



Grand River Accessibility Advisory Committee (GRAAC) Agenda

Thursday, January 22, 2026, 1:30 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Region of Waterloo - Gaukel Room 110

150 Frederick Street

Kitchener, ON N2G 4J3

The Grand River Accessibility Advisory Committee shall assist the participating municipalities in fulfilling the purpose of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act by providing vision and advice regarding the removal of barriers.

People interested in participating in this meeting can email Administrative Coordinator, Janis McKenzie at Janis.McKenzie@kitchener.ca. Please refer to the delegation section on the agenda below for the registration deadline. Written comments received will be circulated to the Committee prior to the meeting and will form part of the public record.

Accessible formats and communication supports are available upon request. If you require assistance to take part in a city meeting or event, please call 519-741-2345 or TTY 1-866-969-9994

Coordinating Municipality - Kitchener

Co-Chairs - Tamara Cooper, Alyssa Clelland

Pages

1. Commencement

1.1 Land Acknowledgement

We would like to begin by acknowledging the land on which we gather today, recognizing that the land in which we gather today is the traditional territory of the Haudenosaunee, Anishnawbe and Chonnonton peoples. We would also like to acknowledge the enduring knowledge, presence and deep-rooted traditions of the First Nations, Metis and Inuit who continue to enrich our community to this day.

2. Minutes for Approval

3. Disclosures of Pecuniary Interests

Members of Council and members of the City's local boards/committees are required to file a written statement when they have a conflict of interest. If a conflict is declared, please visit www.kitchener.ca/conflict to submit your written form.

4. Delegations

Pursuant to Council's Procedural By-law, delegations are permitted to address the Committee for a maximum of five (5) minutes. All Delegations must register by 10:00 a.m. on January 22nd, 2026, in order to participate in the meeting.

5. Discussion Items

5.1 Roll Call - Introductions

5.2 Co-Chairs Election 15 m

5.3 The Built Environment Sub Committee Report 20 m

5.4 City of Waterloo - Multi Year Accessibility Plan 15 m
Amy Ross, Accessibility Advocate, City of Waterloo will present on this matter

6. Recess and Reconvene

7. Discussion Items Continued

7.1 North Dumfries 2025 Annual Accessibility Report 15 m 3
Ashley Good, Clerk, Township of North Dumfries will present on this matter.

7.2 Website Revitalization - Region of Waterloo 5 m
Deb Bergey, Manager and Jennifer Walker, Program Manager, Resident Experience, Strategy, and Communications will present on this matter.

7.3 Assisted Waste Collection - Region of Waterloo 20 m 10
Ann-Marie Weber, Supervisor Contracts and Service, Waste Management; Melissa Chaves, Coordinator Contracts and Services, Engineering and Environmental Services will present on this matter.

8. Information Items

9. Adjournment

Please send regrets to Janis McKenzie - janis.mckenzie@kitchener.ca

Township of North Dumfries 2025 Annual Accessibility Status Report



The TOWNSHIP of
NORTH DUMFRIES

Adopted by Council:

Accessible formats are available upon request.

Background and Purpose

In December 2001, the *Ontarians with Disabilities Act* (ODA) was passed by the provincial government to improve access and opportunities for persons with disabilities. Under the legislation, all municipalities, with a population greater than 10,000, are required to establish an accessibility advisory committee. In addition, the legislation stipulates that the majority of committee members must self-identify as a person with a disability. As such, the Grand River Accessibility Advisory Committee (GRAAC) was established by Regional Council in 2003. This Joint Committee of the seven area municipalities (the Townships of North Dumfries, Wellesley, Wilmot, and Woolwich and the Region of Waterloo, the Cities of Kitchener and Waterloo) provides vision and direction to Members of Council and staff as the participating municipalities develop plans to remove barriers and improve accessibility for people with disabilities.

In June 2005, the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* (AODA) was enacted into law. The Act is more comprehensive and prescriptive than the ODA and its requirements apply to the public, private, and not-for-profit sectors. The Act included the development of accessibility standards, compliance deadlines, and administrative penalties for non-compliance.

