



**Northumberland County 2018 Accessibility Status Report  
Prepared: January, 2019**

**An update on actions taken by the County of Northumberland to create a more inclusive organization for people with disabilities and implement the County's Multi-Year Accessibility Plan**



# Northumberland County 2018 Accessibility Status Report

## Prepared: January, 2019

### Contents

Contact Information.....	3
Glossary of Acronyms .....	4
Introduction .....	5
Statement of Commitment.....	5
Northumberland Accessibility Advisory Committee .....	5
Agency Representatives.....	6
Community Representatives.....	6
Staff Representatives .....	6
Multi-Year Accessibility Plan.....	6
2018 Accomplishments.....	6
IASR General Requirements.....	6
Information & Communication Standard .....	7
Employment Standard .....	7
Design of Public Spaces Standard .....	7
Other Actions Taken .....	7
2019 Goals .....	8
IASR General Requirements.....	8
Customer Service Standard.....	8
Information & Communication Standard .....	8
Design of Public Spaces Standard .....	8
Other Actions to be Taken .....	9
Ongoing Commitments.....	9
IASR General Requirements.....	9
Customer Service Standard.....	9
Information & Communication Standard .....	9

Employment Standard .....	10
Design of Public Spaces Standard .....	10
Conclusion.....	10

## Contact Information

**Municipality:**

Corporation of the County of Northumberland

**Address:**

555 Courthouse Road  
Cobourg, Ontario  
K9A 5J6

**Website:**

[www.northumberlandcounty.ca/accessibility](http://www.northumberlandcounty.ca/accessibility)

**Key contacts:**

Kirsty Brown, Human Resources and Accessibility Coordinator

Phone: 905-372-3329 ext.2327

Email: [accessibility@northumberlandcounty.ca](mailto:accessibility@northumberlandcounty.ca)

Hope Bergeron, 2019-2020 Northumberland Accessibility Advisory Committee Chair

Phone: 905-377-0760

This document is available in an accessible format upon request.

Please contact the County's Accessibility Coordinator at 905-372-3329 ext.2327 or [accessibility@northumberlandcounty.ca](mailto:accessibility@northumberlandcounty.ca) to request an alternative format that meets your needs.

## **Glossary of Acronyms**

AODA	Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act
IASR	Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation
NAAC	Northumberland Accessibility Advisory Committee
ODA	Ontarians with Disabilities Act
OHRC	Ontario Human Rights Code
PDF	Portable Document Format

## **Introduction**

What is accessibility? It simply means giving all people the ability to participate fully in everyday life.

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (also referred to as the AODA), was passed in 2005 and provides for the development, implementation, and enforcement of mandatory standards for accessibility in all areas of daily life. These standards set out mandatory legal requirements for organizations, businesses, and municipalities. The AODA was preceded by the Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001 (ODA), which set the foundation for accessibility in the public sector.

Ontario's first accessibility standard under the AODA – the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service (Ontario Regulation 429/07) – became law on January 1, 2008, and the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (Ontario Regulation 191/11 or IASR for short) which covers Employment, Information and Communication, and Transportation was released in June, 2011. An amendment to the IASR was released by the Province in December, 2012 to include the Accessibility Standard for the Design of Public Spaces. Further changes came into force on July 1, 2016. Now all accessibility standards — including the accessible customer service standard — are part of the IASR.

One of the requirements of the IASR is to establish, implement, maintain and document a multi-year accessibility plan to outline strategies we will take to prevent and remove barriers and meet the requirements under the legislation. This plan must be reviewed at least once every 5 years. The IASR also requires an annual status report to be prepared to report on the progress of measures taken to implement the strategies referenced in the multi-year plan.

The key purpose of this report is to outline the Corporation of the County of Northumberland's (the County's) progress towards meeting the requirements of the IASR and to update the County's multi-year plan.

## **Statement of Commitment**

The County of Northumberland is committed to complying with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) and all of the standards under it in order to create a barrier-free Ontario. The County is committed and guided by the four core principles of dignity, independence, integration, and equal opportunity. The County supports the full inclusion of persons as set out in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, and the AODA.

## **Northumberland Accessibility Advisory Committee**

Under the AODA, all municipalities with a population greater than 10,000 are required to establish accessibility advisory committees. The majority of the members of the committee must be persons with disabilities. The main duty of the committee is to advise Council about the requirements and implementation of accessibility standards and the preparation of accessibility reports and such other matters for which Council may seek its advice.

The Northumberland Accessibility Advisory Committee (NAAC) provides significant input, advice, recommendations, and support to County Council and all County departments regarding matters related to accessibility including the development and maintenance of the County's accessibility plan in accordance with the AODA.

