



**COUNTY OF MIDDLESEX
JOINT ACCESSIBILITY PLAN
2016-2021**



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Introduction

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act

In June 2005, the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act 2005 (AODA) was enacted into law. The AODA is more comprehensive and prescriptive than the Ontarians with Disabilities Act from 2001 and applies to the public sector, as well as private and non-profit organizations. The AODA requires the development of accessibility standards, compliance deadlines, and administrative penalties for non-compliance.

The fundamental purpose of the AODA is to ensure that Ontario is accessible by 2025. Ontario is the first and only Canadian jurisdiction to regulate accessibility standards.

Standards Development Committees were established in the following areas:

- Customer Service
- Information and Communications
- Employment
- Transportation
- Built Environment

Each standard has established implementation targets and compliance requirements for obligated organizations.

The AODA requires accessibility of goods, services, facilities, accommodation, employment as well as information and communications.

Implementation Strategy

Middlesex County supports the spirit and goals of the AODA to make the Province of Ontario accessible by 2025. The County is striving to become more accessible and inclusive to people with disabilities by ensuring accessibility is a reality throughout all facilities and business operations. Ensuring accessibility is integrated into all County initiatives, business practices, boards, committees departments and divisions. The County and all participating municipalities are committed to fulfilling the requirements.

Participating Municipalities

This multi-year accessibility plan is prepared jointly between the County of Middlesex and the following participating municipalities:

- County of Middlesex
- Township of Adelaide Metcalfe
- Township of Lucan Biddulph
- Municipality of Middlesex Centre
- Municipality of North Middlesex
- Municipality of Southwest Middlesex
- Municipality of Strathroy-Caradoc
- Municipality of Thames Centre
- Village of Newbury

Statement of Commitment

Middlesex County and the participating municipalities are committed to eliminating barriers and improving accessibility for people with disabilities in a manner that respects dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity.

Middlesex County recognizes the diverse needs of all our residents and customers and will respond by striving to provide services and facilities that are accessible to all. Middlesex County is committed to meeting the needs of people with disabilities in a timely manner, and will do so by preventing and removing barriers to accessibility and meeting accessibility requirements under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA).

Middlesex Accessibility Advisory Committee

The AODA requires municipalities to establish an Accessibility Advisory Committee, where the population exceeds 10,000.

The Middlesex Accessibility Advisory Committee is a public committee that is comprised of people with disabilities and staff members from the County and local municipalities. The purpose of the committee is to provide advice to Councils on the removal and prevention of barriers.

Monitor and Review

This Multi-Year Accessibility Plan will be reviewed and updated at least once every five years.

An annual status report will be completed to document the progress and measures taken to implement Middlesex County's strategy and meet the requirements under the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation.

Plan coordination

The County's Accessibility Coordinator is responsible for the development of this plan, in consultation with the participating municipalities and the Accessibility Advisory Committee.

Municipal Contact Information

Municipality	Contact
County of Middlesex 399 Ridout Street North London ON N6A 2P1	Jennifer Cowan, Accessibility Coordinator Kathy Bunting, County Clerk
Township of Adelaide Metcalfe 2340 Egremont Drive, R.R.#5 Strathroy, ON N7G 3H6	Cathy Case, Acting CAO/Treasurer
Township of Lucan Biddulph 270 Main Street, P.O. Box 190 Lucan, ON N0M 2J0	Ron Reymer, CAO Lisa deBoer, Clerk
Municipality of Middlesex Centre 10227 Ilderton Road, R.R. #2 Ilderton, ON N0M 2A0	Michelle Smibert, CAO Stephanie Troyer-Boyd, Clerk
Municipality of North Middlesex 229 Main Street, P.O. Box 9 Parkhill ON N0M 2K0	Marsha Paley, CAO Jackie Tiedeman, Clerk
Municipality of Southwest Middlesex 153 McKellar Street, P.O. Box 218 Glencoe, ON N0L 1M0	Janneke Newitt, Administrator-Clerk
Municipality of Strathroy-Caradoc 52 Frank Street Strathroy, ON N7G 2R4	Ralph Coe, CAO Angela Toth, Director of Corporate Services/Clerk
Municipality of Thames Centre 4305 Hamilton Road, Dorchester ON N0L 1G3	Stewart Findlater, CAO Margaret Alexander, Clerk
Village of Newbury 22910 Hagerty Road, Newbury, ON N0L 1Z0	Betty Gordon, Clerk-Treasurer

Timelines and Deliverables

Outcomes

- People with disabilities will have access to accessible services
- People with disabilities will have access to alternate formats and communication supports for any information that the County produces
- A barrier-free recruitment process
- Greater accessibility in County-owned facilities
- County staff able to identify barriers to accessibility and actively seek solutions to prevent and remove barriers

Approach

- Develop policies and procedures
- Incorporate accessibility into planning processes
- Train staff
- Engage the public in feedback
- Work to remove barriers to employment
- Continue to make facilities accessible
- Ensure there is access to information and communications

Timelines

2012-2013:

- The development of policies
- Developing a multi-year accessibility plan
- Purchasing requirements
- Emergency and public safety information
- Public Libraries
- Report to the Accessibility Directorate of Ontario (2013)

2014-2021:

