

The Township of Huron-Kinloss

Multi-Year Accessibility Plan



February 2018

Multi Year Accessibility Plan

Table of Contents

<u>Executive Summary</u>	3
<u>Aim</u>	4
<u>Objectives</u>	4
<u>Accessibility Standards Overview</u>	5
<u>Description of the Township of Huron-Kinloss</u>	9
<u>Accessibility Working Group</u>	10
<u>Council Commitment to Accessibility Planning</u>	10
Definitions <u>Disability</u>	11
<u>Barriers</u>	11
<u>Facilities, Policies, Plans, Practices and Services to be Reviewed</u>	12
<u>Barrier-identification Methodologies</u>	12
<u>Barrier Removal Initiatives</u>	13
<u>Barriers Identified</u>	16
<u>Review and Monitoring Process</u>	16
<u>Communication of the Plan</u>	18
<u>Feedback and Contact Information</u>	19
<u>Looking Ahead</u>	19
<u>Appendix</u>	21

Executive Summary

People with disabilities represent a significant and growing part of our population. According to Statistics Canada, about 1.9 million Ontarians have disabilities – about 16% of the population. It is estimated that 20% of the population will have disabilities in two decades.

The purpose of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (AODA) is to achieve a fully accessible Ontario by 2025 by improving opportunities for people with disabilities and providing for their involvement in the identification, removal and prevention of barriers to their full participation in the life of the province. The AODA now mandates that all municipalities prepare a Multi-Year Accessibility Plan. Municipalities must develop accessibility standards and enforce them.

With Ontario Regulation 429/07, Public Sector organizations such as the Township of Huron-Kinloss had to comply with the first of five accessibility standards set out by the AODA which was Customer Service. We needed to comply with that standard as of January 1, 2010 which we successfully accomplished.

Ontario Regulation 191/11 combined the next three standards calling it the Integrated Accessibility Standards. This was comprised of Information and Communication, Employment and Transportation. Ontario Regulation 191/11 was amended with the addition of Ontario Regulation 413/12 – Design of Public Spaces standard. Requirements under these standards will be phased in from now to 2021 according to a prescribed timetable. The Township of Huron-Kinloss continues to meet the standards set for each year.

The Design of Public Spaces standard came into effect for our municipality January 1st, 2016. This affects predominately new builds and major renovations. As with the other four standards, the Township of Huron-Kinloss is meeting or exceeding these requirements as we update facilities in the township.

Ontario Regulation 165/16 combined all five standards under the Integrated Accessibility Standards. There were a few minor updates to Accessible Customer Service standard which came into effect July 1st, 2016 that the township has addressed.

The Township of Huron-Kinloss has committed itself to continually improve access to all municipal facilities and services. The Township is constantly focusing on the removal of physical barriers identified throughout the Municipality and reviewing policies and practices to increase accessibility.

Multi Year Accessibility Plan

Aim

The Township of Huron-Kinloss is committed to provide quality service to all members of the community by identifying, removing and preventing barriers to those accessing our goods, facilities and services.

Objectives

The Township's Multi-Year Accessibility Plan shall address barriers in the following manner:

1. The Township of Huron-Kinloss will identify, remove and prevent barriers through the passage of by-laws, adoption of policies and implementation of programs.
2. Continually assess the progress made by the Township in removing and preventing barriers that have been identified.
3. Review by-laws, policies, programs, facilities and services of the Township to identify barriers to people with disabilities.
4. Describe the measures the Township of Huron-Kinloss will take to identify, remove and prevent barriers to people with disabilities.
5. Make the plan available to the public.
6. Comply with the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* within the timeframes assigned.

Accessibility Standards Overview

Customer Service (Previously Regulation 429/07)

The Accessibility Standards for Customer Service came into force on January 1, 2008. The Customer Service standard became part of the Integrated Accessibility Standards under O. Reg. 165/16 on July 1st, 2016. This standard applies to all “obligated organizations” (of which we are one) in Ontario that provide goods, services and facilities to the public or to other businesses.

As a public sector organization, the Township of Huron-Kinloss complied with the following Accessibility Standards by January 1, 2010:

1. Establishing policies, practices and procedures on providing goods and services to people with disabilities.
2. Training staff on how to serve people with disabilities.
3. Allowing people with disabilities to bring their support person or service animal with them.
4. Communicating with a person in a way that respects their disability.
5. Providing a method of feedback that is accessible and readily available to the public.

The Accessible Customer Service policy was written and adopted by by-law on October 19, 2009 and was amended May 17, 2010 and again July 1, 2016. All council, staff, volunteers and contractors as at December 31, 2009 completed customer service training. New staff and volunteers receive training when they begin work with the Township. The names, dates of training and the training provided are recorded and are available upon request.