### **Agency Representatives**

Clare Paterson, Northumberland Child Development Centre  
Anne Newman, Community Care Northumberland

### **Community Representatives**

Hope Bergeron (2018 - 2019 Committee Vice-Chair, 2019 - 2020 Committee Chair)  
Kathy Richards  
Robert Robertson

### **Staff Representatives**

Kirsty Brown, Northumberland County Human Resources and Accessibility Coordinator

### **Multi-Year Accessibility Plan**

The County of Northumberland strives to provide goods, services, and facilities that are accessible. Our multi-year accessibility plan is designed to support the principles and requirements outlined in the AODA and the IASR. The plan serves as a road map to help us meet our legislative requirements and to help create a more inclusive organization.

The County reports annually on the progress and implementation of the plan, posts the information on the County's website, and provides the plan in an alternative format upon request.

### **2018 Accomplishments**

Please note – In the 2018 budget, an issue paper was put forward to request approval to contract an external Accessibility Consultant to complete an accessibility compliance audit for the County of Northumberland. The purpose of the audit was to review all existing accessibility policies, practices and training to ensure compliance with the AODA, to identify any gaps and to develop an action plan for moving forward. As such, several of the 2018 goals were put on hold until recommendations on how to proceed were received. The audit is now complete with the 2019 goals reflecting many of the recommendations.

### **IASR General Requirements**

- Provided training at orientation to all new staff on the requirements of the IASR and the Human Rights Code as it pertains to persons with disabilities
- Began piloting online training module for training new employees on the AODA and the Human Rights Code as it pertains to people with disabilities

- Added a self-serve kiosk (computer) in the lobby of the Community & Social Services department for clients to use to research information, apply online for services, print documents, etc. Many accessibility features were addressed (desk that lowers/rises, a touch-enabled computer screen, etc.)

### **Customer Service Standard**

- Began piloting online training module for new employees on accessible customer service
- Completed an accessibility compliance review of the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of 555 Courthouse Road, Cobourg, looking at service related elements

### **Information & Communication Standard**

- Began a complete redesign of corporate website with a focus on meeting accessibility requirements
  - Reviewed and updated Accessibility section for new website
  - Training was provided to all website content creators on creating accessible pdf and Word documents

### **Employment Standard**

- Reached out to all staff reminding them of the County's commitment and process for requesting individualized workplace emergency response information
- Communicated with all candidates and new hires that accommodations are available, upon request, to support candidates with disabilities throughout the recruitment process

### **Design of Public Spaces Standard**

- Facilities department ensured new shared services Paramedic/Fire station in Roseneath was constructed meeting all of the requirements of the Design of Public Spaces standard
- Facilities department installed single story lift at 112 Front Street in Campbellford to increase accessibility
- Facilities department renovated washrooms and locker rooms in Veronica Street Roads depot (Cobourg) and Morganston Roads depot to add accessible washrooms
- Preliminary design work for the new GPL redevelopment began, including a focus on accessibility
- Completed an accessibility compliance review of the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of 555 Courthouse, Cobourg, looking at accessible public spaces-related elements
- Transportation department finalized the construction and installation of an audible pedestrian signal at Elgin Street/Strathy Road intersection in Cobourg

### **Other Actions Taken**

- Completed an extensive accessibility audit with external consultant through Accessibility Advantage
- Council recognized and proclaimed the week of May 27 to June 2, 2018 as National Access Awareness Week in Northumberland County
  - Promoted accessibility awareness to the public through local and social media

- “Disable Disrespect” promotional campaign displayed at all County locations and promoted on the County’s intranet
- Hosted a “Conducting Accessible Meetings” workshop for County employees
- Initiated recruitment for new NAAC members

## **2019 Goals**

### **IASR General Requirements**

- Work with Purchasing department to implement a process to ensure all persons who provide goods, services or facilities on behalf of the County are trained in the requirements of the IASR and have training on the OHRC as it pertains to people with disabilities
- Work with Purchasing to provide training and information to managers and others responsible for procuring goods, services and facilities to ensure accessibility features and criteria and incorporated into purchases
- Review and revise existing IASR policies and ensure effective training to communicate them
- Develop a training strategy that includes:
  - Timely completion of both general and position specific AODA training
  - Tools to access understanding of training material
  - Identification of departments/positions requiring specialized accessibility training

### **Customer Service Standard**

- Complete 1 to 2 department accessibility reviews with the NAAC, looking at service-related elements
- Review and revise existing Accessible Customer Service policies and ensure effective training to communicate them