- Employment
- Training
- Feedback process
- Accessible formats and communication supports
- Accessible Websites and web content
- Report to the Accessibility Directorate of Ontario (2015, 2017, 2019, 2021)
- Design of Public Spaces Regulation
- Accessible Customer Service update

Middlesex County Accessibility Achievements

Training

- Trained staff on accessibility regulations in 2013. This training is provided on an ongoing basis when new employees are hired. The training includes:
 - A review of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act and its regulations (including the Accessible Customer Service Standard and the Integrated Accessibility Standard)
 - An overview of the Ontario Human Rights Code
 - How to interact and communicate with persons with various types of disability.
 - How to interact with persons with disabilities who use an assistive device or require the assistance of a guide dog or other service animal or the assistance of a support person.
 - How to use equipment or devices available on the provider's premises or otherwise provided by the provider that may help with the provision of goods or services to a person with a disability.
 - What to do if a person with a particular type of disability is having difficulty accessing the provider's goods or services.
- Developed training document for volunteers. This training is provided on an ongoing basis when new volunteers come on board.
- Trained staff on "creating accessible documents". The training includes:
 - The basics of how to build an accessible Word document
 - Tips and best practices
 - How to test for accessibility within a document
 - Plain language and colour contrast
 - A review of making Excel spreadsheets and PowerPoint presentations accessible (this is provided to staff based on job duties)
 - Reviewing an accessible PDF
- Trained County Council on AODA requirements in February 2015.
- In-house web developer received training on the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines
- Assistive technology training was developed and provided to staff in the Strathroy, Lucan and Parkhill branches. This training is specific to the assistive technology that is available within those branches. (In class training has been provided, as well as an online module is available for new staff)

Accessible Websites and Web Content

- Mapping software
 - The County of Middlesex launched new mapping software in 2015. The software was launched in an effort to provide high quality mapping services to County residents. The mapping software is WCAG compliant.
- Templates
 - Created templates to assist in making documents accessible. This includes Council and Committee reports, job advertisements, bylaws, job descriptions, media release, newsletters and various finance documents.

- Websites updated in 2015
 - In 2015, the County undertook website re-design projects for the Middlesex County Library and the Economic Development websites. Both projects have been made accessible in accordance with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0
- Accessible Emergency Plan
 - Community Emergency Management Plan is currently available in a web accessible format on the County's website. Alternate formats can be obtained by contacting the County Clerk's office.

Policies

- Accessible Customer Service policy developed in 2009
- Developed Corporate Accessibility policy which includes the requirements under the Accessible Customer Service Standard and the Integrated Accessibility Standard.
- Developed Accommodations in the Workplace policy which outlines the process that staff must follow when requesting an accommodation. The policy also outlines the process for accommodations being provided during the recruitment process.

Purchasing

- Amended purchasing policy in October 2013.
- Developed purchasing resource for staff in October 2013.

Library

- Materials available in the branches include: Large Print Books, eBooks (online), and audiobooks (CD's available, and downloadable)
- Patrons with disabilities can participate in the Canadian Equitable Library Association's (CELA) service and receive: Daisy books, Braille books and Described DVD's.
 - In addition, CELA has recently launched an online app called "Direct to Player". This allows patrons with an iPad or tablet to be able to directly download audiobooks onto their device.
 - CELA offers audio newspapers and magazines.
 - Patrons can sign up through the Library.
- Assistive technology is available at the Lucan, Strathroy and Parkhill Branches. Technology includes:
 - Dragon Naturally Speaking (voice recognition software)
 - JAWS (screen reading software)
 - ZoomText (screen magnification software)
 - Large Print Keyboards
 - Joystick mouse

Feedback Process

- Members of the public can submit their feedback using an online or printable form. The County welcomes feedback regarding accessibility.

- When the County receives feedback, the County Clerk will notify the appropriate department and make arrangements for the feedback to be followed up with.
- When seeking feedback from the public, the County will provide accessible formats and/or communication supports to members of the public upon request.

Communication Supports and Accessible Formats

- Through training, the County attempts to ensure that documents found on the County's website (through which the County has control) are accessible per the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines. This is an ongoing process and documents are being updated. Members of the public can request documents in accessible formats or communication supports needed to attend meetings. Members of the public should contact the County Clerk to determine the appropriate format.

Employment Requirements

- Developed Accommodations in the Workplace policy which outlines the process that staff must follow when requesting an accommodation. The policy also outlines the process for accommodations being provided during the recruitment process.
- Provided Department Heads with information on how to remove barriers to accessibility throughout the recruitment process.
- Developed accommodations procedure to ensure that accommodation requests are documented.

Middlesex County Accessibility Future Goals

Training

- Develop comprehensive purchasing training and deliver to staff responsible for making purchases.
- Develop online training module and additional resources to help staff create accessible documents. (Training is currently provided in class)
- Develop CELA training for Library staff
- Develop Accessible Communications training for Library staff

Design of Public Spaces Regulation

- The County will ensure compliance with the Design of Public Spaces regulation as it applies to County owned public spaces.

Accessible Customer Standard update

- Review the updated Accessible Customer Service standard in 2016 and implement as required.

Websites and Web Content

- Continue to monitor websites to ensure WCAG compliance
- Develop strategy to ensure web document compliance for documents dating back to 2012.

Policies

- Continue to review policies to ensure they are consistent with the four principles of accessibility.