Integrated Accessibility (Regulation 191/11)

Under the AODA, Ontario Regulation 191/11, entitled, “Integrated Accessibility Standards” (Regulation), came into force on July 1, 2011. This Regulation established accessibility standards for Information and Communication, Employment, and Transportation.

Some of the requirements are: developing policies to ensure that our communication is accessible to people with disabilities; ensuring we are able to provide information in a format that considers an individual’s disability; ensuring that our website is compliant with applicable standards; and developing policies to ensure potential employees with disabilities receive appropriate accommodations during the recruitment, selection and hiring phases.

The Integrated Standards will be implemented in phases according to its staggered compliance deadlines.

Multi Year Accessibility Plan

Information and Communications

The Township of Huron-Kinloss will follow universal design principles and best practices when developing, implementing and maintaining information and communications strategies and products. This includes websites, social media and print communications materials as well as face-to-face interactions.

The Township is committed to ensuring that information and communications are available and accessible to persons with disabilities. The township will make reasonable efforts based upon the needs of the community and upon request within the constraints of being a small rural municipality. For the purposes of this policy reasonable efforts by the township shall be based on the frequency of indications for needs of service, the availability of the service requested, the relative cost compared to the overall township budget, best practices recognized by similar rural municipalities and Provincial regulation. This will be achieved by:

1. Achieving compliance with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) to ensure the Municipal website is accessible to people with disabilities.
2. Developing resource materials for creating accessible documents for common software programs such as MS Word, Excel and PowerPoint.
3. Ensuring that emergency information, procedures, plans and public safety information is available in alternate formats, when requested.
4. Developing a training strategy to ensure that staff has the knowledge, tools and technical advice to create accessible materials.
5. Ensuring documents are available in an alternate format, upon request.
6. Review and update the Municipal Multi-Year Accessibility Plan at least once every five (5) years

Employment

The Township of Huron-Kinloss is committed to ensuring that the process of finding, getting and keeping a job is as inclusive as possible in order to build an effective workforce. The township will make reasonable efforts based upon the needs of the community and upon request within the constraints of being a small rural municipality. For the purposes of this policy, reasonable efforts by the township shall be based on the frequency of expressions for the need for service, the availability of the service requested, the relative cost compared to the overall municipal budget, best practices recognized by similar rural municipalities and Provincial regulation. The Municipality will achieve this by:

1. Understanding employer obligations to provide employment accommodations.
2. Identifying and removing barriers in the workplace.
3. Enhancing workplace emergency responses through individualized emergency response information and assistance as required.

Multi Year Accessibility Plan

4. Revising individual work plans and developing a guide, tools and templates to remove barriers from the recruitment process.

Transportation

In 2013, by-law 2013-66 was passed making the Township of Huron-Kinloss a member of Saugeen Mobility and Regional Transit Services (SMART). Therefore the township needs to ensure SMART meets the requirements of the Specialized Transportation Services of the Transportation standard. For SMART this means they:

- Must make information on accessibility equipment and features of their vehicles, routes and services available to the public
- Cannot charge a fare to a support person if that person is required by the person with the disability
- Have an eligibility application process

Currently SMART estimates the demand for their services as an average of 1.25% of a municipality's population based on past experience. The more urbanized a municipality, the higher that percentage goes. If there are assisted living or long-term care facilities, again the percentage will increase. When service becomes delayed, additional staff or vehicles are brought in as necessary and available.

Equipment failures are inevitable but SMART maintains an up-to-date fleet of vehicles that are serviced regularly to avoid, as much as possible, equipment failures. When there is a failure, staff move as quickly as possible to bring in a replacement vehicle in order to continue to provide their services.

Design of Public Spaces / Built Environment

The Design of Public Spaces (Accessibility Standards for the Built Environment - Ontario Regulation 413/12) amended the Integrated Accessibility Standards (O. Reg. 191/11) and focused on built public open spaces and streetscape elements. This affects only new construction or major renovations and came into effect January 1, 2016.

The elements that fall under this regulation are:

- Recreational trails and beach access routes
- Outdoor Public Use Eating Areas
- Outdoor Play Spaces
- Exterior Paths of Travel (including ramps, stairs, pedestrian signals, and rest areas)
- Accessible Parking
- Obtaining Services
- Maintenance

Multi Year Accessibility Plan

Procedures are being developed for preventative and emergency maintenance of the accessible elements in the Public Spaces described above. Also, being developed are procedures for dealing temporary disruptions when these accessible elements are not in working order.

All municipal building exterior steps and forward edges should be highly coloured contrasted for easy visibility. All municipal buildings that have accessible entrances should be marked with the International Symbol of Accessibility as well as adding more accessible parking spaces that are clearly marked with the symbol.

All renovation and construction projects moving forward will comply with the Facility Accessibility Design Standards (FADM) if applicable.

