

Multi-Year Accessibility Plan 2024 / 2028

This 2024 to 2028 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan outlines how Norfolk County will continue to meet the requirements of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) and remove barriers in our programs, services and facilities for people with disabilities.



Accessible formats and communication supports available upon request.

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Executive Summary

This 2024 to 2028 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan outlines how Norfolk County will continue to meet the requirements of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) and remove barriers in our programs, services and facilities for people with disabilities. The plan outlines the long-term strategies to achieve legislated accessibility requirements and improve accessibility across Norfolk County. The 2024 to 2028 Plan builds off the success of Council's direction, Norfolk County Accessibility Advisory Committee's advice and the strong foundation of previous multi-year accessibility plans.

Statement of Commitment

The Corporation of Norfolk County is committed to creating and maintaining a barrier-free County where everyone can live, work and play. This Multi Year Accessibility Plan – spanning from 2024 to 2028 - will act as a roadmap on our journey to meeting the Province's mandate of a fully accessible Ontario by 2025 and beyond.

Norfolk 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. Norfolk 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).

This Multi Year Accessibility Plan is a by-product of working sessions between County staff, consultation with the Norfolk County Accessibility Advisory Committee as well as members of the Norfolk County community living with disabilities.

Background: Norfolk County's third multi-year accessibility plan

Norfolk County's first multi-year accessibility plan was created and approved by County Council in 2013 with the plan expiring at the end of 2018. Its second multi-year accessibility plan was approved in 2018 and spanned to the end of 2022. During this time-period, Norfolk County filed Accessibility Compliance Reports on a biennial basis to the Ministry for Seniors and Accessibility (formerly the Accessibility Directorate of Ontario). These reports were filed in 2015, 2017, 2019, 2021 and 2023.

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act: The state of the AODA & how do we fit

The structure of this Multi Year Accessibility Plan is based upon requirements outlined under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA). The AODA came into effect in

2005 with a goal to make the Province of Ontario fully accessible to all by 2025. The AODA is a law that sets out a process for developing and enforcing accessibility standards. Ontario is the first province and one of the first jurisdictions in the world to enact specific legislation establishing a goal and time-frame for accessibility. It is also the first jurisdiction to legislate accessibility reporting and to establish standards in areas like employment, transportation and the design of public spaces.

These standards fall under the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation O. Reg 191/11 (IASR). The IASR are laws that government, businesses, non-profits and public sector organizations must follow to become more accessible and improve levels of barrier-free access to their services.

The standards are as follows:

Part I – General Requirements

- Includes information on accessibility policies, procurement, establishment of accessibility plans and staff training

Part II – Information and Communications

- Focuses on providing information to our residents in a barrier-free and universally accessible manner including requirements for websites and web content, feedback processes, accessible formats and communication supports and emergency procedures

Part III – Employment

- Providing a barrier-free employment cycle is the focus of Part III – from recruitment and assessment, to selection and notifying successful applicants, to providing appropriate supports and accommodation plans for employees living with disabilities

Part IV – Transportation

- Highlights the requirements for conventional transportation services (transit buses, motor coaches or rail based transportation) and specialized transportation services (designed to transport persons with disabilities) along with taxicabs and accessible taxicabs

Part IV.1 – Design of Public Spaces

- Technical accessibility requirements for numerous public spaces including recreational trails, outdoor play spaces, exterior paths of travel and accessible parking

Part IV.2 – Customer Service

- Includes information on the use of service animals and support persons, temporary service disruptions, feedback processes and customer service focused staff training

Part V – Compliance

- Outlines compliance reporting structure and affiliated non-compliance administrative penalties

Every 3 years the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act is reviewed by an individual appointed by the Provincial government – in 2017 the Honorable David C. Onley was selected to undertake this review. Over the course of 2018, Mr. Onley held public consultations across the Province, interviewing a wide array of individuals living with disabilities as well as those working in the realm of accessibility. In 2019, Mr. Onley put forward 15 recommendations to the Minister of Seniors and Accessibility. The recommendations put forth by Mr. Onley have not yet been enacted in the form of legislative changes as of 2024.