Township of Adelaide Metcalfe Accessibility Achievements

Training

- Trained staff on accessibility regulations as required.
- On-going training of staff on creating accessible documents.
- Training available to Council on AODA requirements in February 2013, hosted by Middlesex County.

Accessible Website and Web Content

- Website improvements made and on-going.

Policies

- Accessible Customer Service policy developed in 2009.
- Accessibility policy developed in 2013 which includes requirements under the Accessible Customer Service Standard and the Integrated Accessibility Standard.
- Accommodations in the Workplace policy developed in 2013 which outlines the process that staff must follow when requesting an accommodation and the process for accommodations during the recruitment process.

Communication Supports and Accessible Formats

- Through training, the Township attempts to ensure that documents found on the Township's website are accessible per the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines. This is an on-going process and documents are updated as staff time permits. Members of the public can request documents in accessible formats or communication supports needed to attend meetings. Members of the public should contact the Clerk to determine the appropriate format.
- 2014 Municipal Election. The Township used an alternative voting method (telephone/internet).

Employment Requirements

- The Accommodations in the Workplace policy (adopted in 2013) outlines the process for accommodations being provided during the recruitment process.

Township of Adelaide Metcalfe Accessibility Goals

Training

- Provide Department heads with information on how to remove barriers to accessibility through the recruitment process.
- Develop procedures to ensure that accommodation requests are documented.
- Develop comprehensive purchasing training and deliver to staff responsible for making purchases.
- Provide (through Middlesex County) on-going training to help staff create accessible documents.

Website and Web Content

- Continue to monitor website to ensure WCAG compliance.
- Develop strategy to ensure web documents are compliant dating back to 2013.

Policies

- Continue to review Township policies to ensure they are consistent with the four principles of accessibility.
- Reformat Emergency Response Plan (currently posted on the website) to a more accessible format.
- Create a format to receive feedback from the public.

Design of Public Spaces Regulation

- The Township will ensure compliance with the Design of Public Spaces regulation as it applies to municipally owned public spaces. Municipal staff will advise developers of these regulations during consultation meetings.
- Ensure improvements to municipally owned facilities are reviewed and inspected for compliance.

Accessible Customer Service Standard update

- Review the updated Accessible Customer Service Standard in 2017 and implement as required.

Township of Lucan Biddulph Accessibility Achievements

Municipal Facilities

- Completed the construction of a new Township Office that included dedicated accessible parking spaces, entrance doors, service counter, washrooms and large monitors for Council meeting for presentations.

Municipal Elections

- In the 2014 Municipal Election the Township utilized an electronic voting system incorporating voting through telephone and secure internet connections. The Chief Electoral Office attended locations within the municipality that might have difficulty with the new system and assisted them with the process to ensure they had the ability to vote in the election (i.e. LTC Facilities and Senior Apartments). A kiosk was also set up at the Township Office and Library and staff at both locations were available for assistance in person or by phone.

Training

- Trained staff on accessibility regulations in 2013. This training is provided on an ongoing basis when new employees are hired. The training includes:
 - A review of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act and its regulations (including the Accessible Customer Service Standard and the Integrated Accessibility Standard)
 - An overview of the Ontario Human Rights Code
 - How to interact and communicate with persons with various types of disability.
 - How to interact with persons with disabilities who use an assistive device or require the assistance of a guide dog or other service animal or the assistance of a support person.
 - How to use equipment or devices available on the provider's premises or otherwise provided by the provider that may help with the provision of goods or services to a person with a disability.
 - What to do if a person with a particular type of disability is having difficulty accessing the provider's goods or services.
- Developed training document for volunteers. This training is provided on an ongoing basis when new volunteers come on board.
- Trained staff on "creating accessible documents". The training includes:
 - The basics of how to build an accessible Word document
 - Tips and best practices
 - How to test for accessibility within a document
 - Plain language and colour contrast
 - A review of making Excel spreadsheets and PowerPoint presentations accessible (this is provided to staff based on job duties)
 - Reviewing an accessible PDF
- Trained Township Council on AODA requirements in February 2015.

- Web developer received training on the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines

Accessible Websites and Web Content

- Templates
 - Developed templates to assist in making documents accessible.
- Websites updated in 2014
 - In 2014, the Township undertook a website re-design for municipality's website. This project have been made accessible in accordance with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0
- Accessible Emergency Plan
 - Community Emergency Management Plan is currently available in a web accessible format on the Township's website. Alternate formats can be obtained by contacting the Clerk's office.

Policies

- Accessible Customer Service policy developed in 2009
- Developed Corporate Accessibility policy which includes the requirements under the Accessible Customer Service Standard and the Integrated Accessibility Standard.
- Developed Accommodations in the Workplace policy which outlines the process that staff must follow when requesting an accommodation. The policy also outlines the process for accommodations being provided during the recruitment process.

Purchasing

- Amended purchasing policy in October 2013.
- Developed purchasing resource for staff in October 2013.

Feedback Process

- Members of the public can submit their feedback using an online or printable form. The Township welcomes feedback regarding accessibility.
 - When the Township receives feedback, the Clerk will notify the appropriate department and make arrangements for the feedback to be followed up with.
- When seeking feedback from the public, the Township will provide accessible formats and/or communication supports to members of the public upon request.