The Integrated Accessibility Standard Regulation (IASR) was created as part of the AODA. These standards are rules that businesses and organizations in Ontario have to follow to identify, remove and prevent barriers so that people with disabilities have more opportunity to participate in everyday life.

The IASR is broken down into five standards:

- General Requirements
- Information and Communication
- Employment
- Transit
- Design of Public Spaces

The purpose of this status report is to make the public aware of the Township of North Dumfries's progress with regard to our 2022-2026 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan. This plan will provide a summary of key accomplishments that were made towards inclusions in 2025, and look ahead to 2026. The Township of North Dumfries's 2022-2026 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan can be found on our website (www.northdumfries.ca). Accessible formats are available upon request.

The Township of North Dumfries is dedicated to promoting a barrier-free Township for employees, citizens and all who live, work, visit, and invest in the Township. With this plan, the Township is proud to present its findings and report on the development of strategies to remove and prevent future barriers for people with disabilities and the aging population.

The 2025 Annual Status Report will be made available on the Township's website at www.northdumfries.ca. It will also be provided to anyone who requests a copy, in addition to providing accessible formats upon request.

The Township of North Dumfries

As the Township of North Dumfries continues to grow, Council and staff are committed to creating and maintaining an accessible and inclusive community for all residents.

The Township of North Dumfries consists of primarily rural areas, in addition to a variety of small villages including Ayr, Clyde, Branchton, Reidsville and Roseville. The population of the Township of North Dumfries is approximately 11,000. The Council of the Township of North Dumfries is governed by a Mayor and four Ward Councilors.

In order to meet the needs of the Township's growing population, now, and in the future, Council has established a Corporate Strategic Plan for the 2024 – 2026 time period.

The Vision Statement for the Strategic Plan – North Dumfries, a growing and welcoming rural community. The Mission Statement – Serving our community to enhance the quality of life in North Dumfries.

The Core Values and Behaviour as outlined in the Corporate Strategic Plan is the value statement of being inclusive. The Township as it makes decisions and conducts its activities will embrace the principle of *inclusiveness*. In this respect the Township will commit to welcome, listen, learn and understand, and, foster an environment of respect and a sense of belonging for all.

Organizational Structure

The Township of North Dumfries is comprised of four Departments: Chief Administrative Officer, Corporate Services, Development Services, Leisure and Community Services; and Engineering and Public Works.

Grand River Accessibility Advisory Committee (GRAAC)

The Grand River Accessibility Advisory Committee (GRAAC) is an advisory committee serving the Region of Waterloo and the respective Councils of the Cities of Kitchener and Waterloo and the Townships of North Dumfries, Wellesley, Wilmot and Woolwich. Staff representatives of each municipality participate in a joint recruitment process annually to fill GRAAC vacancies and each Council passes a resolution to appoint new members. GRAAC is made up of between 11 to 15 volunteers and/or agency representatives and advises the councils on accessibility issues including their annual accessibility plans.

Township of North Dumfries GRAAC staff representative:

Ashley Good, Clerk
106 Earl Thompson Road
Ayr, Ontario N0B 1E0
Phone 519-632-8800
agood@northdumfries.ca