Any new Site Plan Control and Subdivision plans will be reviewed to ensure barrier-free requirements are identified.

Description of the Township of Huron-Kinloss

Huron-Kinloss is a Township rich in history tracing its ancestry to the 1880s, a pattern apparent in the hamlets dotting the Township map. The Township of Huron-Kinloss was created in 1999 with the amalgamation of three communities, the Village of Lucknow, and the Townships of Huron and Kinloss.

Geographically located in the southwest corner of Bruce County, the Township is bordered on the west side by the spectacular Lake Huron and on the remaining three sides by agricultural land.

The villages of Lucknow and Ripley form the Township's two urban centres. Ripley is located geographically in the Township's centre and Lucknow hugs the southern border. A variety of retail and commercial services are available in both communities. Point Clark, a large shoreline community in the south west corner, is home to an increasing number of both permanent and seasonal residents.

Ripley is home to the municipal offices, the Ripley-Huron Community Centre and Arena, a post office, bank, medical centre, library and a grain supply elevator. Lucknow also has a bank, medical centre and library as well as a Community Centre and Arena. It is the commercial centre for local agriculture and aggregate industries. A third community centre is located in the hamlet of Point Clark, Both Lucknow and Ripley have modern fire stations and have services, which meet the needs of their largely rural regions.

The Municipality is continuing to undertake ventures that will revitalize the downtown areas of these communities. Several different funding opportunities have developed beginning with the "Spruce the Bruce" program which began in 2010. With this program, downtown businesses can apply for grants to improve their facades and signage. Funding is also available through our Downtown Improvement Program that offers businesses the opportunity to apply for funding for Façade and Patio Improvements, Signage and Awnings, Energy Efficiency upgrades or building restoration and accessibility improvements. Grants are also available for streetscape improvements, beautification and marketing. The Community Improvement Plan is another source of potential grants available to businesses for improvements. The Huron-Kinloss Ice Cream Trail™ continues to promote what Huron-Kinloss has to offer to both residents and visitors. The initiative won an Ontario Tourism Marketing Award in 2013. Another tourism attraction, Secrets of the Back 40, was runner-up in 2014.

The Township of Huron-Kinloss, with its fertile soil, has a strong agricultural sector. Livestock husbandry and crop production are the main farming activities within the Township. A majority of the lands have a Canada Land Inventory rating of Class One or Two. With quality gravel deposits in the eastern part of the Township, Huron-Kinloss has a thriving aggregate industry.

Multi Year Accessibility Plan

Ripley and Lucknow are serviced by municipal water and sanitary sewer systems, and the services required for industrial development and growth is available in each community. A new water tower in Ripley will meet the growing requirements for a safe and secure water supply. Preliminary groundwork is beginning to prepare for a new water tower in Lucknow. Construction timing will depend on funding opportunities. The shoreline area now has more permanent residents and it is serviced by one lakeshore water system for greater efficiency. Upgrading of water lines is carried out on an on-going basis in order to continue to offer quality drinking water to all residents.

The two provincial highways (Highways 9 and 21) which run through the Township are maintained by the Ministry of Transportation while the Bruce County Highways Department maintains the county roads. The municipality is responsible for the maintenance of its concession roads.

Huron-Kinloss' main attraction, and a point of pride, is the Point Clark Lighthouse. Designated a National Historic Site, the lighthouse has undergone extensive renovations under Parks Canada's direction and was closed to visitors in 2009. The tower and museum at the lighthouse re-opened for tours in June of 2015.

Accessibility Working Group

The Working Group consists mainly of Township staff. Through communication with the various community groups we hope to increase our knowledge of accessibility issues.

Chief Administrative Officer	Mary Rose Walden
Clerk	Emily Dance (alt. Kelly Lush)
Treasurer	Jodi MacArthur (alt. Phyllis Hunter)
Director of Public Works	John Yungblut
Chief Building Official	Matt Farrell
By-law Enforcement Officer	Heather Clark-Falconer
Director of Community Services	Mike Fair (alt. Chris Davey)

Council Commitment to Accessibility Planning

The Council for the Township of Huron-Kinloss is committed to:

- Providing quality service to members of the community with disabilities.
- The continual improvement of all Municipal facilities and services, to better meet the needs of those with disabilities.
- The re-examination of its regulations and policies to ensure the objectives of the plan are being met.
- Building strong relationships with persons with disabilities in order to ensure that existing barriers can be identified and removed and future barriers are prevented.

Multi Year Accessibility Plan

The Township of Huron-Kinloss authorizes the working group to prepare an accessibility plan that will enable the Township to meet these commitments.

Definitions:

Disability

The AODA adopts a broad definition for disability that is set out in the Ontario Human Rights Code. A Disability is anything that is defined as:

- 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 foregoing, 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
- An injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997

Barriers

A “barrier” is anything that prevents a person with a disability to fully participate in all aspects of society because of his or her disability, including a physical barrier, an architectural barrier, an informational or communications barrier, an attitudinal barrier, a technological barrier, a policy or a practice.