Communication Supports and Accessible Formats

- Through training, the Township attempts to ensure that documents found on the Township's website (through which the Township has control) are accessible per the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines. This is an ongoing process and documents are being updated. Members of the public can request documents in accessible formats or communication supports needed to attend meetings. Members of the public should contact the Clerk to determine the appropriate format.

Employment Requirements

- Developed Accommodations in the Workplace policy which outlines the process that staff must follow when requesting an accommodation. The policy also outlines the process for accommodations being provided during the recruitment process.
- Provided Department Heads with information on how to remove barriers to accessibility throughout the recruitment process.
- Developed accommodations procedure to ensure that accommodation requests are documented.

Township of Lucan Biddulph Accessibility Future Goals

Training

- Develop comprehensive purchasing training and deliver to staff responsible for making purchases.
- Develop online training module and additional resources to help staff create accessible documents. (Training is currently provided in class)

Design of Public Spaces Regulation

- The Township will ensure compliance with the Design of Public Spaces regulation as it applies to Township owned public spaces.

Accessible Customer Standard update

- Review the updated Accessible Customer Service standard in 2016 and implement as required.

Websites and Web Content

- Continue to monitor websites to ensure WCAG compliance

Policies

- Continue to review policies to ensure they are consistent with the four principles of accessibility.

Middlesex Centre Accessibility Achievements

Training

- Trained staff on accessibility regulations in 2013. This training is provided on an ongoing basis when new employees are hired. The training includes:
 - A review of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act and its regulations (including the Accessible Customer Service Standard and the Integrated Accessibility Standard)
 - An overview of the Ontario Human Rights Code
 - How to interact and communicate with persons with various types of disability.
 - How to interact with persons with disabilities who use an assistive device or require the assistance of a guide dog or other service animal or the assistance of a support person.
 - How to use equipment or devices available on the provider's premises or otherwise provided by the provider that may help with the provision of goods or services to a person with a disability.
 - What to do if a person with a particular type of disability is having difficulty accessing the provider's goods or services.
- Developed training document for volunteers. This training is provided on an ongoing basis when new volunteers come on board.
- Trained staff on "creating accessible documents". The training includes:
 - The basics of how to build an accessible Word document
 - Tips and best practices
 - How to test for accessibility within a document
 - Plain language and colour contrast
 - A review of making Excel spreadsheets and PowerPoint presentations accessible (this is provided to staff based on job duties)
 - Reviewing an accessible PDF
- Trained Municipal Council on AODA requirements in February 2015.

Accessible Websites and Web Content

- Mapping software
 - The County of Middlesex launched new mapping software in 2015. The software was launched in an effort to provide high quality mapping services to County residents. The mapping software is WCAG compliant.
- Templates
 - Created templates to assist in making documents accessible. This includes Council reports, bylaws and policies.
- Accessible Emergency Plan
 - Notice on municipal website that Emergency Management Plan in alternate format can be obtained by contacting the municipal office.

2014 Municipal Election

- 2014 municipal election was conducted using an online solution compliant with the guidelines as listed by the W3C technologies website principles which include organization, functionality and readability of information provided, as well as alternative ways of representing information (audio).
- The system used had full compliance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005.
- A Municipal Election Accessibility Report was presented to Council in January 2015 in accordance with the Municipal Elections Act.

Policies

- Accessible Customer Service policy developed in 2009
- Developed Corporate Accessibility policy which includes the requirements under the Accessible Customer Service Standard and the Integrated Accessibility Standard.
- Developed Accommodations in the Workplace policy which outlines the process that staff must follow when requesting an accommodation. The policy also outlines the process for accommodations being provided during the recruitment process.

Purchasing

- Amended procurement policy in October 2013 and again in June 2016.
- Developed purchasing resource for staff in October 2013.

Feedback Process

- Developed a policy where members of the public can submit their feedback using an online or printable form. The municipality welcomes feedback regarding accessibility.
 - When feedback is received, the appropriate department is notified and arranges for the feedback to be followed up with.
- When seeking feedback from the public, the municipality will provide accessible formats and/or communication supports to members of the public upon request.

Communication Supports and Accessible Formats

- Through training, the municipality attempts to ensure that documents found on the municipal website (through which the municipality has control) are accessible per the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines. This is an ongoing process and documents are being updated. Members of the public can request documents in accessible formats or communication supports needed to attend meetings. Members of the public should contact the Clerk to determine the appropriate format.

Employment Requirements

- Developed Accommodations in the Workplace policy which outlines the process that staff must follow when requesting an accommodation. The policy also outlines the process for accommodations being provided during the recruitment process.
- Provided Directors with information on how to remove barriers to accessibility throughout the recruitment process.

- Developed accommodations procedure to ensure that accommodation requests are documented.

Middlesex Centre Accessibility Future Goals

Training

- Develop comprehensive purchasing training and deliver to staff responsible for making purchases.
- Develop online training module and additional resources to help staff create accessible documents. (Training is currently provided in class)

Design of Public Spaces Regulation

- The Municipality will ensure compliance with the Design of Public Spaces regulation as it applies to Municipal owned public spaces.

Accessible Customer Standard update

- Review the updated Accessible Customer Service standard in 2016 and implement as required.

