



MULTI-YEAR ACCESSIBILITY PLAN 2013-2017



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

An Introduction to the AODA	3
A Message from the Halton Hills Accessibility Advisory Committee	4
Town of Halton Hills Accessibility Advisory Committee	5
Accessibility Accomplishments	6
Objectives of the 2013-2017 Multi-year Accessibility Plan	7
2013 – 2017 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan	8-14
Conclusion	15



An Introduction to the AODA....

People with disabilities represent a significant and growing part of our population. According to Statistics Canada, 1.85 million people in Ontario have a disability which represents 15.5% of Ontario's population. Disability tends to increase with age. In two decades it is estimated that 20% of the population will have a disability. Enhancing the ability of people with disabilities to live independently and contribute to the community will have positive effects on the future prosperity in Ontario.

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) is the first law of its kind in Canada. Under the AODA, the Province is developing, implementing and enforcing accessibility standards. The goal of the act and the standards is to make the province accessible for all people with disabilities by 2025.

The Multi-Year Accessibility Plan is based upon requirements under the AODA. The AODA sets out the roadmap for an accessible Ontario by 2025. It contains standards in the following five areas:

- Customer Service
 - Information & Communication
 - Employment
 - Transportation
 - Built Environment
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- The Customer Service Standard (Ontario Regulation 429/07) was the first standard under the AODA to become law. It ensures that people with disabilities can receive goods and services in a manner that takes into account one's disability
 - The Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (Ontario Regulation 191/11) is made up of three of the five standards - Information and Communication, Employment and Transportation Standards. The goal of the IASR is to make it easier for people with disabilities to get to where they need to go; expand Ontario's labour pool and welcoming people with disabilities into more workplaces; and give people with disabilities access to more of the information we all depend on.
 - The Built Environment Standard is the final standard to be released. This Standard pertains to the design of public spaces. While the Built Environment standard is still in its draft stages, The Town of Halton Hills understands the importance of an accessible built environment that allows for independence and participation for persons of all abilities. The Town continues to provide upgrades/renovations within public facilities and spaces in order to remove and/or prevent barriers.

A Message from the Halton Hills Accessibility Advisory Committee....

The objective of providing a totally accessible community to all Town of Halton Hills residents is a goal certainly worth striving for. Over the past several years, the Town, in consultation with the Halton Hills Accessibility Advisory Committee, has made great strides towards removing and preventing barriers to accessibility.

Our continued working relationship with Town staff and the support of Council on the implementation of the accessibility requirements outlined within the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act 2005* will most certainly assist in achieving an accessible community that we can all be proud of.

The Multi-Year Accessibility Plan 2013-2017 is in keeping with our mandate to implement, maintain and enhance accessibility for all persons with disabilities in a manner that respects their dignity and independence and we look forward to working with Council and Town staff to carry-out the actions identified within the multi-year plan.

Councillor Moya Johnson, Chair
On behalf of the
Halton Hills Accessibility Advisory Committee



Town of Halton Hills Accessibility Advisory Committee....

The Town of Halton Hills Accessibility Advisory Committee (HHAAC) is a key resource and contributor to accessibility planning issues in all departments of the Town. The HHAAC 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, seniors' issues, and communication.

The HHAAC has access to resources to consider all disabilities when making recommendations. A Town appointed staff person works with the HHAAC to help facilitate the process. The HHAAC also assists with the development of protocols related to AODA on various topics including site plan applications, construction of new Town facilities, renovations to Town owned facilities and all department purchases.

HHAAC is committed to working with staff and the community to develop standards that reflect the community's needs. Halton Hills Town Council seeks input of the Committee in establishing criteria for current and new policies and practices. Most importantly, the HHAAC generates ideas for the development and implementation of Municipal Accessibility Plans which benefit persons with disabilities throughout the Town of Halton Hills.

Members of the 2010 -2014 Accessibility Advisory Committee...

Mayor Rick Bonnette (Ex-officio)
Councillor Moya Johnson, Chair
Councillor Jon Hurst, Vice Chair
Bill Leslie, Citizen Member
Chris Kenopic, Citizen Member
Karen Heffernan, Citizen Member
Barb Montemurro, Citizen Member
Judy Fewster, Citizen Member
Ron McKnight, Citizen Member
Kirk Donaldson, Citizen Member
Michelle Lowe, Citizen Member
Andrew Tutty, Citizen Member
Grace Chadwick, Citizen Member
Wendy Farrow-Reed, Halton Chamber of Commerce Representative

Accessibility Accomplishments....