The following are example of these barriers that may be found in the Municipality:

Barrier Type	Example
Physical	A door knob that cannot be operated by a person with limited upper body mobility and strength.
Architectural	A hallway or door that is too narrow for a wheelchair or scooter.
Informational	Typefaces that are too small to read by a person with low vision.
Communicational	A staff member who talks loudly when addressing a deaf person.
Attitudinal	A staff member who ignore a customer in a wheelchair.
Technological	A paper tray on a laser printer that requires two strong hands to open.

Multi Year Accessibility Plan

Policy/Practice A practice of announcing important messages over the intercom that people with hearing impairments cannot hear clearly.

Facilities, Policies, Plans Practices and Services to be Reviewed

The Accessibility Working Group will advise Council on any by-laws, programs, policies, practices and services that affect persons with disabilities. The Group's review will include but not be limited to the following:

- Site plans and building plans of existing municipal buildings
- Existing Municipal By-Laws
- Significant renovations
- Leased Facilities or any other facility used as a municipal building
- Municipal Capital facilities under the Municipal Act
- Goods and services provided by the municipality or agents providing services under contract with the municipality
- Employment practices and accommodations
- Communications and publications
- External service providers
- Planning practices
- Current Capital Plan
- Operational Policies
- Accessibility of meetings

Barrier-identification Methodologies

The Working Group will use the following methodologies as described below for identifying barriers:

Staff and Council Review of Plan: The Plan will be delivered to all staff and Council members in order to identify barriers they have or that the public may have informed them of.

Township Newsletter: A notice will be put in newsletters asking the public to submit their concerns to the Working Group or provide input into the Plan.

Consultation from Community Groups and Persons with Disabilities: A number of interest groups will be contacted for any suggestions or recommendations. The public is encouraged to bring information forward at any time.

Yearly Audits: Working group members will consult with Facilities managers to discuss any complaints or concerns made in regard to accessibility issues at each municipally owned site

Barrier Removal Initiatives

In 1997, the former Township of Huron built a Municipal Office, which is now used as the main office for the amalgamated Township of Huron-Kinloss. The building was constructed to be accessible to the physically disabled. Exterior ramps lead to the main office and council chambers, washrooms and travel spaces are large enough to accommodate those that require the use of a wheelchair, and power operated doors are provided. Exterior stairs are marked as to their location for the visually disabled. The basement, which is being used as office space, is not fully accessible but any amenities required by the public or staff with disabilities are available on the main level.

The Lucknow and District Sports Complex was reconstructed in 1994 and was made fully accessible for persons with disabilities at that time. Features included accessible entrances, travel spaces and washrooms. A meeting room was constructed on the ground floor that eliminated the need for the previous room located on the second floor. A further addition was added to the second floor with meeting space, and viewing area along with an elevator for accessible access.

The Ripley Huron Community Centre had an addition constructed in 1993 that provided accessible washrooms, change rooms, travel areas, and entrances. A meeting room was constructed on the main floor and a lift was installed to the upstairs hall. This elevator has been refurbished continuing to allow access to the upstairs viewing area for persons with disabilities. The move to full accessibility continues with the latest being the installation of accessible push button doors and hand dryers at the appropriate levels in the main level washrooms.

Major reconstruction projects to the downtown areas of both Lucknow and Ripley have made the villages more accessible. In keeping with the principles of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, as assets such as sidewalks are being replaced, the new sidewalks installed are fully accessible. One of the first was in Lucknow where a new sidewalk on the south side of Campbell from Havelock to Bob Street was replaced. Later the sidewalk on Gough Street was replaced with the new one having the roll-over curbs; especially important as this sidewalk is in front of Sepoy Manor (a retirement home). New sidewalks were installed in Whitechurch, again with the low profile rollover curbs making it easier for persons with disabilities who use mobility aids easier transition from the sidewalk to the road. Also in Whitechurch, detectable warning surfaces for pedestrian crossings were installed on the sidewalks increasing safety for all those using the sidewalks. In the Village of Ripley as construction occurs, crossing areas are marked by curb cuts or roll-over curbs.

Wayfinding signs have been put up in the Villages of Lucknow and Ripley which are standardized through-out Bruce County. Standardized street signs have been installed in both villages and accessible parking spaces have been created in Lucknow. These all met the standards for accessibility at the time they were installed.