Websites and Web Content

- Continue to monitor website to ensure WCAG compliance
- Develop strategy to ensure web document compliance for documents dating back to 2012.

Policies

- Continue to review policies to ensure they are consistent with the four principles of accessibility.

Southwest Middlesex Accessibility Achievements

Training

- Trained staff on accessibility regulations in 2013. This training is provided on an on-going basis when new employees are hired. The training includes:
 - A review of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act and its regulations (including the Accessible Customer Service Standard and the Integrated Accessibility Standard) - Power Point presentation.
 - An overview of the Ontario Human Rights Code
- Developed training document for volunteers. This training is provided on an on-going basis when new volunteers are recruited.
- On-going training of staff on creating accessible documents.
- Trained Council on AODA requirements in February 2013, hosted by Middlesex County.

Accessible Website and Web Content

- New website launched in 2014. Web designer advises that it has been made accessible in accordance with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0.
- In 2015 revised templates for council reports, minutes and by-laws to ensure accessibility when posted to the web site.

Policies

- Accessible Customer Service policy developed in 2009.
- Accessibility policy developed in 2013 which includes requirements under the Accessible Customer Service Standard and the Integrated Accessibility Standard.
- Accommodations in the Workplace policy developed in 2013 which outlines the process that staff must follow when requesting an accommodation and the process for accommodations during the recruitment process.

Purchasing

- Passed a new Purchasing Policy in 2013, amended in 2014, that addresses accessibility.

Feedback Process

- Created a new feedback form that is available from the municipal website, the municipal office and other various municipal facilities. When feedback is received, the Administrator/Clerk will notify the appropriate department to make arrangements for the feedback to be followed up with in a timely manner.

Communication Supports and Accessible Formats

- Through training, the Municipality attempts to ensure that documents found on the Municipality's website are accessible per the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines. This is an on-going process and documents are updated as staff time permits. Members of the public can request documents in accessible formats or communication supports needed to attend meetings. Members of the public should contact the Clerk to determine the appropriate format.
- 2014 Municipal Election. The Municipality used an alternative voting method (telephone/internet).

Employment Requirements

- The Accommodations in the Workplace policy (adopted in 2013) outlines the process for accommodations being provided during the recruitment process.

Southwest Middlesex Accessibility Goals

Training

- Provide Department heads with information on how to remove barriers to accessibility through the recruitment process.
- Develop procedures to ensure that accommodation requests are documented.
- Develop comprehensive purchasing training and deliver to staff responsible for making purchases.
- Provide (through Middlesex County) on-going training to help staff create accessible documents.

Website and Web Content

- Continue to monitor website and consult with web designer to ensure WCAG compliance.
- Develop strategy to ensure web documents are compliant.

Policies

- Continue to review policies to ensure they are consistent with the four principles of accessibility.
- Reformat Emergency Response Plan (currently posted on the website) to a more accessible format

Design of Public Spaces Regulation

- The Municipality will ensure compliance with the Design of Public Spaces regulation as it applies to municipally owned public spaces. Municipal staff will advise developers of these regulations during consultation meetings.

Accessible Customer Service Standard update

- Review the updated Accessible Customer Service Standard in 2016 and implement as required.

Village of Newbury Accessibility Achievements

Training

- Trained staff on accessibility regulations in 2013. This training is provided on an ongoing basis when new employees are hired. The training includes:
 - A review of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act and its regulations (including the Accessible Customer Service Standard and the Integrated Accessibility Standard)
 - An overview of the Ontario Human Rights Code
- Developed training documents for volunteers and is provided on an ongoing basis when new volunteers are required.
- Trained council on April 13th, 2015 during a council meeting.

Policies

- Accessible Customer Service Policy – March, 2010
- Accessibility Standards for Customer Service – November, 2013
- Accommodations in the Workplace – November, 2013
- Purchasing – October 11th, 2016

Accessible formats

- The Village will provide or arrange for the provision of accessible formats and communication supports for person with disabilities in a timely manner and at a cost that is no more that the regular cost charged to other persons. The person making the request will be consulted to determine the suitability of an accessible format. When it is not practicable to provide an alternate format the Village will provide an explanation.

Built Environment

- The Village will ensure that interior and exterior spaces conform to appropriate legislation, including but not limited to, the Ontario Building Code and the Design of Public Spaces – Ontario Regulation 191/11

North Middlesex Accessibility Achievements

Training

- Trained staff on accessibility regulations in 2013. This training is provided on an ongoing basis when new employees are hired. The training includes:
 - A review of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* and its regulations (including the Accessible Customer Service Standard and the Integrated Accessibility Standard) On-Line Training and Quiz
 - An overview of the Ontario Human Rights Code
 - How to interact and communicate with persons with various types of disability.
 - How to interact with persons with disabilities who use an assistive device or require the assistance of a guide dog or other service animal or the assistance of a support person.
 - How to use equipment or devices available on the provider's premises or otherwise provided by the provider that may help with the provision of goods or services to a person with a disability.
 - What to do if a person with a particular type of disability is having difficulty accessing the provider's goods or services.
- Developed training document for volunteers. This training is provided on an ongoing basis when new volunteers come on board.
- Ongoing Training of staff on "creating accessible documents". The training includes:
 - The basics of how to build an accessible Word document
 - Tips and best practices
 - How to test for accessibility within a document
 - Plain language and colour contrast
 - A review of making Excel spreadsheets and PowerPoint presentations accessible (this is provided to staff based on job duties)
 - Reviewing an accessible PDF
- Trained Council on AODA requirements in February 2015 at County of Middlesex.