In February of 2022, Rich Donovan, a globally recognized subject matter expert on the convergence of disability and user experience, was appointed to complete the 4th review of the AODA. The scope of the review included 3 main considerations: the effectiveness and evolution of the AODA, building awareness and community support, and compliance, enforcement and incentives. Over the span of 2022 and 2023, Mr. Donovan held consultations across the province, including:

- Virtual public town halls
- Surveys of business leaders and people with disabilities
- Interviews with AODA stakeholders and disability experts
- Meetings with varying levels of government officials

As a result of the consultation, along with Mr. Donovan's assessment, the following 5 key themes were identified:

1. **Outcomes are poor:** there is a near unanimous consensus that the AODA is currently failing people with disabilities. Experience design does not consider the functional needs of people with disabilities and thus those individuals receive poorer experience than their peers
2. **Enforcement does not exist:** there is no meaningful enforcement of the AODA. There are significant logistical constraints to enforcement within the Compliance and Enforcement branch of the AODA
3. **Data/ research does not exist:** AODA stakeholders consistently indicated a lack of data was a significant problem in improving the experiences of people with disabilities

4. **Basic leadership does not exist:** stakeholders observed there was a lack of urgency on getting accessibility right within the Ontario Government
5. **Nobody owns outcomes / no accountability:** Tied closely to leadership and enforcement, consultation participants indicated there was a lack of accountability for implementing the AODA within both the private and public sector.

Following a detailed and comprehensive consultation process, Mr. Donovan has put forth the following groups of recommendations:

Crisis recommendations

- Recommendations surrounding emergency response protocols, service delivery and employee experience, AODA delivery models, success metrics and action planning, and accessible procurement

Strategic recommendations

- Recommendations surrounding regulatory legislative changes between federal and provincial government: proposal for the federal government to focus on the private sector with the provincial government placing more of an emphasis on the public sector

Tactical recommendations

- Recommendations surrounding Data, analytics and research, behavioural change tools and mechanisms, mobilizing government actions (both provincially and federally) as well as a focus on the built environment

The 4th legislative review of the AODA in its entirety can be viewed here: [4th Review of the AODA](#). I encourage anyone interested in reviewing a more detailed outline of the recommendations to visit the webpage.

While the 4th review of the AODA provides a bleak current-state assessment in the Province of Ontario, it is important to note that there has been significant progress made in improving levels of barrier-free access here in Norfolk County as outlined in our annual accessibility status reports. With that in consideration, there is no denying that there is still work to be done as we work towards making this province barrier-free. As designated public sector leaders, Norfolk County has an important role to play in making continual and significant improvements relating to accessibility not only in our built environments, but in the way we deliver our day-to-day services to our residents. This multi-year accessibility plan will act as our roadmap demonstrating how Norfolk County can contribute towards a fully accessible Ontario for all.

Plan Coordination

Norfolk County is committed to fulfilling the accessibility requirements under the AODA and IASR. The County's Accessibility and Special Projects department is responsible for the development of this plan, in consultation with the Norfolk County Accessibility Advisory Committee, the public and persons living with disabilities in our community. All staff have a role to play in identifying, removing and preventing barriers. Employees who are engaged and knowledgeable are able to incorporate accessibility considerations into their daily business practices.

While drafting the 2024-2028 Multi Year Accessibility Plan, community members and residents — particularly those with lived experience of barriers to access, equity, and inclusion — were consulted with and welcomed into the conversation.

The County was committed to ensuring this plan would be designed with the inputs of a greater and wider range of Norfolk residents than ever before. That meant collecting the inputs of as many residents and visitors to Norfolk as possible; in particular, those who are living with disabilities, who are loved ones of people with disabilities, or who work with people with disabilities.

The public and persons with disabilities were consulted with via an online survey regarding the establishment, reviewing and updating of the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan. As reflected in the survey, 48% of respondents identified as persons living with disabilities. This level of participation from the target population/ audience was an encouraging sign in ensuring we were hearing from the right demographic.

Accountability: measurement, evaluation, reporting and compliance

The success of this multi-year accessibility plan will rely on having clear and transparent methods of evaluating and reporting progress.

