



Policy

Section: Choose an item.

Policy: Beach Access Stair Policy

By-Law: Click here to enter text.

Date: Click here to enter a date.

Revision: Click here to enter text.

Coverage:

This Policy applies to all municipal parks, waterfront areas, public access points, and maintenance operations, covering all municipal stairs, ramps, platforms, lookout structures, and pathways leading to Lake Huron beaches.

Policy Statement:

The Township of Huron-Kinloss provides safe beach accesses with durable, and environmentally responsible standards for the construction, inspection, maintenance, repair, closure, and replacement of municipal beach access stair structures along the Lake Huron shoreline.

The Township of Huron-Kinloss promotes public safety, protecting infrastructure, and addressing risks related to bluff instability, erosion, fluctuating water levels, and severe weather. Any non-compliant existing stair structures will be removed.

The Township of Huron-Kinloss is environmentally conscious in providing natural pathways versus constructed infrastructure whenever possible utilizing low slope "S" shaped natural paths to prevent erosion on slopes and preventing sand migration off the beaches.

Legislative Authority:

The following legislative authorities to consider include:

1. Municipal Act, 2001 > Core legal basis for municipal policy and by-law powers.
2. Occupiers' Liability Act > Creates duty of care for safety and maintenance.
3. Ontario Building Code (OBC) > Where structures are permanent and constructed
4. Conservation Authorities Act > Natural hazard and shoreline regulation.
5. Accessibility Regulation (AODA) > Design of Outdoor Public Spaces technical guidance document
6. Planning Act & Provincial Policy Statement > Policy consistency with hazard and heritage planning.

Contents:

Director of Community Services / Public Works: Approves closures, major repairs, reconstruction, and budgets, site locations, and coordination of property-owner-initiated access requests.

Facility and Parks Supervisor: Oversees inspections, maintenance, documentation, staff training, annual tree trimming.

Maintenance Staff: Perform inspections, repairs, hazard reporting, tree trimming, and installation of closure signage.

External Agencies: Conservation Authority and Coastal Engineers as required.

1. All municipal beach access stairs shall be:

- a) Constructed of galvanized steel and supported on helical anchor foundations.
- b) Located away from street intersections, if possible, to minimize pedestrian and vehicle conflicts.
- c) Inspected, maintained, and closed when conditions present a safety risk.
- d) Managed with adjacent pathway trees trimmed annually to prevent obstruction and maintain clear sightlines.
- e) If an AODA ramp structure is installed then an Accessible portable washroom, and parking space is also assessed.

2. Additionally, if a local property owner requests a beach access stair to be constructed west of Boiler Beach Road as an extra access point, then the following process applies:

- a) The property owner must submit a request to the Director of Community Services and Director of Public Works and upon review will provide a report to Council to support or deny the request.
- b) If approved the property owner must pay all construction and any other associated costs upfront to the Municipality and enter into an agreement for the following (see C, D, E)
- c) The Municipality will hire and pay the contractor for construction.
- d) Upon completion, the stairs become the property of the Municipality and are included in the municipal inventory for inspections and maintenance.
- e) Any future modifications or repairs to the stair will be billed back to the residential property that initially paid for the construction, Otherwise stairs will be removed

Municipal staff shall follow standardized inspection, maintenance, and documentation procedures while complying with relevant building codes, accessibility standards, conservation authority rules, and environmental best practices.