Highlights of 2025

- ❖ A retrofit of a barrier free lift was installed at the Ayr Community Centre. This allows patrons with the ability to utilize the lift independently.
- ❖ The Township launched a new corporate website that aligns with AODA elements. Clerks Office undertook training with all staff who prepare reports for inclusion in the Council agenda to ensure documents being uploaded to the website are aligned with accessible document standards.
- ❖ Purchased park furniture for Jim Schmid Memorial Park, Cowan Park and Oakwoods Park, that included picnic tables with accessible seating, benches with arms, and concrete pads that are accessible. This is ongoing into 2026 as well.
- ❖ A redesign of Browns Community Subdivision Park was undertaken that included an accessible path around the park, resting benches around the path, shade and picnic tables with accessible seating and an accessible multi-purpose pad.
- ❖ Victoria Park playground equipment was replaced.
- ❖ Refurbishment of the walking path from Stanley Street to Watson Pond. This project included the removal of old asphalt surface, replacing, and extending the handrail, and applying 50 metres of new asphalt surface on the trail.
- ❖ Installation at Browns Community Subdivision Park, that included resting benches around the path picnic tables with accessible seating and an accessible multi-purpose pad/pickleball court.
- ❖ Sidewalk improvements were undertaken to meet minimum maintenance standards, reduce tripping hazards and improve mobility. The 2025 budget funded approximately 625 metres of sidewalk.
- ❖ The Township service standards include snow clearing and salting of the full municipal sidewalk system (approximately 30 km) within the

community. The Township has taken the service inhouse and is completing the work with our own forces to ensure a reliable and consistent service.

- ❖ LED Streetlight replacement of the existing top post fixtures was undertaken to improve sidewalk visibility.

Looking Ahead to 2026

The Township of North Dumfries is committed to eliminating barriers and improving accessibility for persons with disabilities in a manner that respects dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity. The Township recognizes the diverse needs of all our residents and customers and will respond by striving to provide services and facilities that are accessible to all. The Township is committed to meeting the needs of people with disabilities in a timely manner, and will do so by preventing and removing barriers to accessibility and meeting accessibility requirements.

- ❖ Play equipment will continue to be reviewed and replaced on a yearly basis, as required. Recommendations are made by staff for which play structures are priority for the following year. For 2026, the replacement of the playground equipment at Hilltop Park is expected.
- ❖ Purchasing park furniture for Township parks, that includes picnic tables with accessible seating, benches with arms, and concrete pads that are accessible.
- ❖ Improvements are scheduled to enhance the audio/visual systems at the Township Council Chambers to better serve residents and improve meeting accessibility.
- ❖ Introduce e-commerce on the Township website to allow members of the public to pay without having to attend the Township Office.
- ❖ Design and Construction of a Pump Track at Schmidt Park is expected in 2026. The project will include any accessible elements, where possible.
- ❖ A multi-purpose court will be constructed in Clyde Park that will include accessible stone paths to the courts and playground, as well as some shade trees.

- ❖ Improvements are scheduled to be completed to Campbell Trail that will improve the usability of the trail.
- ❖ Net Zero Arena construction will begin for the North Dumfries Community Complex (NDCC) twin pad project in 2026. This addition will include a new dedicated washroom on the second-floor expansion to service the upper-level seating and multi purpose rooms.
- ❖ Improvements to the exterior of the Ayr Community Centre (ACC), including improved parking.
- ❖ The Township service standards will continue to include snow clearing and salting of the full municipal sidewalk system (approximately 30 km) within the community.
- ❖ The Township has budgeted \$90,000 (pending capital budget approval) for ongoing sidewalk repairs and upgrades.
- ❖ Provided ongoing training to current and new staff to include AODA training, Accessible Customer Service and Ontario Human Rights Code as it relates to people with disabilities.
- ❖ Annually, staff will continue to review policies and procedures respecting accessibility, for updates and improvements.
- ❖ Continue to seek GRAAC's input on matters where required.

Conclusion

Council and staff continue to work towards creating a universally accessible community by systematically removing barriers for persons with disabilities.