Accessible Websites and Web Content

- Templates
 - Created templates to assist in making documents accessible. This includes Council reports, bylaws and minutes on an ongoing basis as time permits for staff with ongoing daily workload
- Websites updated in 2014 and 2016
 - In 2014, the Municipality launched a new website. The website has been made accessible in accordance with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0. In 2016, the Municipality is undergoing an update to the website and will ensure compliance with the regulations are met in consultation with the web designer
- 2014 Municipal Election – Alternative Voting Method (Telephone/Internet)
 1. See attached report on how accessibility requirements were met.

- Accessible Emergency Plan
 - Community Emergency Management Plan is currently available on the municipal website and in hard copy at the administration office front counter. Alternate formats can be obtained by contacting the Clerk's office.

Policies

- Accessible Customer Service policy developed in 2009
- Developed Corporate Accessibility policy which includes the requirements under the Accessible Customer Service Standard and the Integrated Accessibility Standard.
- Developed Accommodations in the Workplace policy which outlines the process that staff must follow when requesting an accommodation. The policy also outlines the process for accommodations being provided during the recruitment process.

Purchasing

- Amended purchasing policy in October 2013.
- Reviewed with Manager in October 2013.

Feedback Process

- Members of the public can submit their feedback using the form printed from the municipal website or in person through the municipal office. The Municipality welcomes feedback regarding accessibility.
 - When the Municipality receives feedback, the Clerk will notify the CAO and appropriate department and make arrangements for the feedback to be followed up with.
- When seeking feedback from the public, the Municipality will provide accessible formats and/or communication supports to members of the public upon request.

Communication Supports and Accessible Formats

- Through training, the Municipality attempts to ensure that documents found on the Municipality's website (through which the Municipality has control) are accessible per the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines. This is an ongoing process and documents are being updated. Members of the public can request documents in accessible formats or communication supports needed to attend meetings. Members of the public should contact the Clerk to determine the appropriate format.

Employment Requirements

- Developed Accommodations in the Workplace policy which outlines the process that staff must follow when requesting an accommodation. The policy also outlines the process for accommodations being provided during the recruitment process.
- Provided Department Heads with information on how to remove barriers to accessibility throughout the recruitment process.
- Developed accommodations procedure to ensure that accommodation requests are documented.

North Middlesex Accessibility Future Goals

Training

- Develop comprehensive purchasing training and deliver to staff responsible for making purchases.
- Develop training resources to help staff create accessible documents. (Training is currently provided in class)

Design of Public Spaces Regulation

- The Municipality will ensure compliance with the Design of Public Spaces regulation as it applies to municipal owned public spaces. The municipal staff will advise developers of these regulations to be considered during consultation meetings.

Accessible Customer Standard update

- Review the updated Accessible Customer Service standard in 2016 and implement as required.

Websites and Web Content

- Continue to monitor and update websites to ensure WCAG compliance
- Develop strategy to ensure web document compliance for documents dating back to 2012.

Policies

- Continue to review policies to ensure they are consistent with the four principles of accessibility.

Municipality of Strathroy-Caradoc Accessibility Achievements

Training

- Trained staff on accessibility regulations in 2013. This training is provided on an ongoing basis when new employees are hired. The training includes:
 - A review of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act and its regulations (including the Accessible Customer Service Standard and the Integrated Accessibility Standard)
 - An overview of the Ontario Human Rights Code
 - How to interact and communicate with persons with various types of disability.
 - How to interact with persons with disabilities who use an assistive device or require the assistance of a guide dog or other service animal or the assistance of a support person.
 - How to use equipment or devices available on the provider's premises or otherwise provided by the provider that may help with the provision of goods or services to a person with a disability.
 - What to do if a person with a particular type of disability is having difficulty accessing the provider's goods or services.
- Trained staff on "creating accessible documents". The training includes:
 - The basics of how to build an accessible Word document
 - Tips and best practices
 - How to test for accessibility within a document
 - Plain language and colour contrast
 - A review of making Excel spreadsheets and PowerPoint presentations accessible (this is provided to staff based on job duties)
 - Reviewing an accessible PDF
- Trained Council on AODA requirements
- Assistive technology training was developed and provided to staff in the Strathroy.
- Accessible Customer Service policy developed in 2009
- Developed Corporate Accessibility policy which includes the requirements under the Accessible Customer Service Standard and the Integrated Accessibility Standard.
- Developed Accommodations in the Workplace policy which outlines the process that staff must follow when requesting an accommodation. The policy also outlines the process for accommodations being provided during the recruitment process.

Accessible Websites and Web Content

- Websites updated in 2016
 - Launched a new website in 2016. All web content conforms to the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), 2005, which calls for accessibility levels according to the World Wide Consortium Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0, Level A, at a minimum
 - To illustrate the Municipality's commitment to a high level of website accessibility as quickly as possible, the websites conform to the WCAG 2.0 Level AA, well ahead of the January 1, 2021, date required by AODA regulations.