Multi Year Accessibility Plan

Playground equipment and accessible surfacing installed at Lighthouse Park is designed to allow children with disabilities to enjoy its use. Lewis Park, located at the main intersection of Ripley was designed with accessibility in mind although it was completed well before the Design of Public Spaces standard came into effect. It has accessible surfacing, accessible interactive play equipment, as well as an accessible splash pad with full bathroom / change room facilities. Similarly, the municipal park in Lucknow received major upgrades to its equipment when the Splash pad was installed making it too fully accessible. A new picnic area has been installed by the ball diamond at Victoria Park in Ripley meeting the Design of Public Spaces standard. As our older parks are upgraded they too will be outfitted to the requirements of the Design of Public Spaces standard. Upgrades will occur as financing permits.

Voting methods for municipal elections have been evolving to make them more accessible. In 2003 and 2006 the township used the mail-in ballot method which made it easier for persons with disabilities to cast their votes. For the 2010 and subsequent elections, internet or telephone voting is being used. The latter method encourages participation of more taxpayers and also accommodates as many people as possible.

Property taxes can be paid by coming into our accessible office, by mail, telephone banking, or through pre-authorized payment on the Internet. Tax bills can be received electronically. Again, this allows for persons with visual disabilities to more easily view their bills. These options are offered in an effort to accommodate as many ratepayers as possible.

Questions to the municipality can be submitted though regular mail, e-mail or social media. Many forms and documents are now available on our website including an accessible customer service feedback mechanism. The website is continuing to conform to WCAG 2.0 Level AA standards as set out in O. Reg. 191/11. The Township of Huron-Kinloss can also be found on Facebook and Twitter.

All township staff, volunteers and contractors received the accessible customer service training before January 1st, 2010 as required under the AODA. New persons receive training as part of their initiation process. Training for staff and volunteers under the Integrated Standards and Design of Public Spaces was carried out in 2014 and updated again in 2016 when the Customer Service standard was included in the Integrated Standards.

The infrastructure is continually monitored and upgraded when necessary or when funds are available. The Ripley Medical Centre Building, which also houses the Ripley Family Y Daycare, has had an additional hand railing installed to assist with entering and exiting the building. Accessible push button doors were also installed there making access and egress easier for persons with disabilities and people with strollers.

Multi Year Accessibility Plan

The Lucknow Town Hall, which is a Carnegie building, was able to have an elevator installed now giving access to all three floors including the library and the space where the local theatre guild holds its performances.

Our Emergency Preparedness Plan was updated as per the Integrated Standards requirement. It is available on our website and hard copies are provided upon request. Each facility that is open to the public has maps put up by each entrance depicting the location of fire exits, first aid kits, defibrillators and fire extinguishers for that building.

In an effort to make Council Chambers more accessible to persons with disabilities, a sound system was installed. This allows Council, senior staff and guest speakers a method for amplifying their voices. The sound system is appreciated by the members of Council as well as the audience. Stairs to and from township buildings as well as those within are made more visible with bright yellow nosing in an effort to eliminate or reduce slips and falls.

Accessible push button doors are being installed at municipal facilities as budgetary constraints allow. The first was at the Ripley Library followed by one of the doors to Council Chambers. That has been followed with the door to the washroom in the lobby of the Ripley-Huron Community Centre. This process will continue until all doors are replaced.

The township's Multi-Year Accessibility Plan is available on-line or staff can provide a hard copy if requested at the township office. Individual pamphlets have been prepared for different disabilities (such as hearing impaired) and are available for pick-up in our lobby or on-line. The Lewis Trail and the Apple Rail Trail – both accessible walking trails over 2 km long in the Village of Ripley are proving very popular with many people both with and without disabilities. Keeping people active is one way to promote healthy lifestyles.

Staff are continually designing and updating preventative and emergency maintenance procedures for the accessible elements in Public Spaces as required under Section 80.44 of the Integrated Accessibility Standards O. Reg. 191/11 as amended.

In a County-wide initiative, accessible washrooms in all the municipalities were placed on-line on a County map with descriptions, locations and pictures in time for the 2015 tourist season making traveling easier for persons with disabilities, small children and others. This initiative was very well received by many travelling in the area.

Township infrastructure is continually being monitored for issues affecting persons with disabilities that can be eliminated or reduced and to ensure that the township is in compliance with AODA requirements.

Multi Year Accessibility Plan

Barriers Identified

The Township of Huron-Kinloss reviews and reflects on what are possible barriers for persons with disabilities who wish to utilize their goods, services or facilities with the intent of eliminating or at least reducing the impact of these. Adding ramps to access to public buildings and providing designated parking for persons with disabilities are steps forward. Where the public parks are concerned, providing hard, even surfaces and specialized equipment make use of the park possible for caregivers or those who want to play there. Access and egress of facilities have been made easier with each automatic door installed and once inside the continued use of the automatic doors allow easy access to entire buildings as do elevators. The sound system assisting persons and brightly coloured stair noses are further examples of steps taken to remove barriers for persons with disabilities.