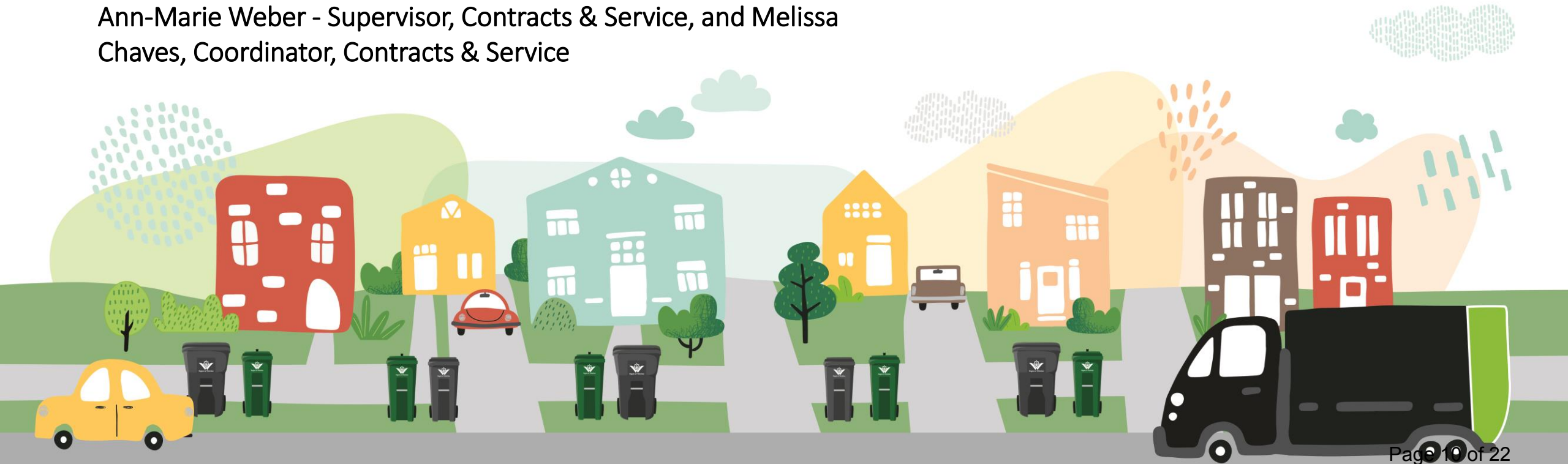
Feedback on the accessibility of Township facilities, programs, and goods and services is always welcome. Please contact the Clerks Office to provide any feedback.

Let's roll!

Countdown to Carts



Presenters from Waste Management Division:
Ann-Marie Weber - Supervisor, Contracts & Service, and Melissa
Chaves, Coordinator, Contracts & Service



Agenda

- Overview of cart-based collection
- Overview of Inclusive Services
 - Assisted Waste Collection
 - Medical Exemption Program
- Process improvements
- Question Period



What is cart-based collection?

- Cart-based collection is when the driver uses a mechanical arm on the side of the truck to lift and empty carts, without having to exit the vehicle
- This requires specific cart sizes
- This will only apply to garbage and organics
- Bulky items and yard waste will continue to be manually collected



Benefits of cart-based collection

- Keeps the Region competitive in relation to contract bids
- More ergonomically friendly
- More stability
- Reduces litter from windy days and pests
- Creates consistency at the curbside