There have been many accomplishments, some very significant, that have been completed under the direction of the HHAAC. These are few of the highlights:

- Closed captioning on Cogeco of Town of Halton Hills council meetings;
- Commissioning of a comprehensive audit of all town facilities to identify and address accessibility deficiencies;
- The review and upgrade of the Activan transportation policy and procedures, as well as the taxi-script program and accessible taxi-cabs;
- Retro-fitting physical barriers, such as automatic sliding doors on the Civic Centre and Acton Arena;
- Installing visible fire alarms in facilities;
- Audits of main sidewalks to identify deficiencies and undertake repairs;
- Monthly newspaper articles written by HHAAC member Andrew Tutty highlighting accessibility issues to the community at large;
- Creation and implementation of the AODA Training Brochure;
- Presentation to the Halton Hills Chamber of Commerce regarding accessibility challenges and the new AODA – Integrated Accessibility Standards;
- Voiceprint – a service which allows for those with visual impairments to know what is happening in our community through audible readings of local newspaper articles broadcast through Cogeco;
- Council approval of the Integrated Accessibility Regulation Standards (IARS) Policy;
- Purchase of an adjustable change table at the Gellert Community Centre for participants who require assistance from their caregivers;
- Removal of bollards posts and open gates on the sidewalks at some town park facilities;
- Creation of the Town of Halton Hills Accessibility webpage;
- Purchase of assistive technology devices for both the Acton and Georgetown Libraries;
- Evacuation Chair for the Georgetown Public Library;
- Review of eight (8) Site Plan Applications since 2010 for development throughout Halton Hills.

Objectives of the 2013 – 2017 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan...

The Accessibility Plan describes the measures that the Town of Halton Hills will take in the next five years to identify, remove and prevent barriers to people with disabilities who utilize the facilities and services of the Town of Halton Hills. While the Integrated Accessibility Standard Regulation requires that a multi-year plan be developed to outline how the Town will remove and prevent barriers within the areas of Employment, Information and Communication, and Transportation, the Town's 2013-2017 Multi-Year Plan goes farther in outlining action items to reduce and prevent barriers within all five standards.

Annually, a status report will be completed to outline the progress of measures taken to implement the multi-year accessibility plan. Additionally, an annual review of the plan will be conducted with the plan being updated as required to include any new identified priority action items and/or as new legislation is brought forward.

The Accessibility Plan is in keeping with the objective of incorporating sustainability into the Town's operation. Implementation of the actions outlined in the Multi-Year Plan provides for greater opportunity to sustain community livability for residents of all abilities.

We welcome customer feedback on the Town's Accessibility Plan. Together we can continue to make the Town of Halton Hills one of the leaders in accessibility.



2013 – 2017 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

Key Area	Action Items	Completed  Additional Comments
2013 Action Items		
Policies	Develop, implement and maintain policies governing how the organization will achieve accessibility through meeting its requirements referred to in the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation, and include a statement of organizational commitment to meet the accessibility needs of persons with disabilities in a timely manner.	 Integrated Accessibility Standards Policy adopted by Council, November 2012.
	Policy to be publicly available and be provided in alternate format upon request.	 Policy available on Town's website and in alternate formats upon request.
Accessibility Plan	Establish, implement, maintain and document a <u>multi-year accessibility plan</u> which outlines the town's strategy to prevent and remove barriers and meet its requirements under the IASR.	In consultation with the HHAAC. Complete January, 2013.
	Post the accessibility plan on website, if any, and provide the plan in an accessible format upon request.	Upon Council approval post the final plan on the Town's website.
	Prepare an <u>annual status report</u> on the progress of measures taken to implement the multi-year accessibility plan. Present the status report to Council. Post the status report to the Town's website and make available in an accessible format upon request	Status Report to be completed December 2013.
	Review and update the accessibility plan at least once every five years in consultation with the HHAAC	Review December 2013 and update as required.
Procuring or Acquiring Goods	Incorporate accessibility criteria and features when procuring or acquiring good, services or facilities, except where it is not practicable to do so.	As of January 1, 2013 and ongoing
	If the town determines that it is not practicable to incorporate accessibility criteria and features when procuring or acquiring goods, services or facilities, the town shall provide, upon request, an explanation.	As of January 1, 2013 and ongoing

