



Corporation of Haldimand County

45 Munsee Street North
Cayuga, Ontario, N0A 1E0

Accessibility Plan

January 1, 2017 to
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Haldimand County Description:

Haldimand County is a single tier municipality with a population of approximately 45,000. The County operates under the authority of the ***Municipal Act of Ontario*** as well as other applicable legislation.

Haldimand County is located on the north shore of Lake Erie and is bordered by Norfolk County, Six Nations of the Grand River Territory, Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation, Brant County, City of Hamilton and the Region of Niagara, and is well connected by a series of provincial highways. Highway 6 runs north south from the City of Hamilton through Haldimand County. Highway 6 also links Haldimand County to the 400 series highway (the major highway system in Ontario), which is within a 15-minute drive. Highway 3 passes through Haldimand County and runs east west from Fort Erie to Windsor.

Haldimand County is a caring, friendly community that is recognized as an exceptional place in which to live, work, play and nurture future generations. Haldimand County values its diversity and unique mix of urban and rural interests, and is committed to preserving its natural beauty and small town atmosphere through responsible growth management. Building on Haldimand County's rich history and heritage, our vision includes a strong and diverse economy that takes advantage of our strategic location and resources. We envision all elements of the community working cooperatively to maintain and build a high quality of life for our current and future residents.

Haldimand County Vision Statement:

Haldimand County will establish itself as an independent high quality service provider that anticipates and meets community needs through service improvements, staff development, integrated planning, use of technology and balanced policies regarding growth and the environment.

Haldimand County Council's Commitment to Accessibility Planning:

Through accessibility planning and with the advice of the Accessibility Advisory Committee, Haldimand County will strategically identify, remove and prevent as many barriers as possible.

Haldimand County Council is Committed to:

- The continual improvement of access to all municipally owned facilities, premises and services for all those with disabilities.
- The provision of quality services to all members of the community with or without disabilities.

1. INTRODUCTION

a) People with Disabilities in Canada/Ontario

People with disabilities represent a significant and growing part of our population. Statistics Canada, through the Canadian Survey on Disabilities, collects information regarding people with disabilities whose everyday activities are limited because of a health-related condition or problem. The 2012 Report provided essential information on the prevalence of various disabilities and support for people with disabilities, their employment profile, their income and their participation in society. In March 2015, Statistics Canada released more data from the 2012 Canadian Survey on Disability (CSD). Data from the CSD are used to present a profile of Canadians whose daily activities are limited because of a long-term condition or health-related problem. According to the survey data, these limitations affect almost 14% of the Canadian population aged 15 years or older – or 3.8 million individuals.

National statistics indicate that 33.2% of people aged 65+ have a disability. Recent population projections estimate that by 2021, Canadians aged 65+ will total 6.7 million people and represent one fifth of the total population.

b) The ONTARIO REGULATION made under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* Integrated Accessibility Standard Regulation (IASR)

The *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (AODA) aims to have a fully accessible Ontario by 2025 through the establishment of accessibility standards in the areas of customer service, transportation, information and communications, employment and the Design of Public Spaces. The AODA requires Ontario government Ministries, as well as municipalities and other key broader public sector organizations, to prepare accessibility plans and to appoint an Accessibility Advisory Committee, the majority of whose members shall be persons with disabilities. Section 4 of the *Integrated Accessibility Standards*, July 2011, establishes the duties of municipalities and requires the following:

c) Accessibility Plans

An accessibility plan describes the actions an organization will take to prevent and remove barriers and when it will do so.

- 4 (1) *The Government of Ontario, Legislative Assembly, designated public sector organizations and large organizations shall:*
 - a) *establish, implement, maintain and document a multi-year accessibility plan, which outlines the organization's strategy to prevent and remove barriers and meet its requirements under this Regulation;*
 - b) *post the accessibility plan on their website, if any, and provide the plan in an accessible format upon request; and*

- c) *review and update the accessibility plan at least once every five years.*
- (2) The Government of Ontario, Legislative Assembly and designated public sector organizations shall establish, review and update their accessibility plans in consultation with persons with disabilities and, if they have established an accessibility advisory committee, they shall consult with the committee.
- (3) The Government of Ontario, Legislative Assembly and designated public sector organizations shall:
 - a) prepare an annual status report on the progress of measures taken to implement the strategy referenced in clause (1) (a); and
 - b) post the status report on their website, if any, and provide the report in an accessible format upon request.