As laid out in the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR), designated public sector organizations are required to report to their respective Council's on an annual basis in the form of annual status report highlighting any achievements relating to accessibility they have realized in the previous year.

Further, on a biennial cycle, all designated public sector organizations are required to file Accessibility Compliance Reports with the Ministry for Seniors and Accessibility. These Accessibility Compliance Reports come in the form of a fillable PDF, requesting specific information on how the organization is meeting its requirements under the AODA as well as the IASR. Those in non-compliance may be subject to administrative penalties.

Like the Annual Status Reports, the Accessibility Compliance Reports follow an open-government model and are made publicly available for residents to view and provide feedback on.

Norfolk County Accessibility Roadmap

Part I – General Requirements

Overview

General Requirements section of the IASR requires the County to:

- Implement and maintain policies governing how the organization achieves or will achieve accessibility through meeting its requirements under the AODA and the IASR
- Include a statement of organizational commitment to meet the accessibility needs of persons with disabilities in a timely manner in their policies
- Establish, implement, maintain and document a multi-year accessibility plan, which outlines the organization's strategy to prevent and remove barriers and meet its requirements under the IASR
- Incorporate accessibility design, criteria and features when procuring or acquiring goods, services or facilities, except where it is not practicable to do so
- Ensure that training is provided on the requirements of the accessibility standards referred to in this Regulation and on the Human Rights Code as it pertains to persons with disabilities

Progress

- Norfolk County's second multi-year accessibility plan created in 2018
- Annual status reports created and presented to County Council annually from 2018-2023
- Accessibility Compliance Reports filed with the Ministry for Seniors and Accessibility (formerly Accessibility Directorate of Ontario) in 2019, 2021 and 2023
- Policy CS-54-AOP-09: Corporate Accessibility Training Process update in 2019
- Norfolk County Accessibility Advisory Committee Accessibility Advisory Committee terms of reference update in 2019
- Policy CS-02: Purchasing Policy updated in 2022, strengthening barrier-free language ensuring all future procurements are meeting relevant legislative requirements
 - o Accessibility staff regularly reviewed procurement documents going out to market (RFP, RFQ, RFT etc.) while also acting as an evaluation panel member, ensuring accessibility is being incorporated into all project design stages

Goals

- Policy CS-54: Corporate Accessibility policy update to reflect requirements under the AODA and IASR while also including barrier-free best practices and strengthened equity, diversity and inclusion verbiage
- Continue to monitor ongoing and future IASR standards development review committee recommendations and possible legislative changes, including the introduction of new Health Care and Education standards
 - Existing standards under review include Employment, Information and Communications and Design of Public Spaces
 - Mirror in respective policy updates and training updates as required
- Create short, job-specific training modules to complement a standard, general on-boarding accessibility training. Ensure enrolment procedures include affiliated training modules based on departmental operations
 - Employment standard focused training for Human Resources Staff as well as SLT, DLT and OLT to ensure barrier free recruitment practices
 - Design of public spaces and accessible design focused training for staff working in the built environment (Engineering, Facilities etc.)
 - Customer service focused training for all front line staff
 - Information & communications training (specifically web accessibility focused) training for staff with authoring & upload authority for the County website
 - Transportation training for Ride Norfolk operators
- Enhance Norfolk County Election Accessibility Plan for the 2026 Municipal Election relating to the accessible built environment and enhanced customer service at our polling locations

Timelines

Ongoing

- Monitoring ongoing and future potential updates to the IASR via Standards Development Committee recommendations

2024-2026

- Corporate Accessibility Policy review and update
- Training updates

2026-2028

- Municipal Election Accessibility Plan

Part II – Information and Communications

Information and communications play an integral role in service delivery across all municipalities in the Province. It is imperative that we share this information in an accessible and barrier free manner. All residents should have access to information that may impact their day to day lives. This should be consumed free of communication and technological barriers. The County will follow universal design principles and best practices when developing, implementing and maintaining information and communication strategies. This includes websites, print communications materials as well as face-to-face interactions.

