



Joint Annual Accessibility Status Report

**A Summary of Middlesex County and Local Municipal Partners Accomplishments
towards Accessibility in 2023**

Objectives and Purpose

This is the seventh Joint Annual Accessibility Status Report update of Middlesex County's Multi-Year Accessibility Plan. In 2022, Middlesex County released its third Multi-Year Accessibility Plan, in accordance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) and the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (Ontario Regulation 191/11). The plan outlines the Middlesex County strategy to prevent and remove barriers to accessibility, which includes how Middlesex County will meet phased-in requirements under the AODA.

This Status Report includes the accessibility initiatives that were completed in 2023 to support the strategy outlined in the Joint Multi-Year Accessibility Plan 2022-2027.

Compliance Reporting

Middlesex County and its Local Municipal Partners (LMPs) filed Accessibility Compliance Reports in 2023 with the Ministry for Seniors and Accessibility. The next compliance reporting period is in 2025.

Middlesex County's Commitment Statement

Middlesex County's statement of commitment establishes the vision and goals for the County to meet the legislated accessibility requirements. The County's statement of commitment is publicly available on the County website.

Middlesex County is committed to being responsive to the needs of all its residents and employees. In order to meet the needs of people with disabilities the County will:

- Ensure policies, practices and procedures address dignity, independence, integration and provide for equal opportunity for people with disabilities.
- Allow people with disabilities to use their own personal assistive devices to obtain, use or benefit from the services offered by the County.
- Accommodate the accessibility needs of people with disabilities to ensure they can obtain, use, or benefit from the County's goods, services, programs, and facilities.
- Communicate with people with disabilities in a manner that takes into account the person's disability.

The County will promote accessibility by ensuring that compliance is met for all regulations made under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*. Timelines for compliance vary. In order to ensure that timelines are met, the County has established, implemented, and will maintain a Joint Multi-Year Accessibility Plan. The plan outlines the strategy to identify, prevent and remove barriers to people with

disabilities. The plan will act as a roadmap for the next 4 years with regards to accessibility and details the goals and timelines for implementing the initiatives.

Continuous Achievements in Accessibility

The County and LMPs focus on removing barriers which may exist in municipal buildings and facilities, while ensuring that new buildings, leases, and renovations do not create any new barriers.

- Middlesex County's Accessibility Policy was updated in 2023, outlining what the County has done to comply with the 2016 Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulations and what customers and employees can expect in the future.
 - LMPs also made revisions to their accessibility policies to ensure compliance with the IASR and AODA
 - The Accessibility Policy is consistently reviewed to ensure it reflects industry best practice.
- Middlesex County Accessibility Advisory Committee continues to meet and review accessibility initiatives while representing all LMPs across the County
- The County and LMPs continue to comply with the requirements of the *Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation* including continuing to train staff, volunteers and third parties who interact on behalf of the County on an ongoing basis.
- All library branches continue to provide accessible materials and communication supports upon request.
 - In addition, the library has several accessible materials and resources available including but not limited to large print books, audio books, Centre for Equitable Library Access (CELA) Library loan access, and accessible computer workstations at the Strathroy, Lucan, Dorchester, Ailsa Craig, Glencoe, and Parkhill Library Branches. (Accessible Workstation includes: ZoomText with high-contrast, large print keyboard; Dragon Naturally Speaking and joystick mouse)
- The County and LMPs have policies in place to ensure the public is notified of accommodations for applicants with disabilities in its recruitment process and hiring process.
- Continue to review customer feedback and take appropriate action.
- The County and its LMPs are continuously identifying opportunities to improve accessibility to municipal services and routinely identify funding opportunities to improve accessibility and inclusion.

Accessibility Highlights of 2023

- **The County of Middlesex achieved the following in 2023:**
 - Provided training on document accessibility to staff to ensure compliance (ongoing)
 - Continued making changes to PDF documents posted online to ensure compliance with the WCAG 2.0 Level AA requirements.
 - Converted from HR Policy 5.01 – Middlesex County Accessibility Policy to Legislative Policy 7.01 – Middlesex County Accessibility Policy
 - Updated the purpose section and expanded on the existing information to include more details on the legislative requirements for accessibility policies.
 - Included a Statement of Commitment and Policy purpose section.
 - Added information on the IASR and AODA requirements.
 - Added a Scope to outline who the policy is directed towards.
 - Expanded the Definitions section.
 - Middlesex London Paramedic Services (MLPS):
 - Reviewed site plans for accessibility compliance at newly constructed paramedic station
 - Upgraded lighting at headquarter parking lot to increase visibility.
 - Provided AODA training for all new hires at onboarding stage.
 - Provided in-service training provided to all staff on respect, diversity, and inclusion.
 - Incorporated an accommodation clause into all the job postings and recruitment processes.
 - Completed workplace risk assessments at stations which included a review of accessibility barriers.
 - Updated service delivery comments through electronic means (accepting compliments and complaints through email)

- **The Township of Adelaide Metcalfe achieved the following in 2023:**
 - Extended the sidewalk on Kerwood Road to connect to the new washroom facility and the main entrance to Kerwood Park.

