC is doing a project on sensory spaces in airports and will be providing recommendation back to the CAC.</p> <p>Target completion: December 2026</p>

Provisions of CTA Accessibility-Related Regulations

The following regulations made by the CTA, apply to YKF:

[Accessible Canada Act \(ACA\)](#), Part 4, Accessibility Plans – Regulations Under the Canada Transportation Act, and Regulations under the ACA;

[Accessible Canada Regulations \(ACR\)](#) – Accessibility Plans;

[Accessible Transportation Planning and Reporting Regulations \(ATPRR\)](#) – Accessibility Plans;

[Canada Transportation Act \(CTA\)](#) PART V Transportation of Persons with Disabilities;

[Accessible Transportation for Persons with Disabilities Regulations \(ATPDR\)](#) Part 1 and Part 4 Divisions 1 and 2.

Feedback Information

We have not received any feedback via our website. We have engaged in-person for verbal feedback.

Consultation

YKF continues to engage with organizations from the community and throughout Canada that support those with disabilities, to better inform our day-to-day ability to meet the needs of travellers, and to help set realistic and meaningful goals.

Feedback from travellers was used to validate the measures already taken by YKF and to inform future goals.

CAC Accessibility Training received by all YKF staff incorporated consultation with people with lived experience, as well as instruction from those with lived experience, to ensure that the training was properly informed.

Goal	Target Completion
Pursue Rick Hansen Foundation Accessibility Certification	<p>Complete.</p> <p>Achieved Rick Hansen Foundation Accessibility Certified Gold.</p> <p>Completion: December 2025.</p>
Invite the Grand River Accessibility Advisory Committee (GRAAC) to complete a peer review of Airport facilities	<p>Completed.</p> <p>Attended the GRAAC winter 2026 meeting and presented on accessibility at the airport. We engaged with multiple individuals with lived experience and personally invited them to the airport for a tour. We intend to continue to engage GRAAC on a cyclical basis.</p> <p>Completion: March 2026</p>
Conduct an accessibility engagement survey on EngageWR	<p>In Progress.</p> <p>A YKF passenger survey was launched with added questions specific to accessibility. The survey is monitored for any feedback</p>

	<p>coming in on the questions added questions.</p> <p>Completion: April 2026</p>
<p>Investigate opportunities to partner with accessibility focussed organizations</p>	<p>In Progress.</p> <p>YKF will have a booth at the National AccessAbility conference in Kitchener on June 1-2, 2026.</p> <p>Hosted tours for local organizations.</p> <p>This will remain in progress until the end of the progress report term.</p> <p>Target completion: December 2026</p>
<p>Investigate implementing a Ready, Set, Fly program for passengers with physical and invisible disabilities</p>	<p>We conduct personalized tours upon request and have formalized the program on our website.</p> <p>Completion: May 2026</p>

The airport has tried to reach out to local organizations to engage in meaningful discussion and to collaborate with the travelling public and those with lived experience. Consultation has consisted of outreach and participation in events/activities. The following is an itemization of consultation activities and results over the past reporting period:

- Feb 18, 2026 – held annual accessibility committee meeting with terminal tenants. The Terminal Working Group includes leadership representatives from airport partners, including Canadian Air Transport Security Authority, Canada Border Services Agency, and various airlines. Questions were asked about their accessibility priorities and what they see as key challenges. Feedback received from the committee included lighting on the main road and hatching on pedestrian walkways being slippery in wet conditions. These are under review with our construction team.

- March 26, 2026 – attended Grand River Accessibility Advisory Committee (GRACC) meeting. GRACC is a cross-disability municipal advisory committee whose members advise on accessibility. The Region of Waterloo Members are chosen for their experience in the field of disability and are people with lived experience with disability issues. YKF presented our Airport Accessibility Plan and gathered feedback from the committee on opportunities at the airport. We have planned an upcoming tour, specifically to gather more feedback from select committee members with respect to navigation through the airport and self-service check-in. Estimated completion Oct 30, 2026.
- YKF participates in the Canadian Airport Council (CAC) Accessibility Working Group by attending monthly calls and participating in-person at least once a year. The last in-person meeting we attended, was in Ottawa in Fall 2025. The CAC Accessibility Working Group is a forum for all member airports to discuss accessibility initiatives and collaboratively discuss accessibility at airports across the country.
- YKF has reviewed the results of the Rick Hansen Foundation audit report to look for recommendations to continue to improve accessibility at YKF. Paint marking and hearing loops are examples of changes made. Window decals are in the design phase to improve visual contrast in some areas.
- April 13, 2026 – A YKF Passenger Survey was launched this spring with questions added to specifically address accessibility at YKF. The survey is monitored for any feedback. Questions asked, specifically related to accessibility include:
 - Do you or someone you travel with have accessibility needs?
 - Have you or someone you travel with ever faced a barrier when travelling through YKF? If yes, please describe the barrier and what support would have been helpful to navigate or remove that barrier.A rating was also requested from passengers as it related to the ease of arranging curbside assistance.

There have not been a significant number of responses to the survey since launch.

- Since publishing the Airport’s Accessibility Action Plan and Feedback Process, people have provided feedback via email, phone and in-person and we have tracked the feedback received. In 2025 we received eight comments/questions. Most of the request received were inquiries about the Sunflower program, wheelchair service from the gate to aircraft, curbside assistance, and parking.

The Region of Waterloo is proceeding with implementing the Sunflower Lanyard program.

- YKF annually hosts National Service Dogs (NSD), who train for NSD, ADS, Lions Foundation and K9Lifelines. We partner with these organizations, who use our facility for their puppies in training to experience the sights and sounds of an airport and prepare them for their future careers.

- o May 6, 2026, tour and feedback session NSD.
 - o Aug 6, 2025, tour and feedback session NSD.
- YKF hosts annual tours for groups that have individual with diverse needs, both physical and hidden, including:
 - o Oct 2025 annual tour and feedback sessions Community Living Cambridge, Sunnyside, Westhill Retirement Center
 - o May 2025 Silver heights Public School Special Education class. Tour included a review of our accessibility features in the airport, and we ask that they provide us their feedback as we move through the terminal spaces.
 - o Sept 2024 Tour and feedback session for the Young Onset Dementia Association for young seniors. We plan to conduct the tour and feedback session again in 2026.
- On multiple occasions, we hosted an elected representative with lived experience, including:
 - o Dec 2025 tour and feedback session where she identified opportunities including improvements to accessible bathrooms and backrest on toilets. YKF and the CAC will be consulting with her specific to barriers she has identified in her travels in Canada.
- YKF will have a booth at the National Accessibility trade show hosted by Independent Living Waterloo Region (ILWR) in June 2026. Our goal is to better connect with persons with lived experience who have travelled through our airport and to consult with them to understand their needs and priorities.
- March 2026 participated in a podcast with AMI Accessible Media INC, a Canadian broadcaster based in Toronto, dedicated to creating content that speaks to the experiences of people with disabilities to discuss what we are doing for accessibility in YKF.
- Implementing a *Ready, Set, Fly* program for passengers with physical and invisible disabilities:
- YKF has always accepted requests for personalized tours for persons with disabilities. In 2025 one family with an autistic child was given the tour. In May 2026 we formally lunched the program on our website as a traveller rehearsal program.