With each construction job, accessibility issues are taken into consideration at the planning stage. The use of the roll-over curbs and tactile walking surface indicators make walking safer and easier for many. Accessible parking spaces are built into plans now. Signage has also been made clearer and is becoming standardized within Bruce County increasing the comfort people feel as they seek directions.

Less visible are the changes in the website made to meet regulated standards. This has extended to any communications coming from the Township. Staff training teaches new hires about accessibility requirements and reviews changes as they come along. Part of the training includes learning how to understand the challenges and needs of persons with disabilities. The Purchasing Policy was updated to reflect the accessibility requirements as was the Emergency Preparedness Plan. Emergency information has been made in accessible format and is located at all facilities open to the public. Efforts have been made that make signage clearer and more easily understandable inside the facilities. With the use of Facebook and Twitter, attempts are being made to reach a wider audience with information that is pertinent to them.

Review and Monitoring Process

The Accessibility Plan is reviewed annually. The Working Group meets when required to discuss any proposed additions to the plan and update progress on initiatives laid out by the plan. Department heads will review major projects to ensure conformance with the plan under the following standards.

Customer Service

The Accessibility Standards for Customer Service came into force on January 1, 2008. The standard applies to all organizations in Ontario that provide goods and services and facilities to the public or to other businesses and who have one or more employees.

Multi Year Accessibility Plan

As a public sector organization, the Township of Huron-Kinloss needed to comply to the following Accessibility Standards by January 1, 2010:

- Establish policies, practices and procedures on providing goods and services to people with disabilities.
- Training staff on how to serve people with disabilities.
- Allowing people with disabilities to bring their support person or service animal with them.
- Communicating with a person in a way that respects their disability.

The Accessible Customer Service policy was written and adopted by by-law on October 19, 2009 and was amended May 17, 2010. All council, staff, volunteers and contractors as at December 31, 2009 completed customer service training. This training has been updated for current employees and communicated to any new employees and volunteers. Under O. Reg. 165/16, on July 1st, 2016 the Customer Service Standard was incorporated into the Accessibility Standards Regulation 191/11.

Transportation

The transportation accessibility standard applies to all persons or organizations making the decision to provide the following types of passenger transportation services and conveyances under provincial jurisdiction: Fixed Route Passenger Transportation Services, On-Demand taxi services, Booked vehicle services, School transportation services, Other transportation services. Huron-Kinloss offers access to a specialized transportation service provider through Saugeen Mobility And Regional Transit Services (SMART).

Information and Communication

Providing alternate formats will ensure that all clients can access our information. The Ontario Human Rights Code establishes, in accordance with the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the principle of access by persons with disabilities to goods, services, facilities and employment. The Code prohibits not only overt discrimination, but also practices that are discriminatory in their effect. Under the Code, to refuse a request for information in an accessible format could be considered a discriminatory practice and could make the township liable for a complaint.

The Township totally revamped the website in 2010 and updated it again in 2018 meeting the standards prescribed by the AODA. This has given all members of the community and those who visit the website a greater ability to access all of the information that is offered on our website. Templates have been designed for reports and agendas to assist staff in compliance to applicable standards.

Employment

The focus is to be on paid employment practices, and related to employee-employer relationships, including recruitment, hiring, and retention policies and

Multi Year Accessibility Plan

practices. The township clearly states in the above process that we are an Equal Opportunity Employer. In accordance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 and the Ontario Human Rights Code, the township will provide accommodations throughout the recruitment, selection and / or assessment process to applicants with disabilities. Policies are in place specifying the wording for the advertising, recruitment and selection process.

As it was stated before the entire municipal office is not yet accessible. If a person with disabilities was hired they would however be able to work on the main floor as there is an accessible entrance, offices, and washrooms. Other facilities in the Township are fully accessible and can be staffed by persons with disabilities. An Individual Accommodation plan will be prepared that is tailored to their specific needs at the time they begin.

Note: In 2011, the Information and Communication, Employment and Transportation components were amalgamated and joint deadlines established. It is now called the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR).

Design of Public Spaces

Requirements under the Design of Public Spaces affect the township when major renovations or new projects are being undertaken. Lion's Park in Point Clark which underwent renovations in 2014 was outfitted with the appropriate play surface and the Splash Pads in recent years in both Ripley and Lucknow were equipped with proper outdoor eating spaces and accessible washrooms as per the requirements as well. All municipal buildings that have accessible entrances are marked with the International Symbol of accessibility. The municipality recently added more accessible parking spaces that are clearly marked with the International Symbol of Accessibility. As the township moves forward it will review, monitor and take into consideration the requirements for:

- Recreational trails and beach access routes
- Outdoor Public Use Eating Areas
- Outdoor Play Spaces
- Exterior Paths of Travel (including ramps, stairs, pedestrian signals, and rest areas)
- Accessible Parking
- Obtaining Services
- Maintenance

Communication of the Plan

Copies of the plan are available at the Municipal Office and Public Libraries. The Plan is also available on the Township website at www.huronkinloss.com. The Township of Huron-Kinloss wants to work together with the members of the community to remove the barriers that still existing within the community.