- **The Township of Lucan Biddulph achieved the following in 2023:**
 - Removal of non-standard sidewalk and replacement with AODA compliant sidewalk on sections of Main Street.
 - Extended sidewalk on Main Street North
 - Completed the development of a Multi-Purpose Court with accessible surface and entrance to the courts.
 - Completed Renovation and Rejuvenation Project at the Lucan Biddulph Community Memorial Centre that included:
 - New accessible entrance

- New accessible dressing rooms
 - New accessible washrooms
 - Installation of Elevator
 - Created dedicated accessible seating section in the ice surface viewing area.
 - Installed new barrier-free automatic sliding door in place of standard swing doors between lobby and ice surface.
 - Renovated Outdoor Community Pool to include accessible ramp, railings and expanded pool deck and new liner.
 - Added new benches at the entrance of the Community Centre facility.
 - Continued with the delivery of services through electronic and remote means with building permits through CloudPermit.
 - Developed online submissions of Planning Applications through CloudPermit
 - Created online Booking System for Community Centre rental of halls, ice surface, pavilions, and sport fields.
 - Finalized an Accessibility Audit for Main Street/Granton Line
 - Initiated the development of Mobile Application that will allow for the push of notifications to users for emergencies, announcements, programming etc.
 - Continued to develop e-newsletters and e-briefings for Council Meetings to enhance information sharing.
 - Provided AODA Legislation–Customer Service Training for all staff / new hires / others identified in legislation.
 - Completion of AODA Audit in 2023
- **The Municipality of Middlesex Centre achieved the following in 2023:**
 - CloudPermit Planning for 2023
 - Continued updates to municipal website to ensure compliance with the WCAG 2.0 Level AA requirements.
 - Refresher training on creating accessible Word documents for corporate services staff.
 - Re-affirmed commitment to delivering accessible services in updated Customer Service Policy, which says, "Aligned with its corporate values of respect, cooperation, innovation and integrity, the Municipality of Middlesex Centre is committed to delivering effective, equitable and accessible customer service."
 - OPP/Archives Exterior Door Entrance - Delaware Community Centre
 - Completion of New playground structure - Westbrook Park
 - Pavilion upgrades. Added and accessible parking spot to access the pavilion/washrooms- Heritage Park
 - Accessible Washrooms (Enabling Accessibility grant) - Poplar Hill Park

- Playground Replacement and addition of 2 accessible parking spaces- Meadowcreek Park
 - Playground Replacement and addition of 2 accessible parking spaces - Komoka Park
 - Finalized asphalt trail from parking lot to playground and addition of 3 accessible parking spaces - Denfield Park
 - Addition of Accessible door opener for family washroom in Komoka Wellness Centre Coors rink lobby
 - Addition of drop-down handrails in all accessible washroom stalls in the Komoka wellness centre (6 handrails installed)
 - Weldon Park – addition of a new accessible path and entrance into the refinished tennis courts.
 - Ilderton Community Centre – addition of a larger size accessible public entrance door
 - Ilderton Library – addition of 2 new accessible parking spaces
 - Komoka Park – continuation of asphalt hard surface trails in conjunction with Middlesex Paving
 - Change over to heavier entrance matting at KWC and Community Centres
 - Caverhill Park – addition of asphalt hard surface trail from road to playground
 - Dementia Awareness Training for staff
 - All new hires complete AODA Customer Service Standards training
 - Active staff (excluding volunteer fire services) completed AODA Customer Service Standards Refresher Training (105 completed).
 - Made significant strides in ensuring our new job descriptions are in an accessible format.
 - Added benches and garbage receptacles to Hyde Park Road
 - Expanded the sidewalk network in Delaware around Delaware Public School and the Lions Park
- **The Municipality of North Middlesex achieved the following in 2023:**
 - Opened a new Fire and Paramedic Shared Services Station that has accessible washrooms, and accessible parking (neither were available at the old facility.)
 - North Middlesex added new, wider, and more accessible sidewalks on Parkhill Main St. from Elginfield Road to Parkhill Drive, including new tactile walking surface indicators at all sidewalk ramps.
 - Undertaken sidewalk and drainage improvements at the intersection of Mill St. and Station St. in Parkhill
 - Regular website checks for accessibility
 - Addition of benches in Lions Park Ailsa Craig
 - Closed captioning enabled for virtual participation during Council meetings.
 - Public Works engaging in upgrading wayfinding signage in Parkhill for core areas.