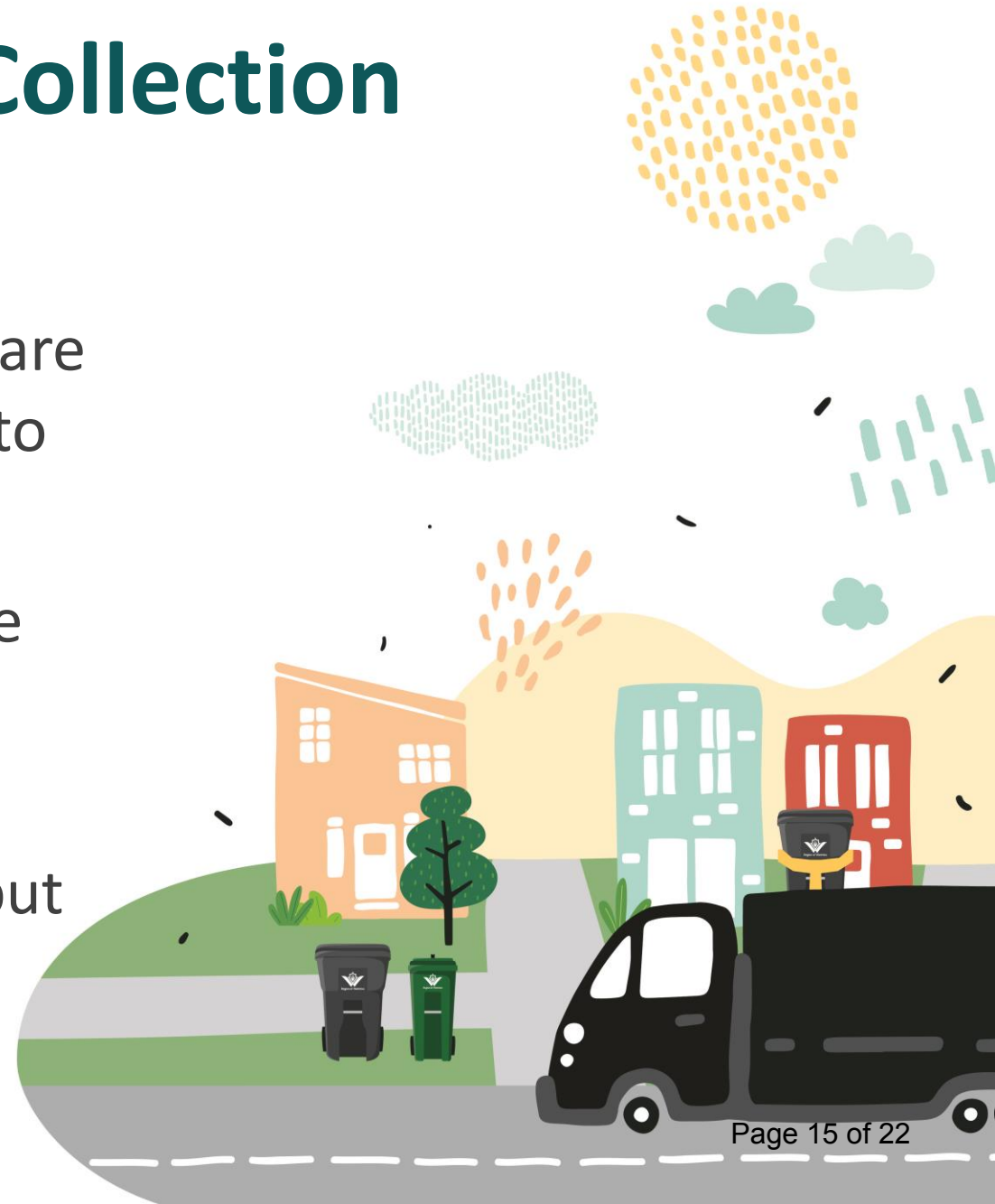
Waste Managements Inclusive services

1. Assisted Waste Collection Service
2. Medical Exemption Program



What is the Assisted Waste Collection Service?

- To assist those with a disability where they are unable to bring their garbage and organics to the curb
- Collection contractors will bring the garbage and organics material from a designated outdoor area to the curb
- After collection, the empty containers are put back in the designated area.