Overview

The Information and Communications section of the IASR requires the County to:

- Ensure processes for receiving and responding to feedback are accessible to persons with disabilities
- Provide or arrange for the provision of accessible formats and communications supports for persons with disabilities
- Provide emergency procedures, plans or public safety information in an accessible format or with appropriate communication supports
- Provide websites and web content conforming with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 Level AA

Progress

- Website redevelopment in 2017 to WCAG 2.0 Level A compliance
- County Council Reports and PowerPoint templates created in 2019 to meet WCAG 2.0 Level AA standards
- Accessible document training provided to various County staff members, ensuring content created in Microsoft Word and Adobe Acrobat are meeting WCAG 2.0 Level AA compliance
- Procured a website scanning tool (Monsido) to assist in identifying gaps as it relates to WCAG 2.0 AA compliance while also providing enhanced website analytics
- Automated closed captioning added to Norfolk County Council, public hearing and board of health meetings on YouTube

Goals

- Continue to work towards WCAG 2.0 AA compliance - with a particular focus on a future website redevelopment and web content governance model
- Take inventory of existing content on the website, leveraging Monsido website scanning tool and affiliated web analytics
- Review PDF's / pages as identified by analytics and determine which can be removed or moved into HTML content
- Following future website redevelopment - develop robust accessible document training strategy for website content uploaders onto the County Site
- Review and update Policy CS-45-AOP-03 Accessible Formats and Communication Supports ensuring we are providing adequate resources upon request
- Review and update Policy CS-55: Corporate Customer Service Feedback/ Complaint process to reflect best practices as it relates to opportunities to provide feedback in a barrier free manner
- Review and update CS-54-AOP-07 Accessible Documents Procedure to better align with future website redevelopment
- Explore options to build-in accessible templates into County Council report writing software – E-scribe

Timelines

Ongoing

- Work towards WCAG 2.0 AA compliance – dynamic nature of web content compliance makes this an ongoing task

2024-2026

- Website redevelopment and affiliated work
- Accessible document training
- Accessible Formats and Communication supports, Corporate Customer Service Feedback/ Complaint Process and Accessible Document Procedure policy updates
- E-scribe templates

Part III – Employment

The County is committed to ensuring the employment life-cycle (finding, getting and keeping a job) is as inclusive and barrier free as possible. Effective workplaces provide diverse, inclusive and accessible employment experiences. Accessible recruitment is a powerful tool - it improves our ability to communicate, brings more people together and increases our competitive advantage as to not overlook quality, qualified potential employees. Human Resources, in conjunction with hiring directors and managers will work to ensure the County provides prospective & current employees a barrier-free employment experience.

Overview

The Employment section of the IASR requires the County to:

- Ensure the recruitment, assessment and selection process is accessible and barrier-free. This includes notifying job applicants when they are selected to participate in an assessment or selection process that accommodations are available upon request
- Notify successful applicants of our policies for accommodating employees with disabilities
- Provide accessible formats and communication supports for employees required to perform the employees job including information that is generally available to employees in the workplace
- Provide workplace emergency response information to employees who have a disability
- Provide documented individual accommodation plans for employees with disabilities
- Develop and have in place a return to work process for employees who have been absent from work due to a disability
- Consider performance management, career development and advancement and redevelopment for employees with disabilities

Progress

- All job postings let the public know that accommodations are available upon request during the recruitment process
- Human Resources Policy OHS-05 Accommodation Policy updated in 2018 to reflect legislative updates – encompassing vast majority of Employment standard requirements under the IASR

- o Affiliated programs and plans updated
 - OHS-05A Individualized Accommodation Plan
 - Return to Work Plan
- Human Resources Policy HR-38: Emergency Workplace Response Information for Employees with Disabilities updated in 2020
- Human Resources Form FO-143: Individual Emergency Workplace Response Plan updated in 2017

Goals

- Review and update where appropriate Accommodations in the Workplace Policy
- Review and update where appropriate Emergency Workplace Response for Employees with Disabilities Policy
- Review and update where appropriate Human Resources Policy OHS-05 Accommodation Policy to strengthen verbiage surrounding recruitment, assessment and selection requirements under the IASR
- Review and update Policy CS-54-AOP-04 Assistive Devices in the Workplace Procedure
- Continue to monitor potential changes to the Employment Standard under the IASR as a result of 2018 Standards Development Committee (SDC) review