### **Information & Communication Standard**

- Continue to provide training on creating accessible pdf and Word documents
- Test and launch new corporate website, ensuring it and all content on it meets WCAG 2.0 Level AA
- Information Technology and Communications department planning to collaboratively engage with departments currently operating their own websites (beyond the corporate site) to develop a plan to ensure WCAG compliance

### **Design of Public Spaces Standard**

- Complete 1 to 2 department accessibility reviews with the NAAC, looking at accessible public spaces-related elements
- Facilities department to ensure the new shared services Paramedic/Fire station in Campbellford is built meeting all accessibility requirements (estimated completion: end of 2019)
- Facilities department to install 2 automatic door openers to the main doors at the Material Recovery Facility in Grafton

- Facilities department to install 2 automatic door openers to the Provincial Offences courtroom on the lower level of 860 William Street
- Transportation department plan to complete upgrades (jointly with the Municipality of Trent Hills) to the Bridge Street East/Doxsee Street intersection in Campbellford including the installation of an audible pedestrian signal.

### **Other Actions to be Taken**

- Proclaim the week of May 26 to June 1, 2019 as National AccessAbility Week (formerly National Access Awareness Week) and promote accessibility awareness through events to be determined
  - Select County staff members to be awarded 2019 Helping Hands certificate and present certificates at May, 2019 County Council session
- Deliver accessibility orientation for new Council (early 2019)
- Finalize recruitment for new NAAC members and ensure effective training is provided

### **Ongoing Commitments**

#### **IASR General Requirements**

- Maintain accessibility policies and multi-year plan
- Prepare annual status report on progress of multi-year plan and post on website
- Provide accessibility policy and multi-year plan in an accessible format, when requested
- Incorporate accessibility criteria and features when procuring or acquiring any goods, services or facilities (including self-serve kiosks)
- Provide training to all new staff and volunteers on the requirements of the IASR and the Human Rights Code as it pertains to persons with disabilities

#### **Customer Service Standard**

- Maintain accessibility policies governing the provision of goods, services and facilities to people with disabilities
- Notify the public that policies are available, upon request
- Allow a person with a disability who is accompanied by a service animal to enter our premises and keep animal or support person with them, unless otherwise excluded by law
- Allow a person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person or uses an assistive device to enter our premises and not be prevented from having access to that support person or assistive device
- Provide notice of temporary service disruptions when a facility or service that a person with a disability would usually use is unavailable
- Provide accessible customer service training to all new staff and volunteers
- Maintain a feedback process

#### **Information & Communication Standard**

- Ensure process for receiving and responding to feedback is accessible by providing accessible formats and communication supports, upon request

- Provide or arrange for the provision of accessible formats or communication supports for persons with disabilities, upon request
- Provide publicly available emergency procedures, plans, and safety information in an accessible format, when requested. Consult with the individual making the request to determine a suitable format
- Work towards updating all County websites and content on websites to conform with WCAG 2.0 Level AA

#### **Employment Standard**

- Notify the public and staff of the availability of recruitment and workplace-related accommodations (including accessible formats and communication supports)
- Upon request, provide or arrange for the provision of accessible formats or communication supports for information that is required for an individual to do their job and information that is generally available in the workplace
- Provide individualized workplace emergency response information to employees with disabilities, upon request
- Maintain a process for the development of individual accommodation plans
- Maintain a process for employees to return to work after being absent due to a disability and require disability-related accommodations
- Take into account individual accommodation needs and/or plans when using any performance management processes, providing career development and advancement opportunities, and/or redeploying employees

#### **Design of Public Spaces Standard**

- Consult with the public and people with disabilities and meet specific technical requirements when building any new, or making any significant changes to recreational trails/beach access routes, outdoor public eating areas, outdoor play spaces, outdoor paths of travel (sidewalks, ramps, stairs, curbs, pedestrian signals), accessible parking, or service-related elements (service counters, fixed queuing lines and waiting areas)
- Continue reviewing County owned/operated public spaces to assess accessibility and determine where improvements may be needed

#### **Conclusion**

The purpose of the AODA is to develop, implement, and enforce accessibility standards with respect to customer service, information and communication, employment, transportation and the design of public spaces. In addition to being obligated by law to continue our pursuit of the prevention and removal of barriers for people with disabilities and to create a more inclusive organization, it is simply the right thing to do.

The County has made several improvements within our policies, by-laws, facilities, programs, and practices, and we are committed to continuing our work in order to create a universally accessible organization for all.

Feedback on accessibility within the County of Northumberland is always welcome. Please contact the County's Accessibility Coordinator at 800-354-7050 ext.2327 or [accessibility@northumberlandcounty.ca](mailto:accessibility@northumberlandcounty.ca).