The AODA also imposes other obligations on municipalities whether directly, or through amendments to other Ontario statutes covering such matters as:

- (a) *Access to public buildings and facilities;*
- (b) *Accessibility must be considered as part of planning, development and subdivision approval;*
- (c) *Accessibility must be considered as a part of the building permit process;*
- (d) *Certain conditions covering business licenses;*
- (e) *Misuse of designated parking spaces established in municipal by-laws;*
- (f) *Improved access to municipal elections, considering access when selecting locations for voting.*

In summary, the intent of this requirement is that obligated organizations develop a multi-year accessibility plan outlining their strategies to prevent and remove barriers to accessibility. Once developed, organizations must maintain their accessibility plan.

2. Customer Service Standard

Ontario's first accessibility standard, the Customer Service Standard, came into effect on January 1, 2008. The legal requirements are set out in two Ontario Regulations under the AODA: the ***Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07***, which states the requirements of the Customer Service Standard; and ***Exemption for Reporting Requirements, Ontario Regulation 430/07***, which exempts organizations that have fewer than 20 employees (unless the organization is a designated public sector organization) from certain documentation requirements of the Standard.

The *Accessibility Standards for Customer Service* state what businesses and other organizations in Ontario must do to make the provision of their goods and services more accessible to people with disabilities. In broad terms, the Standard requires the following compliance activities be undertaken:

3. The Integrated Accessibility Standard Regulation

Ontario regulation 191/11 brought into force the Integrated Standard for Transportation, Information and Communication, and Employment. This standard is the third set of regulations enacted under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act and came into force July 1, 2011. The regulations establish accessibility standards to remove barriers in the following three areas.

The IASR also incorporates the “Design of Public Spaces” that was part of the Built Environment Standard”. The “Built Environment Standard” is now incorporated into the Building Code as well as the Design of Public Spaces being incorporated into the IASR. The County’s Facilities Accessibility Design Standards (FADS) document will be brought to Council in the new year for adoption.

The former “Customer Service Standard” is now incorporated into the IASR as well. The portions are as follows:

- Organizations are required to establish policies, practices and procedures governing the provision of goods or services to people with disabilities.
- Organizations must provide access for service animals and support persons.
- Organizations are required to provide the public with notice when there are temporary disruptions to the facilities that people with disabilities use in order to benefit from their goods and services.
- Organizations must provide training for employees, volunteers, agents and otherwise, who deal with members of the public or third parties on the organization’s behalf.
- Organizations are required to establish a process for receiving and responding to feedback or complaints received regarding the manner in which they provide goods and services to persons with disabilities.
- Organizations with at least 20 employees are required to notify the persons to whom they provide goods and services that the documents required by the regulation are available upon request.
- Where an organization is required to provide a document to a person with a disability, it must be provided in a format that takes into account the person’s disability.

In addition to these compliance activities, organizations with at least 20 employees are also required to file annual compliance reports with the Ministry of Community and Social Services. These compliance reports are to be filed by March 31 of each year.

4. Transportation Standard

The proposed Transportation Standard is the only industry-specific standard to be developed under the AODA and focuses on making transportation services accessible. It applies to all public transportation systems including subways, buses, trains and taxis.

5. Information & Communications Standard

This Standard is intended to remove barriers in all information and communications for people with disabilities. The Standard is intended to help people with disabilities access more sources of information that people rely on every day. This includes websites, public libraries, textbooks and public safety information.

6. Employment Standard

As suggested by its name, this Standard aims to prevent, identify and remove barriers across all cycles of the employment lifecycle for people with disabilities. The Standard helps employers support and keep skilled employees. It will make accessibility a normal part of finding, hiring and communicating with employees, whether they have disabilities or not.

Specific requirements under the various Standards will be phased in between 2012 and 2025, however Part I of each of the integrated regulations addresses common requirements that obligated organizations must meet under all three Standards. The regulations require that all of the areas are addressed through policies and multi-year plans. Appendix D illustrates the timelines for each of the three integrated standards.

7. Built Environment Standard

In 2010, a Standard Development Committee submitted its recommendations – in a document entitled *The Final Proposed Accessible Built Environment Standards* – to the Ministry of Community and Social Services for government consideration. The Design of Public Spaces Standard, as part of the IASR, is the government's response to the committee's recommendations on accessible public spaces, and became law as of January 1, 2013. Some accessibility requirements were also incorporated into the revised Ontario's Building Code. The Code regulates accessibility features inside buildings (e.g., accessible washrooms) while the Design of Public Spaces Standard primarily regulates outside spaces, such as pedestrian such as trails, but also regulates indoor elements not included in the Code, such as service counters.