Timelines

Ongoing

- Monitor potential changes to Employment standard from 2018 SDC Review

2024-2026

- Review and update Accommodations in the Workplace Policy
- Review and update Emergency Workplace Response for Employees with Disabilities
- Review and update Assistive Devices in the Workplace Procedure

Part IV – Transportation

The County is dedicated to providing barrier-free and accessible transportation through Ride Norfolk. The Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR) Transportation Standard aims to remove barriers to public transportation. Designing a universally accessible transit system enables and empowers people living with disabilities to fully participate and contribute to our community. On-demand trip booking through Ride Norfolk improves connectivity and provides a dependable and reliable transportation option. Ride Norfolk recognizes the diverse needs of its ridership and will continue to provide services that are barrier-free to all. Ride Norfolk ensures that accessibility features are considered as part of the design as well as the procurement of goods, services and facilities. All information pertaining to accessible equipment, accessibility features of the vehicles, routes and services provided will be made available. The County also supports accessible transportation options beyond public transit by ensuring that taxicab services, including accessible taxicabs, are available to meet the diverse needs of our residents.

Overview

The Transportation section of the IASR requires the County to:

- Ensure barrier-free access to transportation services provided by Ride Norfolk
- Make available to the public current information on accessibility equipment and features of vehicles, routes and services
- Accommodate persons with disabilities if the accessibility equipment on a vehicle is not functioning and equivalent service cannot be provided
- Provide accessibility training to employees and volunteers on
 - o The safe use of accessibility features and equipment
 - o Acceptable modifications to procedures in situations where temporary barriers exist or accessibility equipment on a vehicle fails
 - o Emergency preparedness and response procedures
- Establish, implement, maintain and document emergency preparedness and response policies that provide for the safety of persons with disabilities and make those policies available to the public
- Ensure that no fare is charged to a support person who is accompanying a person with a disability where the person with a disability has a need for a support person
- Manage, evaluate and take action on customer feedback

- Annually hold at least one public meeting involving persons with disabilities to ensure that they have an opportunity to participate in a review of this multi year accessibility plan
- Notify riders of appointment booking and client cancellation policies
- Consult with the Norfolk County Accessibility Advisory Committee, the public and persons with disabilities in the development of accessible design criteria to be considered in the construction, renovation or replacement of bus stops and shelters
- Consult with the Norfolk County Accessibility Advisory Committee to determine the proportion of on-demand accessible taxicabs in the community
- Permit riders to have service animals or supports persons at no additional cost

Progress

- On-demand transit services provided Monday to Friday from 7:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.
- Contracted transit services provided by third party contractor with work commencing in January 2023
- Third party contractor working to remove all systemic barriers to transportation for individuals with disabilities through the development and communication of policies, practices and procedures that are consistent with the principles of dignity, independence, integration, and equal opportunity
- Third party contractor provides AODA, IASR and Ontario Human Right Code training to all employees
- Shared ride services, allowing riders to request trips through the Blaise mobile app and website or over the phone by selecting a pickup point and destination
- Transit services available from bus stop to bus stop on a first come, first serve basis
- Over 90 bus stops spread out across various communities within Norfolk County, including stops in Brantford and Mount Pleasant. Includes targeted stops for populations experiencing increased mobility device usage (senior housing services, retirement homes etc.)
- Vehicles are equipped with a lift at the rear of the bus to assist passengers with limited mobility or those who are using mobility devices
- Priority seating available to those living with disabilities who require it at both the rear and front of the bus, marked by barrier-free mobility signage
- Fares waived for Canadian National Institute for the Blind (CNIB) card holders and veterans

- Two grant applications submitted awaiting decision to complete a Transit Master Plan; improve accessibility at select stops and install additional transit shelters
- Consultation completed with Norfolk County Accessibility Advisory Committee, members of the public and persons living with disabilities to determine proportion of on-demand accessible taxicabs required in the community as well as the development of accessible design criteria to be considered in the construction, renovation or replacement of bus stops and shelters
- Research indicated that Norfolk County has 29 licensed taxicabs, of which 2 are wheelchair-accessible. This represents approximately 7% of the fleet with best practice benchmarks across Ontario suggesting that smaller municipalities typically aim for 5–10% of their fleet to be accessible, while larger cities target 10–15%