- Documents (PDF, Microsoft Word, Microsoft PowerPoint) dated Jan. 1, 2012, or later are posted to the website as AODA compliant.
- For all historical documents (PDF, Scans, Microsoft Word, and Microsoft PowerPoint) dated prior to Dec. 31, 2011, every effort is made to make the document available and AODA-compliant. If a document provided on the website contains elements that are inaccessible, an alternative method of access will be provided.
- Developed standardized and accessibility compliant staff report template for implementation in 2016 to ensure content meets web content accessibility guidelines.
- Accessible Emergency Plan
 - Community Emergency Management Plan is currently available in a web accessible format on the Municipality's website. Alternate formats can be obtained by contacting the Clerk's office.

Municipal Buildings

- Installed new directional signage for the Strathroy-Caradoc municipal office (52 Frank Street, Strathroy) to improve way-finding, including clear identification for the location of accessible washrooms within the facility
- Installation of new, accessible height service counters at the recreation department reception area and environmental services/roads departments reception area located within the Strathroy-Caradoc municipal office (52 Frank Street, Strathroy)
- Improved lighting for accessible ramp at the side entrance to the Strathroy-Caradoc municipal office (52 Frank Street, Strathroy)
- New non-slip rubber surface coating applied to the front steps of the Strathroy-Caradoc municipal office (52 Frank Street, Strathroy)
- Improvements made to the automatic pushbutton operators installed on the front entrance door of the Strathroy Library/Museum facility (34 Frank Street, Strathroy)
- Replacement automatic pushbutton operator installed on the games room/hall entry at the Strathroy & Area Seniors Centre facility (137 Frank Street, Strathroy)

Policies

- Accessible Customer Service policy developed in 2009
- Developed Corporate Accessibility policy which includes the requirements under the Accessible Customer Service Standard and the Integrated Accessibility Standard. Developed Accommodations in the Workplace policy which outlines the process that staff must follow when requesting an accommodation. The policy also outlines the process for accommodations being provided during the recruitment process

Purchasing

- Amended purchasing policy in 2014.
- Developed purchasing resource for staff in October 2013.

Feedback Process

- Members of the public can submit their feedback using an online or printable form. The Municipality welcomes feedback regarding accessibility.
 - When the Municipality receives feedback, the Municipal Clerk will notify the appropriate department and make arrangements for the feedback to be followed up with.
- When seeking feedback from the public, the Municipality will provide accessible formats and/or communication supports to members of the public upon request.

Communication Supports and Accessible Formats

- Through training, the Municipality attempts to ensure that documents found on the Municipality's website (through which the Municipality has control) are accessible per the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines. This is an ongoing process and documents are being updated. Members of the public can request documents in accessible formats or communication supports needed to attend meetings. Members of the public should contact the Municipal Clerk to determine the appropriate format.
- Upgraded our Police and Fire Dispatch Centre (including Middlesex County) to allow for Text to 911 for hearing and speak impaired callers.

Employment Requirements

- Developed Accommodations in the Workplace policy which outlines the process that staff must follow when requesting an accommodation. The policy also outlines the process for accommodations being provided during the recruitment process.
- Provided Department Heads with information on how to remove barriers to accessibility throughout the recruitment process.
- Developed accommodations procedure to ensure that accommodation requests are documented.

Municipality of Strathroy-Caradoc's Accessibility Future Goals

Training

- Develop comprehensive purchasing training and deliver to staff responsible for making purchases.
- Develop online training module and additional resources to help staff create accessible documents. (Training is currently provided in class)

Design of Public Spaces Regulation

- The Municipality will ensure compliance with the Design of Public Spaces regulation as it applies to municipally owned public spaces.

Accessible Customer Standard update

- Review the updated Accessible Customer Service standard in 2016 and implement as required.

Future Goals

- New automatic pushbutton operators installed on the doors of the public washrooms located in the Strathroy Library/Museum facility (34 Frank Street, Strathroy) to enhance accessibility
- Improvements planned for the accessible parking area at the Strathroy & Area Seniors Centre facility (137 Frank Street, Strathroy), with existing concrete surface (failing) to be replaced with new asphalt surfacing and marked to current accessible parking space standards
- Colour contrast strip to be added to the edge of each step of the new non-slip rubber surface coating that was applied to the front steps of the Strathroy-Caradoc municipal office (52 Frank Street, Strathroy) in 2015

Municipality of Thames Centre Accessibility Achievements

Training

- Trained Council Members and Department Heads on the new Accessibility Policy in 2013.
- Trained staff on accessibility regulations in 2014. This training is provided on an ongoing basis when new employees are hired. The training includes:
 - A review of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act and its regulations (including the Accessible Customer Service Standard and the Integrated Accessibility Standard)
 - An overview of the Ontario Human Rights Code
 - How to interact and communicate with persons with various types of disability.
 - How to interact with persons with disabilities who use an assistive device or require the assistance of a guide dog or other service animal or the assistance of a support person.
 - How to use equipment or devices available on the provider's premises or otherwise provided by the provider that may help with the provision of goods or services to a person with a disability.
 - What to do if a person with a particular type of disability is having difficulty accessing the provider's goods or services.
- Developed training document for volunteers (including committee members). This training is provided on an ongoing basis when new volunteers come on board.
- Trained staff on "creating accessible documents". This was provided to admin staff in 2014 and 2015. This training includes:
 - The basics of how to build an accessible Word document
 - Tips and best practices
 - How to test for accessibility within a document
 - Plain language and colour contrast
 - A review of making Excel spreadsheets and PowerPoint presentations accessible (this is provided to staff based on job duties)
 - Reviewing an accessible PDF
- Trained Council Members on AODA requirements in 2015.
- The In-house web developer was informed of the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines in 2013.