It is expected that requirements for housing and retrofit will be addressed through separate standard development committee processes in the future.

a) Haldimand County Facility Accessible Design Standards

Haldimand County has developed a draft Facility Accessible Design Standard (FADS) which will, once approved, become the standard for facilities' development. The FADS document contains the requirements under the Built Environment Standard which is now incorporated into other regulations, and will become the official document of Haldimand County when adopted. The FADS document will be presented to Council in the new year once it is amended to only include necessary sections so as to not duplicate the Building Code.

8. Ontario Human Rights Code

The IASR does not replace or affect legal rights or obligations that arise under the Ontario Human Rights Code and other laws relating to the accommodation of people with disabilities. This means that the Ontario Human Rights Code or other applicable legislation may require

additional accommodation measures that go beyond, or are different from, the Standards established by the regulations of the AODA.

9. Haldimand County Accessibility Advisory Committee

The Haldimand County Accessibility Advisory Committee (HCAAC) is a key resource and contributor to accessibility planning issues in all departments of Haldimand County. The HCAAC is dedicated to promoting a barrier free environment for all persons, regardless of needs, to participate as fully as possible in all aspects of community life. It is a legislated committee of active community volunteers who represent or provide a general knowledge of a wide range of disabilities including: physical, visual, hearing impairment, intellectual, mental health, senior's issues and communication.

The committee has access to resources to consider all disabilities when making recommendations. A County appointed Staff Liaison works with the HCAAC to help facilitate the process. The HCAAC is developing protocol to play a critical role in advising County Staff on various topics including site plan applications, renovations for County owned facilities and all department purchases.

Most importantly, the HCAAC generates ideas for the development and implementation of the annual Accessibility Plan. For more information on the HCAAC please see Terms of Reference on page 13 of this document.

a) Goals & Objectives of the Accessibility Committee

The goals of the Haldimand County Accessibility Advisory Committee are to encourage and facilitate accessibility on behalf of all persons by:

1. Promoting public awareness and sensitivity to accessibility issues;
2. Encouraging cooperation among all service and interest groups to ensure a better community for all persons;
3. Identifying and documenting relevant accessibility issues and concerns with respect to all municipal property and buildings;
4. Liaising with County Departments and local organizations in addressing accessibility issues that are related to municipal property and buildings;
5. Recognizing that disability, trends and standards are constantly changing.

b) Accessibility Advisory Committee Mission Statement

Haldimand County's Accessibility Advisory Committee is dedicated to promoting a barrier free environment for all persons, regardless of needs, to participate as fully as possible in all aspects of community life.

c) Accessibility Advisory Committee Members

Members of the Accessibility Advisory Committee shall be appointed by Council for the term of the Council.

d) Accessibility Advisory Committee Staff Liaison

Clerk
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10. OBJECTIVES OF THE ACCESSIBILITY PLAN:

The Accessibility Plan describes the measures that Haldimand County will take in the term of the plan to identify, remove and prevent barriers for people with disabilities who utilize the goods, services and facilities of Haldimand County.

The Plan will:

- Describe the process by which the County will identify, remove and prevent barriers to people with disabilities
- Review earlier efforts to remove and prevent barriers to people with disabilities.
- Review of the facilities, policies, programs, practices and services in the County to identify barriers to people with disabilities.
- Describe the measures the County will take in the term of the plan to identify, remove and prevent barriers to people with disabilities.

11. HALDIMAND COUNTY 2017 - 2021 ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

a) Site Audit of Municipally Owned Facilities

- In conjunction with the committee review, the consultant report (completed in 2010) resulting from the facilities audit identified any barriers that exist in County owned properties and services. The recommendations including priorities, estimates and timelines will be presented to senior management and Council.
 - In those areas that could be addressed by either the decision to consolidate administrative operations or have been completed, only one item remains which is ongoing – creation of tactile approaches at sidewalk/road intersections – which is being dealt with as sidewalks are replaced.
- County staff will continue to review all buildings/properties within its jurisdiction to identify barriers and develop specific plans to remove those barriers.
- The HCAAC will be consulted in the design process of any new municipally owned properties and/or major renovations to existing facilities/properties, to ensure the prevention of any barriers to accessibility for all Haldimand County residents.

b) Training

Haldimand County will provide training for the IASR to:

- All County employees;
- All volunteers;
- All persons who participate in developing policies and;
- All other persons who provide goods, services or facilities on behalf of the corporation.