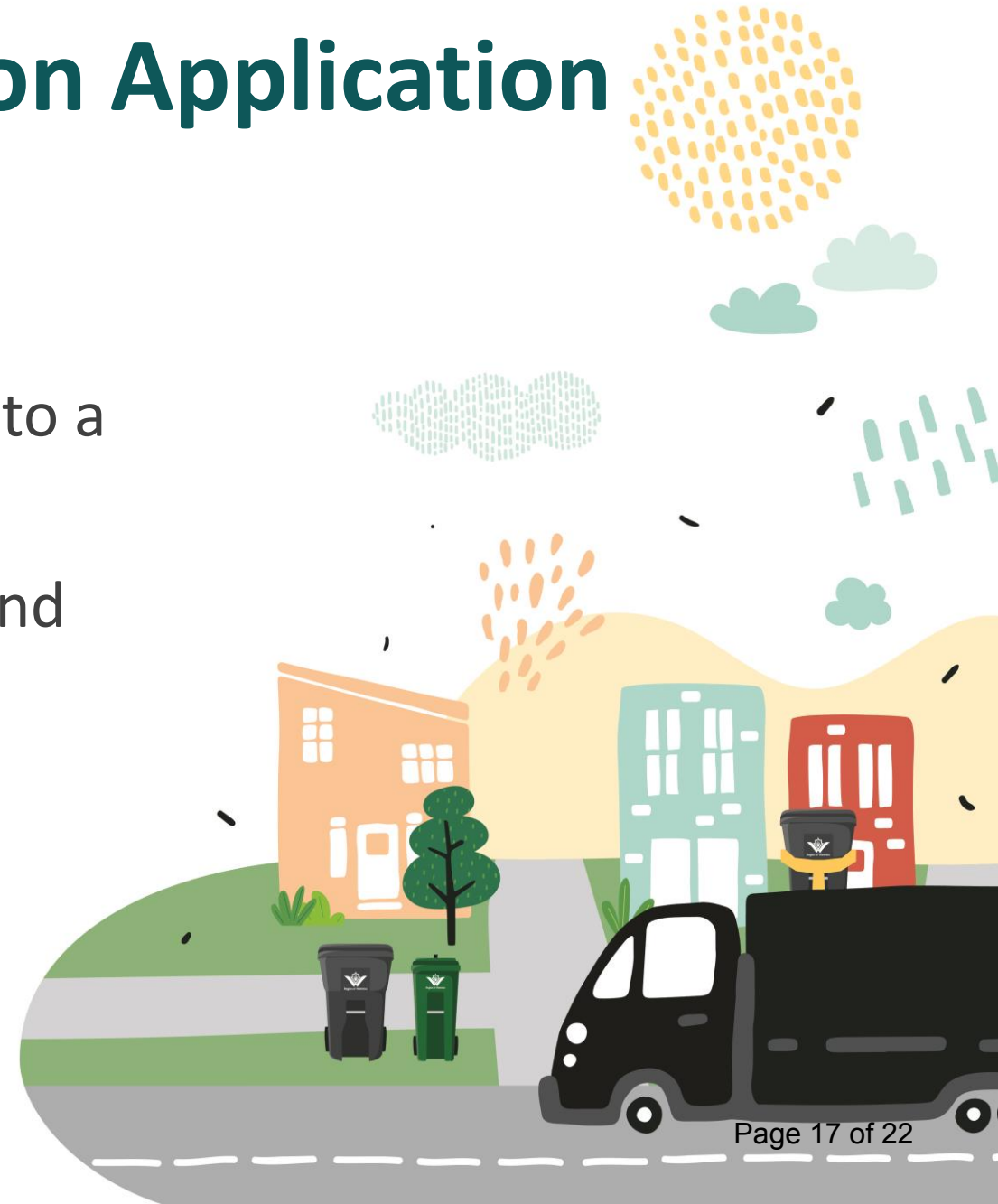
What is the Medical Exemption Program?

- To assist residents who have a medical condition that results in additional waste that cannot be recycled (such as incontinence products, or unrecyclable medical packaging)