Accessible Websites and Web Content

- Templates
 - Created templates to assist in making documents accessible. This includes Council and Committee reports, and by-laws. The Municipal Staff are working towards making other web documents accessible, ie. job advertisements, job descriptions, media releases, newsletters, etc.
- Accessible Emergency Plan

- Community Emergency Management Plan is currently available in a web accessible format on the Municipality's website. Alternate formats can be obtained by contacting the Municipal Clerks office.

Policies

- Developed Accessible Customer Service policy in 2009.
- Developed Corporate Accessibility policy which includes the requirements under the Accessible Customer Service Standard and the Integrated Accessibility Standard.
- Developed Accommodations in the Workplace policy which outlines the process that staff must follow when requesting an accommodation. The policy also outlines the process for accommodations being provided during the recruitment process.
- Developed Modified Work Policy in 2013.

Purchasing

- Amended purchasing policy in November 2013 and again in November 2014.
- Developed purchasing resource for staff in November 2014.

Feedback Process

- Members of the public can submit their feedback using the feedback form available at the Municipal Office or on the Municipality's website. The Municipality welcomes feedback regarding accessibility.
 - When the Municipality receives feedback, the Municipal Clerk will notify the appropriate department and make arrangements for the feedback to be followed up with.
- When seeking feedback from the public, the Municipality will provide accessible formats and/or communication supports to members of the public upon request.

Communication Supports and Accessible Formats

- Through training, the Municipality attempts to ensure that documents found on the Municipality's website (through which the Municipality has control) are accessible per the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines. This is an ongoing process. Members of the public can request documents in accessible formats or communication supports needed to attend meetings. Members of the public should contact the Municipal Clerk to determine the appropriate format.
- Developed a procedure for requests for an alternate format or communication support in 2015. This information has been forwarded to the Department Heads who would be responding to these types of requests.

Employment Requirements

- Developed Accommodations in the Workplace policy which outlines the process that staff must follow when requesting an accommodation. The policy also outlines the process for accommodations being provided during the recruitment process (includes Accessible Recruitment Guidelines).

- Provided Department Heads with information on how to remove barriers to accessibility throughout the recruitment process.
- Developed accommodations procedure to ensure that accommodation requests are documented.

Accessible Taxis

- Conducted a survey to assist the Municipality in determining the proportion of accessible taxicabs need in the community. The results were presented to Council for their information in September 2013.

Municipality of Thames Centre Accessibility Future Goals

Training

- Develop comprehensive purchasing training and deliver to staff responsible for making purchases.
- Develop online training module and additional resources to help staff create accessible documents. (Training is currently provided in class)

Design of Public Spaces Regulation

- The Municipality will ensure compliance with the Design of Public Spaces regulation as it applies to Municipal owned public spaces.

Accessible Customer Standard update

- Review the updated Accessible Customer Service standard in 2016 and implement as required.

Websites and Web Content

- Continue to monitor websites to ensure WCAG compliance
- Develop strategy to ensure web document compliance for documents dating back to 2012.
- Update municipal website to ensure it is WCAG compliant

Policies

- Continue to review policies to ensure they are consistent with the four principles of accessibility.

Repeal of Ontarians with Disabilities Act

The Ontarians with Disabilities Act (ODA) established the foundation for accessibility in the public sector by requiring municipalities to establish Accessibility Advisory Committees and develop accessibility plans. These have been municipal requirements since the legislation was enacted in 2001.

In 2005, the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) was established. The AODA allowed for the development of accessibility standards to be developed by the Province of Ontario. The Ontario government has removed sections of the ODA which are comparable to those addressed by the AODA or its regulations.

Effective December 1, 2015, twelve sections of the ODA have been repealed. These sections are largely duplicated or addressed in a comparable manner by the AODA or its regulations. This change will positively reduce the administrative burden on municipalities.

In particular, three sections of the ODA that directly impact municipalities were repealed as follows:

- Section 11 - Municipal Accessibility Plans
 - the ODA Requirement to Develop Annual Accessibility Plans
 - the AODA requires municipalities to develop multi-year accessibility plans.

- Section 12 - Accessibility Advisory Committees
 - the ODA Requirement for Municipalities to Develop Accessibility Advisory Committees (AACs)
 - the AODA requires that the majority of AAC members be persons with disabilities and provides for an expanded scope of the committee when compared with ODA-related requirements.

- Section 13 - Municipal Goods and Services
 - the ODA Requirement for Municipalities to Ensure Accessible Procurement of Goods and Services
 - the AODA requires all broader public sector organizations to incorporate accessibility into procurements of goods, services and facilities, including kiosks.

All other ODA requirements continue to be in effect. The AODA remains Ontario's primary accessibility law and municipalities will continue to be required to comply with applicable requirements in that statute and its regulations.

Accessibility committees and plan requirements from the ODA are duplicated in the AODA and therefore are unchanged.