Goals

- Review and update Policy CSD-12 Ride Norfolk Accessibility Policy to reflect any applicable legislative changes and include transportation-related best practice
- Work with third party contractor app to enhance overall accessibility and usability based on community feedback
- Continue to seek funding opportunities to improve levels of barrier-free access to Ride Norfolk vehicles, stops and service delivery and across the County
- If successful under funding applications, work closely with the Norfolk County Accessibility Advisory Committee as well as the Economic Development Advisory Committee on the completion of a Transit Master Plan in identifying any existing barriers to service and guide improvements over the coming years
- Increase accessible on-demand taxicab fleet to 10% (up from 2 to 3). Utilize licensing incentives to bring up the proportion from 7% to 10%

Timelines

Ongoing

- Monitor funding opportunities

2024-2026

- Ride Norfolk – Accessibility Policy update
- Work with third party contractor transit app
- Implement findings of Transit Master Plan

Part IV.1 – Design of Public Spaces (Accessible Built Environment)

The County will strive to ensure that new facilities are designed and built with universal design principles in mind.

The Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR) Design of Public Spaces Standard (DOPS) works hand in hand with the Ontario Building Code to ensure all new buildings and public spaces are barrier-free. Ontario Building Code Section 3.8: Barrier-Free Design outlines design requirements for buildings including but not limited to barrier-free paths of travel, washrooms (including universal), accessible signage, doorways and ramps. The DOPS focuses on building exteriors and ensuring public spaces are easily accessible to everyone including those with disabilities.

Overview

The Design of Public Spaces Standard requires the County:

- To meet the technical requirements as outlined in Part IV.1 for:
 - Recreational trails and beach access routes
 - Outdoor public use eating areas
 - Outdoor play spaces
 - Exterior paths of travel (outdoor sidewalks and walkways, ramps, stairs, curb ramps, depressed curbs, accessible pedestrian control signals, rest areas)
 - Off-street accessible parking
 - Service counters, fixed queuing guides and waiting areas
- To meet the consultation requirements as outlined in Part IV.1 for:
 - Recreational trails
 - Outdoor play spaces
 - On-street parking
 - Rest areas
- To provide procedures for preventative and emergency maintenance of the accessible elements in public spaces and procedures for dealing with temporary disruptions when accessible elements required under the maintenance section of the IASR are not in working order

Progress

- Norfolk County's Accessibility Design Guidelines updated in January 2019 to harmonize with AODA's Design of Public Spaces Standards, Ontario Building Code and CSA amendments
- Secured significant funding under the Enabling Accessibility Fund (Federal funding program for barrier-free built-environment enhancements) for the following projects:
 - **Delcrest Park** in Delhi redeveloped in 2018 with an accessible playground, rubber ground surface, accessible parking and surrounding barrier-free paths of travel.
 - **Simcoe Kinsmen Park** redeveloped in 2019 with an accessible ground surface
 - **County Administration Building** second floor accessible washroom upgrades to renovate existing washrooms to be entirely barrier-free slated for 2024
- Barrier-free path of travel installation at the Simcoe Kinsmen Park in 2022 providing access from Talbot Street North while also significantly improving the overall level of barrier-free access to the park
- Purchase and installation of accessible, height-adjustable podium at the County Administration Building council chambers allowing a wider range of users to access microphone system
- Langton Community Centre washroom upgrade project completed in 2022 – included a full upgrade to existing washroom to be a fully accessible universal washroom while also providing barrier-free access to men's and women's washrooms
- Ongoing Delhi Kinsmen Pool renovation project focused on greatly improving levels of accessibility to the entrance, change rooms and washrooms
- Port Dover beach mat installation for 6 consecutive and successful summers, enhancing barrier-free access to the beach
- Various streetscape reconstruction projects prioritizing exterior paths of travel (curb ramps, sidewalks and accessible pedestrian control signal) upgrades at various locations across the county
- Numerous accessible parking upgrades throughout the County including both on-street and off-street accessible parking spaces