Multi Year Accessibility Plan

Feedback and Contact Information

Members of the public are encouraged to make comments on the Township of Huron-Kinloss's Multi-Year Accessibility Plan and any accessibility issues. There are a number of ways a person can contact the township to express their accessibility related comments. A feedback form is available on the township website or by request.

Contact : Accessibility Coordinator
Township of Huron-Kinloss
21 Queen Street, P.O. Box 130
Ripley, ON N0G 2R0
519-395-3735 Fax: 519-395-4107
info@huronkinloss.com

Looking Ahead

With the majority of the deadlines for the standards behind now, what remains is to continually be seeking ways to make the goods, services and facilities more accessible to the public.

Integrated Standard: Customer Service

Actions:

1. Training to be maintained for employees and volunteers
2. Review of feedback forms and amend processes if required

Integrated Standard: Information and Communication

Actions:

1. Multi-Year Accessibility Plan (Review every five years)
2. Annual Status Report to be prepared
3. All material on website to be WCAG 2.0 Level AA Standard by January 1st 2021
4. Accessible formats and communication supports upon request to be carried out in a timely manner and at no additional cost to person making the request.

Integrated Standard: Employment

Actions:

3. Return to Work Process – develop as need is required for individual
4. Redeployment Process – develop as need is required for individual

Integrated Standard: Transportation

Actions:

1. SMART to maintain accessibility plans
2. SMART to maintain eligibility criteria and appeal process

Integrated Standard: Design of Public Spaces

Actions:

Multi Year Accessibility Plan

1. New construction or major renovations to meet standards of O. Reg. 191/11 as amended
2. As funding comes available, move all public access doors to accessible push button access
3. As funding comes available make all washrooms fully accessible

Appendix:

About Disability

The Disability Continuum

There is no universally accepted meaning for the word "disability". Most definitions, however, can be placed on a continuum. At one end of the spectrum, disability is explained in terms of medical conditions (medical model). At the opposite end, disability is explained in terms of the social and physical contexts in which it occurs (environmental model).

The medical model focuses on deficiencies, symptoms and treatments. The World Health Organization's (WHO) 1976 definition for disability, for example, is "any restriction or lack (resulting from an impairment) of ability to perform an activity in the manner or within the range considered normal for a human being." Medical model definitions promote the idea that disability is a deviation from the norm.

Many people with disabilities are troubled by definitions that regard disability as abnormal, preferring instead to portray disability as commonplace, natural, and in fact, inevitable. As people age, they experience gradual declines in visual acuity, auditory sensitivity, range of motion, bodily strength and mental powers. Significant functional limitations affect almost half of people between the ages of 55 and 79, and over 70% of people over 80. Beyond middle age, disability is the norm.

The environmental model explains disability in relation to social and physical contexts. In this view, the environment, not an individual's medical condition, causes disability. For example, during an electrical blackout, a person who is completely blind can effortlessly navigate around the home, hammer nails, and, if a Braille user, read a novel. A sighted person would be unable to perform these tasks easily, if at all. In this example, the environment disables the sighted person.

The environmental model emphasizes that people with disabilities are capable human beings, and that it is barriers, not medical conditions, that are disabling. Disability results when people design a world for their way of living only, without taking into account the natural - and foreseeable - variability among human beings. In other words, disability is a consequence of design flaws in the built and human environments.

All barriers are human-made. If design problems cause barriers, then disabilities can be eliminated - or minimized - by modifying how we live, the tools we use, and our intuitions about the proper way to do things. If systemic barriers cause disabilities, the disabilities can be eliminated by modifications to policies, plans and processes. If attitudes cause barriers, then disability awareness, respect and

Multi Year Accessibility Plan

an understanding of positive interaction with people with disabilities will remove barriers.

Specialized medical knowledge may be needed to treat diseases and symptoms, but not to address barriers. Barriers, not medical conditions, prevent people with disabilities from participating fully in life.

Types of disability and functional limitations

A person's disability may make it physically or cognitively hard to perform everyday tasks such as operating a keyboard, reading a sign, differentiating colours, distinguishing sounds, climbing stairs, grasping small items, remembering words, or doing arithmetic.

Consider the functional limitations associated with twelve different kinds of disability and the effects of these limitations on an individual's ability to perform everyday tasks.

1. Physical

Physical disabilities include minor difficulties moving or coordinating a part of the body, muscle weakness, tremors and in extreme cases, paralysis in one or more parts of the body. Physical disabilities can be congenital, such as Muscular Dystrophy; or acquired, such as tendonitis.