Key Area	Action Items	Completed  Additional Comments
Self-service kiosks	Incorporate accessibility features when designing, procuring or acquiring self-service kiosks	<p><i>Kiosk</i> – an interactive electronic terminal, including a point-of-sale device, intended for public use that allows users to access one or more services or products or both.</p> <p>Ensure adequate space surrounding self-serve terminals/kiosks and availability of large font text.</p>
Training	<p>Train on the requirements of the accessibility standards referred to in the IASR (Information & Communication, Employment and Transportation) and on the Human Rights Code as it pertains to persons with disabilities.</p> <p>Keep a record of the dates of training and the individuals who have received training.</p>	<p>Training to be provided to;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All employees & volunteers - All others persons who provide goods, services or facilities on behalf of the Town <p>Produce a handbook to assist with the training requirement.</p>
Accessible Feedback Processes	Ensure that the Town's feedback processes are accessible to persons with disabilities by providing and arranging for the provision of accessible formatted and communication supports upon request.	Provide feedback forms on the Town's website with accessibility features (ie. large fonts)
Employment	Ensure the Town's recruitment process provides for accommodations for those with disabilities or whose disabilities increase over time.	As of January 1, 2013 and ongoing
	Develop and have in place a return to work process for employees who have been absent from work due to a disability and require disability-related accommodation in order to return to work.	Develop by December 31, 2013

Key Area	Action Items	Completed  Additional Comments
	Develop an Accommodation Policy which is to be provided to all employees.	By December 31, 2013.
Accessible Website	<p>Ensure the Town's website(s) and web content conform to W3C WCAG 2.0 Level A</p> <p>This applies to websites, web content and web-based applications.</p>	By December 31, 2013
Public Library Materials	<p>Libraries to provide and arrange access for accessible materials where available.</p> <p>Libraries to provide accessible features on their public access computers.</p>	As of January, 2013 and ongoing
Facilities & Public Spaces	Install Accessible Traffic (cross-walk) Signals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Main & Mill Streets in Acton – 2013 (or prior) • Main & Mill Streets in Georgetown – 2013 (or prior) • Guelph & Delrex – 2013 • Mountainview & Danby (subject to Council Report)
	Install accessible sliding doors at the Acton Seniors Centre	Renovation to front entrance
	Acquire an accessible podium equipped with an accessible microphone for Council Chambers	For use by delegations attending Council meetings
Assistive Devices	Purchase Assistive Devices for the new Georgetown Library	2012/2013

Key Area	Action Items	Completed  Additional Comments
	Install Assistive Hearing Devices in Council Chambers (Assistive Listening Devices (ALD))	Equip Council Chambers with a wide area FM transmitter which automatically changes FM users' personal receivers to the frequency used in the Chambers. Citizens and staff attending meetings in Council Chambers, who don't have personal receivers, can, use a receiver available through the Town.
	Investigate the opportunity to provide Closed Captioning in real time within the Council Chambers	Look at the viability of hooking television monitor(s) into Cogeco feed in order to provide Closed Captioning to citizens attending Council meetings.

Key Area	Action Items	Completed  Additional Comments
2014 Action Items		
Accessibility Plan	Prepare an <u>annual status report</u> on the progress of measures taken to implement the multi-year accessibility plan. Post the status report to the Town's website and make available in an accessible format upon request.	Status Report to be completed December 2014.
	Review and update the accessibility plan as required.	Review December 2014 and update with any identified priority action items.

