



Accessibility Annual Status Update: 2021

Accessibility Status Report

This Accessibility Status Report serves as an update on the progress towards meeting the planned initiatives listed in Haldimand County's 2017-2022 Accessibility Plan and implementation of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) and the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (Ontario Regulation 191/11).

The 2021 Accessibility Compliance Report was submitted to the Government of Ontario in December 2021.

Haldimand County's Commitment to Accessibility Planning

Through accessibility planning and with the advice of the County's 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.

Development of 2022-2027 Accessibility Plan

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

Haldimand County's Accessibility Plan expires in 2022. The Plan will be updated in Q2 to identify strategic priorities for 2022-2027. The new 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 the facilities, policies, programs, practices and services in the County to identify barrier to people with disabilities.
- Describe the measures the County will take in terms of the plan to identify, remove and prevent barriers to people with disabilities.

2021 Summary of Accessibility Accomplishments

General

- Continued to implement the County's multi-year Accessibility Plan, 2017-2022 which has been posted on the County's website and is available in an accessible format, upon request.
- Filed 2021 Accessibility Compliance Report with the province.
- Prepared the Annual Status Report of measures set out in the multi-year accessibility plan, posted it on the County's website and provided it in an accessible format, upon request.
- Accessibility policies and procedures posted on website and provided in an accessible format, upon request.
- Continued to implement purchasing policy, which requires suppliers and their staff to comply with the AODA when acquiring goods, services and facilities.

Customer Service Standard

- Service disruption notices were posted at affected facilities, on the County's website and communicated through social media channels.
- Provided alternative facilities or services where possible.
- The comprehensive Accessible Customer Service Policy has been posted on the County's website and provided in an accessible format, upon request.
- Re-organized the Corporate Services division to create the Customer Experience and Communications division with a strategic focus on accessibility
- Developed job description for new, permanent part time Accessibility Coordinator as part of the new CEC division and initiated recruitment process
- Provided on-going training to Accessibility Advisory Committee Members, volunteers and new staff.

Information and Communications Standard

- Several forms and documents on the Haldimand County website were updated to be fillable accessible PDFs.
- Continue to receive and follow up on feedback in regards to our goods, services and facilities.
- Continue to ensure processes for receiving and responding to feedback are accessible for persons with disabilities by providing/arranging for accessible formats and communications supports, upon request.
- Began conducting Haldimand County website audit in collaborating with IT to enhance accessibility of content

Design of Public Spaces Standard

- A number of new parks were constructed, or had equipment replaced to meet accessible standards.
 - Thistlemore Playground (Equipment replacement - Caledonia)
 - Kinsmen Playground (Equipment replacement - Dunnville)
 - Lions Playground (Equipment replacement – Dunnville)
 - Oswego Park (Equipment replacement – Dunnville)
 - Burke Park Playground (Equipment replacement – Caledonia)
- New off-street and accessible parking was created/reconfigured at the Haldimand County Administration Building. New designated spaces were added to ensure a barrier-free path of travel to and from the building.
- Parking upgrades at Lower Lafortune Park and Port Maitland Pier. New designated spaces were added to ensure a barrier-free path of travel to the pier boardwalk and park greenspace.

Employment Standard

- Continue to notify the public about the availability of accommodation for applicants with disabilities in the recruitment process.
- Acknowledgement statement on job applications includes statement of availability of accessibility accommodations in recruitment process.
- Continue to notify candidates for employment of the availability of accessibility accommodations when contacted for an interview or assessment.
- Offered support to employees who require temporary or permanent work accommodation and maintain a return to work employment accommodation program.
- Continue to inform new employees of policies and procedures to support employees with disabilities during on-boarding and orientation.

Transportation Standard

- In the absence of public transit, continued to communicate and advise private transportation companies (Taxicab Operators and Drivers) on the requirements of the Transportation Standard including fare restrictions and the posting of vehicle registration and identification information.
- Monitored Taxi industry and ensured compliance with Accessible Taxicab requirements.
- Ensured Accessible Taxicabs meet all safety requirements stipulated through the County's Hired Vehicle Licensing By-law.
- Continued to ensure every licensed driver of an Accessible Taxicab notifies passengers upon arrival, offers such assistance as the passenger requires, and properly and safely handles passenger mobility aids.

2022 Goals and Next Steps

Goals

- Consult with the County's Accessibility Advisory Committee on various capital projects, community consultations and changes to existing services.
- Monitor and update existing accessibility policies, as appropriate.
- Review customer feedback and make changes, where appropriate.
- Continue to keep abreast of accessibility issues, innovations and trends.
- Develop accessible templates and create accessible documents, to improve access to information.
- Consult the public, persons with disabilities and the Accessibility Advisory Committee

Next Steps

- Recruit a permanent, part time Accessibility Coordinator to lead all accessibility-related matters for the County
- Undertake a comprehensive review of the County's 2017-2022 Accessibility Plan and develop a new plan for 2022-2027 based on changes stemming from the County reorganization in 2021
- Review AODA training modules and learning resources for new/existing staff and update based on industry best practices
- Audit Haldimand County website and develop new compliance checklist/training resources aligned with WCAG 2.0 regulations
- Provide input into the Accessibility Consultation requirements as part of the Community and Recreation Facilities Strategy and Hagersville Library + Active Living Centre project
- Review municipal election 2022 Accessibility Plan and provide guidance with respect to making the 2022 municipal election accessible for all
- Recruit new Accessibility Advisory Committee members for 2022-2026 Term of Council (Q4)

Contact Information

For more information about accessibility initiatives within the County or to obtain a copy of this presentation in an alternative format, contact the Supervisor, Customer Experience & Communications.

Phone: 905-318-5932 ext. 6309

E-mail: accessibility@haldimandcounty.on.ca

Mail: Supervisor, Customer Experience and Communications
Customer Experience and Communications Division
Haldimand County Administration Building
53 Thorburn Street, Cayuga, ON N0A 1E0

Feedback

Haldimand County invites public input to help identify barriers where changes need to be made to improve access to County facilities, goods and services. Should a member of the public wish to provide general feedback, comments or suggestions on how to improve accessibility in the County, please contact the Supervisor, Customer Experience and Communications.