- Live with CloudPermit software for Planning applications (Minor Variance, Consent, Zoning) supporting more accessible application processes for the public.
- **The Municipality of Southwest Middlesex achieved the following in 2023:**
 - Virtual participation has been offered to attend Council meetings, Committee meetings, and regular appointments.
 - Continue to ensure municipal information on website and social media is accessible.
 - Continue to provide AODA training for all new hires.
 - Ongoing upgrading of municipal sidewalks to ensure AODA compliance. The community of Wardsville, had significant upgrades during the 2023 year.
 - Built an accessible/inclusive playground in the Appin community area.
 - Southwest Middlesex Recreation Centre reconstruction finalized providing an accessible/inclusive facility.
 - Installed paved parking access at multiple municipal facilities.
- **The Municipality of Strathroy-Caradoc achieved the following in 2023:**
 - Launch of new HRIS (UKG) to allow better access to documents, scheduling, and other employment related info for Municipal Employees [UKG Accessibility standards available here](#)
 - Addition of one van accessible off-street parking space at Municipal Office for total of two, with appropriate signage
 - Automatic door opener installed at Westcast Room at Gemini Sportsplex
 - Automatic door openers installed at Alexandra Park Public Washrooms
 - Enhanced LED lighting at Tennis Courts for those with visual impairments
 - Completion of Yorkview Community Park Asphalt Trail Upgrades
 - Installation of “Tales and Trails” in co-ordination with Middlesex County Library - a storytelling trail along an accessible pathway in Alexandra Park
 - First signage installations completed under new community Wayfinding Signage Program with required AODA parameters regarding font type, size, and contrast.
 - Fully accessible ALL WHEELS park completed at Fair Grounds Recreation Complex (334 Metcalfe Street)
 - Addition of AODA sidewalks with appropriate tactile plates and improved street lighting as part of the Drury Lane (Albert Street to Saulsbury Street) and Queen Street (Carroll Street to CN Tracks) Reconstruction Projects
 - Addition of AODA Sidewalks with appropriate tactile plates to Metcalfe Street West (Nagel Gate to Park Street)
 - Addition of AODA crosswalk with sidewalk and ramps connecting including appropriate tactile plates and push buttons (County Crosswalk) at Glendon Drive and Bond Street
 - Future: Conceptual designs with AODA considerations underway for future amenities (future Lockwood Crescent Park; future community garden)

- Ongoing: Provision of AODA training for staff and Councillors at onboarding stage
 - Ongoing: Monitoring of corporate website for website and document accessibility
 - Ongoing: Ensure circulation of internal and external communications (such as planning notices and print advertising) are AODA compliant with appropriate font and contrast, and offering of alternative formats
- **The Municipality of Thames Centre achieved the following in 2023:**
 - Conducted virtual and in-person Council meetings.
 - Continue to ensure municipal information on website and social media is accessible.
 - Continue to provide AODA training for all new hires, committee members and Council members at onboarding stage.
 - Secretarial support to the Accessibility & Inclusivity Advisory Committee
 - Upgraded the municipal sidewalks to ensure AODA compliance.
 - Installation of tactile plates on newly constructed sidewalks
 - Installed two new painted Crossovers on King Street
 - Installed new Pedestrian Crossover with lights on Dorchester Road
 - Received Ontario Trillium Fund grant to pave walking paths at Thorndale Community Park, engineer work to address storm water management has started with corrective measures to take place before finalizing the plans for paving of the walking paths (Spring 2024).
 - Awarded Phase 2 of Accessible/Inclusive playground, located at Dorchester Community Park, with features ordered and set for early Spring 2024 installation.
 - Awarded contract and have begun 27,000 square foot renovation and expansion of FlightExec Centre, which will provide a greatly enlarged Senior Centre, Auditorium and VON Day Program Space.
 - Installed 6 new accessible benches and 6 new accessible picnic tables in various parks and facilities throughout the municipality.
 - Installed new playground with accessible features at Crampton Park.
 - **Village of Newbury achieved the following in 2023:**
 - All notices, forms, documents, minutes and agendas are produced in standardized Arial 12-point font.

Availability of the Plan and Status Report

The Multi-Year Accessibility Plan and Annual Accessibility Status Reports can be accessed through Middlesex County's website: [Middlesex County Accessibility Page](#).

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Accessible formats and/or communication supports available upon request.