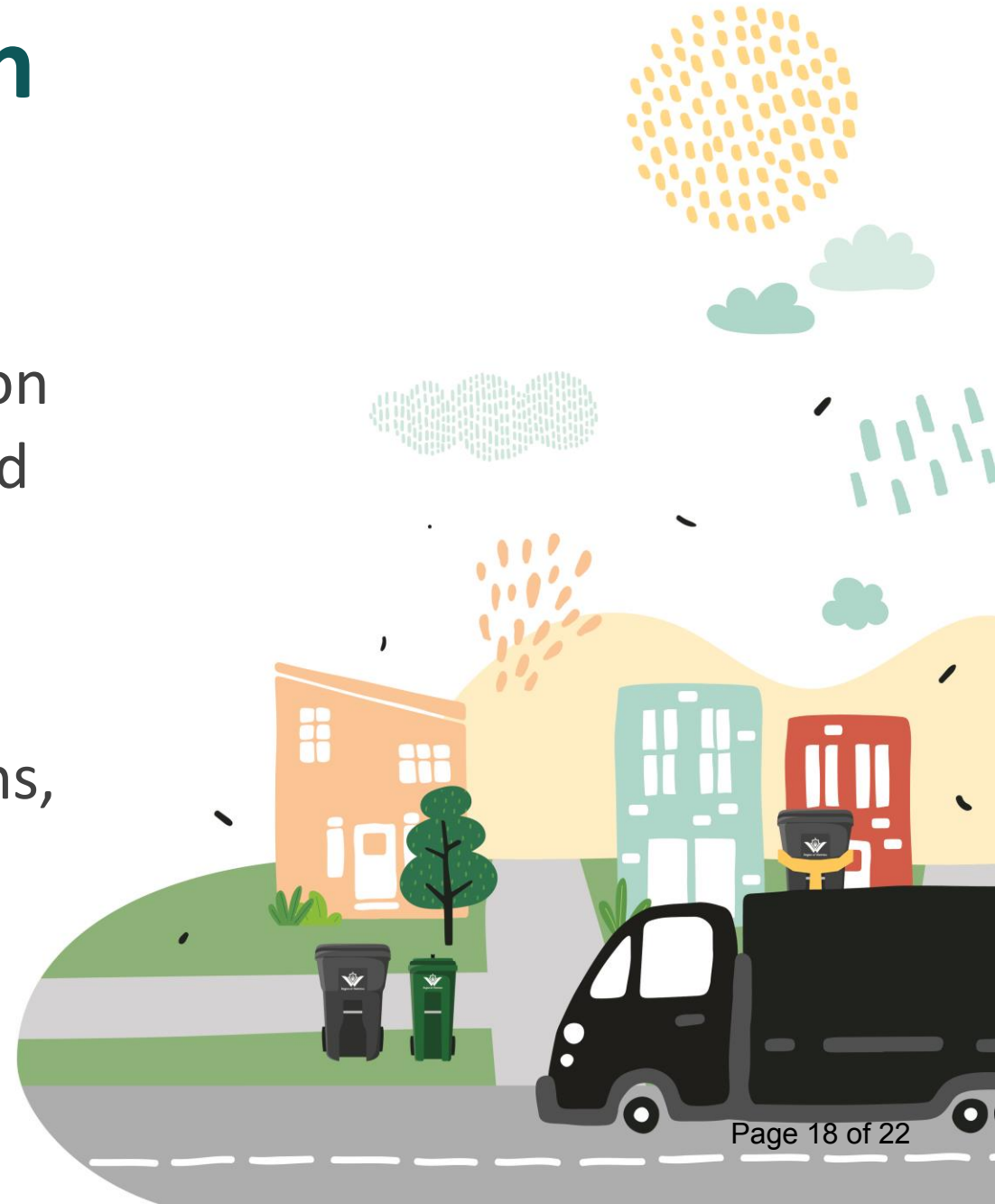
Old Assisted Waste Collection Application Process

- Application was mailed or hand-delivered to a resident
- Resident would mail back an application and medical note for processing
- Not previously advertised on our website



Current Medical Exemption Application Process

- Residents can fill out an online application or call our service first contact centre and provide a medical note
- Completed applications are reviewed
- Annual renewal for permanent conditions, no medical note required



Process Improvements

- Residents can apply for both Assisted Waste Collection and Medical Exemption in one application
- One medical note from a medical professional can be used for both programs
- For those with permanent conditions, they do not need to provide a medical note for renewal