Goals

- Create Universal Washroom Emergency Call Button Alarm Procedure for all County facilities equipped with universal washrooms
- Update Norfolk County Accessibility Design Guidelines to reflect most recent OBC barrier-free design guidelines and industry best-practices regarding universal design
- Review and update
 - Policy CS-54-AOP-05 Assistive Device Procedure – Power Doors
 - Policy CS-54-AOP-06 Assistive Device Procedure – CAB Lift
 - Policy CS-54-AOP-08 Accessible Maintenance Procedure
- Continue to monitor potential funding opportunities for the built environment relating to accessibility under the Enabling Accessibility Fund, Ontario Trillium Foundation, Canadian Tire Jumpstart and Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program
- Working closely with Facilities Department, propose future Norfolk County facilities accessibility audit
 - Inclusive of all County facilities
 - Current state assessment
 - Implement a facility audit schedule outlining how often County facilities should be reviewed
 - Use these tools to inform barrier-free facility improvement recommendations and future capital project initiatives

Timelines

Ongoing

- Monitor potential funding opportunities for the accessible built environment

2024-2026

- Universal washroom emergency call button alarm procedure
- Design guidelines update
- Policy and procedure updates – CAB lift, power doors and accessible maintenance

2026-2028

- Facility accessibility audit

Part IV.2 – Customer Service

Norfolk County is committed to providing a universally accessible customer service experience to all of its residents. All members of the Norfolk County community will receive equitable and barrier-free customer service when interacting with County staff. All staff will receive training on how to provide exceptional customer service to all residents, including those living with disabilities.

Overview:

The Customer Service Standard requires the County to:

- Implement and maintain policies governing its provision of goods, services or facilities, as the case may be, to persons with disabilities
- Ensure policies are consistent with barrier-free principles, providing goods, services or facilities in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities
- Provide persons with disabilities equal opportunity to that of others to obtain, use and benefit from the goods, services or facilities provided by the County
- Allow the use of service animals and support persons to enable persons living with disabilities to obtain, use or benefit from County goods, services or facilities
- Provide timely notice of temporary service disruptions by identifying the reason for the disruption, its anticipated duration and a description of alternative facilities
- Provide training on how to interact and communicate with persons with various types of disabilities, how to interact with persons with disabilities who use an assistive device or require the assistance of a service dog, how to use equipment or devices available on County premises and what to do if a person living with a disability is having difficulty accessing County goods, services or facilities
- Create processes for receiving and responding to feedback about the manner in which the County provides goods, services or facilities to persons with disabilities

Progress

- Updated Policy CS-54-AOP-09 Corporate Accessibility Training Process (2019)
- Policy CS-54 Corporate Accessibility Policy updated in November 2016 providing appropriate requirements as it relates to the Customer Service Standard

Goals

- Review and update the following policies and procedures to reflect legislative changes and best practices as it relates to creating a barrier-free customer experience and improved levels of customer service
 - o CS-54-AOP-01 Service Animals in the Workplace Procedure
 - o CS-54-AOP-02 Support Persons Procedure
 - o CS-54-AOP-09 Corporate Training procedure
 - o CS-55 Corporate Customer Service Feedback/ Complaint Process
 - o CS-56 Corporate Notice of Service Disruption Process
- Finalize Policy CS-54-AOP-10 Dynamic Symbol of Access to be utilized in the built environment as well as County communications and policies

Timelines

2024-2026

- Policy and procedure updates – service animals, support persons, corporate training, customer service feedback/ complaints and service disruption
- Finalize dynamic symbol of access policy

Conclusion

Norfolk County is committed to the prevention, identification and removal of accessibility barriers. The 2024-2028 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan (MYAP) will be monitored by the Accessibility and Special Projects Department on an annual basis and status updates will be posted on the County's website. The MYAP will be updated in 2028 in consultation with employees, residents and visitors with disabilities, the Norfolk County Accessibility Advisory Committee and County Divisions and Departments. Accessibility is a corporate-wide responsibility and will be incorporated by design into the work of all operating areas. Norfolk County will demonstrate and maintain accessibility excellence as an inclusive employer, service provider and municipal government.