Key Area	Action Items	Completed  Additional Comments
Accessible Formats	Conduct a review the Town's Style Guideline and update to ensure accessibility standards are captured (ie. accessible fonts, colour contrasting, text size)	All major corporate publications including advertising, promotional materials and resident communications to follow accessible standards.
Municipal Election	<p>Ensure that the coordination of the 2014 municipal election includes accessibility considerations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review and update election manuals - Assistive voting technology opportunities to be made available - Ensure that all polling stations are accessible and have sufficient accessible parking spots - Develop a municipal election accessibility plan - Provide a post-election accessibility report to Council 	Commence mid- year 2013 and throughout 2014 in preparation of the October 2014 Election.
Training	Ensure training on Accessibility Standards is offered to all new employees and third parties	Ongoing
Facilities & Open Spaces	<p>Install accessible push button doors at entrance to;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Council Chambers - Esquesing Room 	
	Install at least one new Accessible Traffic (cross-walk) Signal (upon Council approval through subsequent report)	Locations to be determined
Assistive Devices	Install Assistive Hearing Devices in Esquesing Room	Equip the Esquesing Room with a wide area FM transmitter which automatically changes FM users' personal receivers to the frequency used in the Chambers. Citizens and staff attending meetings in the Esquesing Room who don't have personal receivers, can, use a receiver available through the Town.

Key Area	Action Items	Completed  Additional Comments
2015 Action Items		
Accessibility Plan	Prepare an <u>annual status report</u> on the progress of measures taken to implement the multi-year accessibility plan. Post the status report to the Town's website and make available in an accessible format upon request.	Status Report to be completed December 2015.
	Review and update the accessibility plan as required.	Review December 2015 and update with any identified priority action items.
Accessible Taxi-Cabs/ Specialized Transit	Review, with consultation with the HHAAC, the demand for accessible taxi-cabs within the Town. Provide opportunity for public feedback on accessible transportation needs.	Conduct a public meeting to gain citizens perspective.
Training	Provide accessible standard training to incoming Council members as part of Council Orientation.	January/February 2015
Accessible Website	Ensure the Town's website(s) and web content conform to W3C WCAG 2.0 Level AA This applies to websites, web content and web-based applications.	By December 31, 2015 to meet January 1, 2016 compliance
Facilities & Open Spaces	Install at least one new Accessible Traffic (cross-walk) Signal (upon Council approval through subsequent report).	Location to be determined
	Conduct a signage review at Town facilities to ensure accessibility standards are met.	2015 – review signage within Town Hall, and at Community Centres.

Key Area	Action Items	Completed  Additional Comments
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2016 & 2017 Action Items

Accessibility Plan	Prepare an <u>annual status report</u> on the progress of measures taken to implement the multi-year accessibility plan. Post the status report to the Town's website and make available in an accessible format upon request.	Status Report to be completed December 2015 and 2016
	Review and update the accessibility plan as required.	Review December 2015 and 2016. Update with any identified priority action items.
Facilities and Open Spaces	Continue signage review at Town facilities to ensure accessibility standards are met.	2015 – review signage within at Arenas, Senior Centres, and open spaces (parks, trails, municipal lots)
	Monitor the development of the forthcoming Draft Design of Public Spaces Standards (through the Built Environment – proposed compliance starting in 2016) and identify implications for new or redeveloped Town building projects relative to public spaces. Update the multi-year plan as required in order to meet compliance dates.	Public spaces includes recreational trails, beach access routes, outdoor public eating areas, outdoor play spaces, exterior paths of travel, accessible parking.
Future Plans	Develop a multi-year plan for 2018 through 2023 taking into consideration all legislative requirements of the AODA. Provide public the opportunity to provide feedback on the draft plan.	Bring forward to Council for approval December 2017.

Conclusion

The Town of Halton Hills continues to work toward creating a universally accessible community through the removal of barriers to persons with disabilities. These do not only mean physical barriers – we must ensure that barriers related to architecture, information, technology and attitude are removed or prevented in order to make the Town of Halton Hills accessible for all.

Not only are we obligated to continue our pursuit in the prevention and removal of barriers for people with disabilities – it is simply **The Right Thing to Do!** The Town of Halton Hills has been proactive and, with the assistance and guidance of the HHAAC, we have accomplished much to ensure accessibility is integrated within our by-laws, facilities, policies, programs, services and our customer service practices. We strive to continue our mandate of treating people with disabilities with respect for their dignity and independence, and to make reasonable efforts to provide equal opportunities to our services for all.



“Accessibility is that which enables people to achieve their full potential. It is inclusion. Accessibility is a human right and accessibility is right.”

**The Honorable David C. Onley
Lieutenant Governor of Ontario**