Physical disabilities affect an individual's ability to:

- Perform manual tasks, such as hold a pen, grip and turn a key, type on a keyboard, click a mouse button, and twist a doorknob
- Control the speed of one's movements
- Coordinate one's movements
- Move rapidly experience balance and orientation
- Move one's arms or legs fully, e.g., climb stairs
- Move around independently, e.g., walk any distance, easily get into or out of a car, stand for an extended period, reach, pull, push or manipulate objects, have strength or endurance

2. Hearing

Hearing loss include problems distinguishing certain frequencies, sounds or words, ringing in the ears and total (profound) deafness.

A person who is deaf, deafened or hard-of-hearing may be unable to use a public telephone, understand speech in noisy environments, or pronounce words clearly enough to be understood by strangers.

3. Speech

Speech disability is a partial or total loss of the ability to speak. Typical voice disorders include problems with:

Multi Year Accessibility Plan

- Pronunciation
- Pitch and loudness
- Hoarseness or breathiness
- Stuttering or slurring

People with severe speech disabilities sometimes use manual or electronic communication devices. Individuals who have never heard may have speech that is hard to understand.

4. Vision

Vision disabilities range from slightly reduced visual acuity to total blindness.

A person with reduced visual acuity may have trouble reading street signs, recognizing faces, or judging distances. They might find it difficult to maneuver, especially in an unfamiliar place. He or she may have a very narrow field of vision, be unable to differentiate colours, have difficulties navigating or seeing at night, or require bright lights to read. Most people who are legally blind have some vision.

5. Deaf-blind

Deaf-blindness is a combination of hearing and vision loss. It results in significant difficulties accessing information and performing activities of daily living. Deaf-blind disabilities interfere with communication, learning, orientation and mobility.

Individuals who are deaf-blind communicate using various sign language systems, Braille, standard PCs equipped with Braille displays, telephone devices for the deaf-blind and communication boards. They navigate with the aid of white canes, service animals, and electronic navigation devices.

People who are deaf-blind may rely on the services of an intervener. Interveners relay and facilitate auditory and visual information and act as sighted guides. Interveners are skilled in the communication systems used by people who are deaf-blind, including sign language and Braille.

6. Smell

Smell disability is the inability to sense, or a hypersensitivity to, odours and smells.

A person with a smelling disability may have allergies to certain odours, scents or chemicals or may be unable to identify dangerous gases, smoke, fumes and spoiled food.

7. Taste

Taste, disability limits the ability to experience the four primary taste sensations: sweetness, bitterness, saltiness and sourness.

Multi Year Accessibility Plan

A person with a taste disability may be unable to identify ingredients in food, spoiled food, or noxious substances.

8. Touch

Touch disability alters the ability to sense surfaces and their texture or quality, including temperature, vibration and pressure. Touching sensations may be heightened, limited, absent (numbness), or may cause pain or burning.

A person with a touch disability may be unable to detect (or be insensitive to) heat, cold or changing temperatures. Alternatively, a person with a touch disability may be hypersensitive to sound, physical vibrations, or heated surfaces or air.

9. Intellectual

An intellectual disability affects an individual's ability to think and reason. The disability may be caused by genetic factors (e.g., Downs Syndrome), exposure to environmental toxins (as in Fetal Alcohol Syndrome), brain trauma and psychiatric conditions.

A person with an intellectual disability may have difficulty with

- Language: understanding and using spoken or written information
- Concepts: understanding cause and effect
- Perception: taking in and responding to sensory information
- Memory: retrieving and recognizing information from short or long-term memory
- Recognizing problems, problem solving and reasoning

10. Mental health

There are three main kinds of mental health disabilities:

- Anxiety: a state of heightened nervousness or fear related to stress
- Mood: sadness or depression
- Behavioral: being disorganized; making false statements or inappropriate comments; telling distorted or exaggerated stories

People with mental health disabilities may seem edgy or irritated; act aggressively; exhibit blunt behavior; be perceived as being pushy or abrupt; start laughing or get angry for no apparent reason.

11. Learning

Learning disabilities are disorders that affect verbal and non-verbal information acquisition, retention, understanding, processing, organization and use.

People with learning disabilities have average or above-average intelligence, but take in information, retain it, and express knowledge in different ways.

Learning disabilities affect reading comprehension and speed; spelling; the mechanics of writing; manual dexterity; math computation; problem solving,

Multi Year Accessibility Plan

processing speed; the ability to organize space and manage time; and orientation and way-finding.

12. Other

Disabilities result from other conditions, accidents, illnesses, and diseases, including ALS (Lou Gehrig disease), asthma, diabetes, cancer, HIV/AIDS, environmental sensitivities, seizure disorders, heart disease, stroke, and joint replacement. Temporary disabilities such as broken legs are included in this category as well.