Training requirements as per Section 7 of the IASR will be specific to the duties of employees, volunteers and other persons receiving training as identified in the “Training Matrix for Accessibility” maintained by the Human Resources Division of Haldimand County.

Training on the standards in the IASR and Human Rights Code as it pertains to persons with disabilities will be provided to:

- Employees, volunteers and other persons identified in the IASR;
- New employees, volunteers and other persons identified in the IASR during orientation; and
- All employees, volunteers and other persons identified in the IASR when changes are made to the Standard, or the policies that relate to Accessibility.

Required training will be provided to persons identified in Section 2.3 as follows:

- When possible, on-line training will be provided and signed off by all affected persons and be recorded with the Human Resources Division; and
- When on-line training is not possible, persons will attend training sessions given by persons appropriately trained in the IASR and be recorded with the Human Resources Division.

County staff will continue to train as additional standards become legislated to ensure compliance at all times and will consult with the HCAAC to ensure that it is current with required training.

Amendments to this Accessibility Plan and updated information will be attached as amendments are made and the Plan updated.

Haldimand County Council, staff and the HCAAC will continue to work to remove barriers. The County recognizes that the investment it makes in identifying and removing barriers for people with disabilities will benefit everyone.

c) Availability of the Haldimand County Accessibility Plan

This Accessibility plan will be available at

- www.haldimandcounty.on.ca
- Haldimand County Administration Building, 45 Munsee Street North, Cayuga; and all
- Haldimand County Satellite Offices

The County will make every attempt to make the Accessibility Plan available to those with disabilities for their perusal and review.

2017 to 2021 Goals & Strategies

Category/ Standard	Barrier/Goal and/or Issue	Strategy for Removal and/or Prevention	Anticipated Cost; Lead Role
Customer Service	Continue to improve awareness through ongoing training and communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training for new staff/ councillors/volunteers • Training for HCAAC members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal resources only • Staff Advisory Team (SAT) • Ongoing
	Community Awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advertising in County ad twice per year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No additional cost • Ongoing
Information & Communication	Improvements to the County website to meet WCAG 2.0 Standard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Web Site redesign will incorporate changes to make the web site accessible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Web Redesign Committee • See note 1 below
Built Environment	Removal of, and/or prevention of barriers in county owned and leased facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue with accessibility improvements/enhancements as identified in facility audits • Consolidation of Administrative Facilities will address all accessibility issues in administrative facilities • See note 2 below 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$100,000 • Various departments • Ongoing
	Removal of and/or prevention of barriers in county parks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commence audit of county parks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$10,000 • Consultant/FAPO staff • Ongoing
Employment	Proactive compliance with AODA Employment Standard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actions put in place which lead to compliance with the AODA Employment Standard 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No additional cost • SAT/H.R. • Ongoing
Transportation	Proactive compliance with AODA Transportation Standard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication/advice provided to private transportation companies • No public transit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SAT/Clerks/Licensing • No additional cost • Ongoing

12. Notes to Goals & Objectives

- a) The County will achieve Web Content Accessibility Guideline Standard 2.0 (WCAG 2.0) by then end of 2017 through the redesign of the web site. All accessibility requirements will be met.
- b) The decision to consolidate administrative operations will address all of the accessibility issues in the current administrative facilities by the end of 2019. Other built environment issues to be addressed during the term of this plan are:
 - i. Renovation of the Dunnville Library
 - ii. Installation of accessible counter at the Selkirk Library
 - iii. Construction of a new Cayuga Library
 - iv. Renovation to the pavilion at Grant Kett Park

Haldimand County Accessibility Advisory Committee

Terms of Reference

Purpose

Haldimand County Accessibility Advisory Committee shall assist Council in facilitating and improving opportunities for persons with disabilities by promoting the implementation of the requirements under the ***Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001*** (ODA) and the ***Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*** (AODA) in Haldimand County. This aim will be achieved by advising Council each year on its annual Accessibility Plan and through the review of municipal policies, programs and services and the identification, removal and prevention of barriers to people with disabilities.

Definitions

Within this Terms of Reference:

“Annual accessibility plan” means a plan as designated in Section 11 of the ***Ontarian with Disability Act, RSO 2009*** and Section 29 of the ***Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, RSO 2009*** and shall include:

- A report on the measures the County has taken to identify, remove and prevent barriers to person’s with disabilities;
- The measures in place to ensure that the County assesses its proposals for by-laws, policies, programs, practices and services to determine their effect on accessibility for persons with disabilities;
- A list of the by-laws, policies, programs, practices and services that the municipality will review in the coming year in order to identify barriers to persons with disabilities;
- The measures that the municipality intends to take in the coming year to identify, remove and prevent barriers to persons with disabilities; and
- All other information that the regulations of the ODA/AODA prescribed for the purpose of the plan.