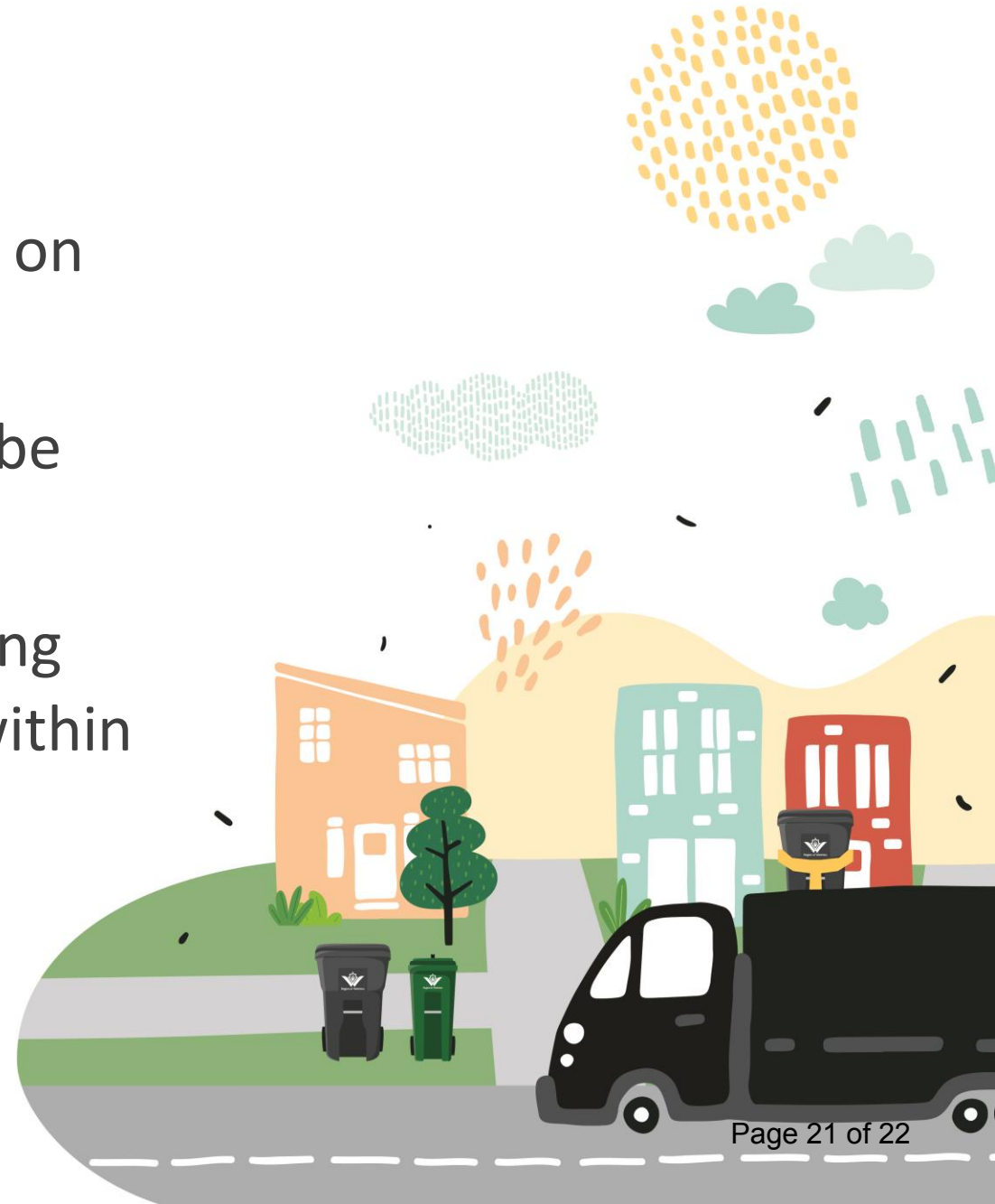
Online Application Improvements

- Application form is written in plain language
- Minimized data collection
- Restricted access to only staff who need it to process applications
- 'Save' function in application form so residents can complete at their own pace
- Multiple submission options for medical note
- Both programs are listed on our website



On-going Program Review

- Continue to listen to feedback provided on our programs
- Process improvements will continue to be made as needed
- Continue to explore other ways of sharing information between various services within the region to improve efficiencies



Questions?