“Barrier” means anything that prevents a person with a disability from fully participating in all aspects of society because of his or her disability, including physical barrier, an architectural barrier, an information or communication barrier, an attitudinal barrier, a technological barrier, a policy or a practice (“obstacle”).

“Disability” means

- Any degree of physical disability, infirmity, malformation, or disfigurement that is caused by bodily injury, birth defect or illness and, without limiting the generality of the forgoing, includes diabetes, mellitus, epilepsy, a brain injury, any degree of paralysis, amputation, lack of physical co-ordination, blindness or visual impediment, deafness or hearing impediment, muteness or speech impediment, or physical reliance on a guide dog or other animal or on a wheelchair or other remedial appliance or device;
- A condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability;
- A learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language;
- A mental disorder; or
- An injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997.

Mandate

- The mandate of the Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC) is to annually review and advise Council on the implementation and effectiveness of the County’s annual Accessibility Plan as outlined in the ***Ontarians with Disabilities Act, RSO 2009/AODA***.
- The AAC will report to Haldimand Council through the Committee in Council.

Composition

- The AAC shall be composed of a maximum of nine (9) members, one of which shall be an elected member of Council, and one of which will be a Haldimand County staff member appointed by the CAO
- A majority of the members must be persons with disabilities. These committee members shall be representative of different types of visible and invisible disabilities noted on the ODA, 2001, such as persons with physical (visual, speech, hearing, deaf, brain injury, use of wheelchair); cognitive (intellectual impairments); perceptual (learning disability); and mental health disabilities.
- A minority of the members may be persons who do not have a disability, but meet one of the following criteria;
 - Parent/guardian representing children with disabilities
 - Persons interested in issues relating to persons with disabilities
- Members shall be a minimum of 18 years of age.
- Members shall be residents of Haldimand County.

- Members shall be considered based upon their special expertise, experience, dedication and commitment to the mandate of the Committee in promoting and facilitating a barrier free municipality to all persons of disabilities.
- Council, at its discretion, may review the composition of this Committee and its Terms of Reference to ensure that its representative of persons with disabilities and is working effectively.
- Members may call upon the expertise of representatives from organizations to provide information regarding accessibility matters.

Roles and Responsibilities

- Members shall be or become familiar with the ***Ontarians with Disabilities Act/AODA*** and the Terms of Reference.
- Members shall declare any situation that is or has the potential to be a conflict of interest, (e.g. pecuniary interest).
- Members will be guided by Haldimand County's Code of Conduct Policy No. 01-19.
- A chair and vice-chair will be elected annually by the membership at the first meeting of each year.
- The Chair shall act as the spokesperson to the staff liaison regarding issues such as agendas, minutes, and requests, for information.
- The Vice-Chair will perform all duties of the Chair in his/her absence.

Staff Liaison

- Provide the Haldimand County's Accessibility Plan annually to the AAC for review.
- Advise members of the AAC on Haldimand County matters pertaining to accessibility.
- Prepare agenda (with Chair) and supporting materials for distribution to members.
- Provide clerical/clerking assistance for the AAC.
- Direct the AAC recommendations and motions to Council through Council in Committee and report back to AAC.
- Ensure that required assistance is available for members with disabilities.

Appointment/Term

- Membership/vacancies on the Haldimand County Accessibility Advisory Committee shall be publicly advertised in local newspapers and on the County Website. Applicants shall be submitted to the Clerk.
- Members shall be appointed by Haldimand County Council.
- Shall be concurrent with the length of term of Council, or until their successors are appointed by Council.

Resignations

- Any resignation from the Accessibility Advisory Committee shall be tendered in writing to the Chair of the AAC who will advise Council through the Staff Liaison.
- In order to maintain a high level of commitment, members may be asked by Council to resign if they have been absent for three consecutive meetings without good reason.

Remuneration/Re-imbusement of Expenses

- Members of the AAC will serve without remuneration.
- Members who are persons with disabilities will be provided with resources related to their disability and that are deemed necessary for them to fully participate in the Committee (i.e., sign language interpretation services, Braille translation services, transportation, support care services, etc.)

Meetings

Meetings may be held quarterly or at the call of the Chair and are open to the public.