



Annual Status Update 2020

To the 2018-22 Joint Accessibility Plan

County of Perth

Municipality of North Perth

Township of Perth South

Township of Perth East

Municipality of West Perth

If you require this document in an alternate/accessible format, please contact info@perthcounty.ca or call 519-271-0531 ext. 210

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County of Perth Joint Accessibility Plan Annual Status Update 2020

Executive Summary

This is the third Annual Status Update to the 2018-2022 County of Perth Joint Accessibility Plan, and illustrates the intentions of the County of Perth and its Lower Tier Municipalities for meeting their obligations under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA), and for identifying, removing and preventing barriers for people with disabilities in communities across the County.

This plan was established, reviewed and updated in consultation with staff and with the Perth County Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC).

This update will be posted on the County's website, as well as on the website of each of the Lower Tier Municipalities, and shall be made available in an alternate format and with communication supports, upon request.

Obligations

The County of Perth and the Lower Tier Municipalities must meet the requirements under the Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001 (ODA) and the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA).

Please refer to the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan 2018-2022 for more information.

Consultation

This plan was developed in consultation with the Perth County Accessibility Advisory Committee. This adds the valuable perspectives of individuals with lived experience to help ensure the effectiveness of this plan. This committee composition is outlined later in this report.

Implementation

The County of Perth and its Lower Tier Municipalities support the spirit and goals of the AODA to make the Province of Ontario accessible by 2025. A commitment has been made to identify and eliminate wherever possible, all forms of barriers faced by people with disabilities, including:

- Attitudinal
- Physical
- Architectural
- Policy/Practices
- Technological
- Information and Communications
- Legislative

Structure and Governance

The Legislative Services Division of the Corporate Services Department and the Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC) are responsible at a corporate level for ensuring compliance to the AODA, and sharing legislative analyses and subject matter expertise. The County of Perth and each of its Lower Tier Municipalities are separately responsible for ensuring that all departments with their Municipalities are compliant with the Standards contained within the AODA. Each department is accountable for ensuring that their respective clauses are executed according to the legislative requirements to the service industry.

Informal consulting groups will be developed on an ad hoc basis for variable terms to assist in policy and procedure review and development and implementation.

This plan is subject to approval by the County of Perth Council and all Lower Tier Municipalities Councils.

Municipal Jurisdictions Participating in this Plan

The Corporation of the County of Perth

1 Huron Street
Stratford, ON N5A 5S4

Lower Tier Municipalities

The Municipality of North Perth

330 Wallace Ave N
Listowel, ON N4W 1L3

The Township of Perth East

P.O. Box 455
25 Mill Street E
Milverton, ON N0K 1M0

The Township of Perth South

3191 Road 122
St. Pauls, ON N0K 1V0

The Municipality of West Perth

P.O. Box 609
169 David Street
Mitchell, ON N0K 1N0

Key Contact

Tyler Sager, Clerk
Corporation of the County of Perth
1 Huron Street, Stratford, ON N5A 5S4
Tel: 519.271.0531 Ext. 210
clerk@perthcounty.ca

Our Progress on the AODA Regulations

The following outlines Perth County's commitments, our countywide progress in 2020 and the new goals established for 2021-22 in meeting the accessibility standards in five key areas, all of which are part of the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR), ON Reg. 191/11.

- Customer Service
- Information & Communications
- Employment
- Transportation
- Design of Public Spaces (and Built Environment)

There are also a number of General Requirements that apply across all of the accessibility standards.

Any updates to the IASR and any new goals established under each of the accessibility standards in the coming years will be reflected in the Annual Status Update Reports to the 2018-2022 Accessibility Plan.

Compliance

As of December 31, 2020, the County of Perth and the Lower Tier Municipalities are compliant with all of the currently applicable requirements of the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation, except one of the requirements under the Information and Communications Standard.

The Information and Communications Standard states that municipal websites and web content must meet the requirements of the World Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0, Level AA. Third party documents comprise part of all Council agenda packages, and some of those documents are not accessible to screen readers. The County of Perth and the Lower Tier Municipalities do not currently have the resources to remediate third party documents, which means that some parts of the agenda packages posted on municipal websites are not in an accessible format. Alternate formats of the agenda packages are available, upon request.

WCAG 2.0 has a provision for Partial Conformance due to third party content. In these cases, a statement of partial conformance may be made indicating that the page does not conform but could conform if certain parts were removed. This statement can be applied to content that is not under the author's control and is described in a way that the users can identify. In the case of Perth County and Lower Tier websites, this would apply to third party content received to include in County Council agenda packages (i.e., consent agenda items).

General Requirements

Procurement

People with disabilities will be treated equitably with respect to the procurement, use and benefit of County services, programs, goods and facilities in a manner that respects their dignity, independence, and integration. This commitment extends to residents, employees, visitors and other stakeholders with visible and non-visible disabilities. Furthermore, the County will ensure that accessibility is integrated into all County initiatives, business practices, boards, committees, departments and divisions. Where it is not practicable to incorporate accessibility criteria and features into the procurement of goods, services or facilities, an explanation will be provided, upon request.

Reporting

Reports will be produced annually on the progress and implementation of the multi-year Accessibility Plan, and this information will be posted on the County website and will be available in alternate formats, upon request. The multi-year Accessibility Plan will be reviewed and updated once every five years. The County and Lower Tier Municipalities, as legislated, will file Accessibility Compliance Reports with the Ministry for Seniors and Accessibility.

Training

All employees, volunteers and persons developing policies for the County of Perth and its Lower Tier Municipalities are trained on the requirements of the accessibility standards in the IASR and on the Ontario Human Rights Code as it pertains to people with disabilities. This includes all members of the County and Lower Tier Municipalities Councils. Persons who provide goods, services or facilities on behalf of the County must also be trained.

The Corporate Accessibility Policy is updated to reflect changes to any of the standards, and training is provided in order to ensure an understanding of any changes.

In 2020, Perth County implemented ongoing staff training. The first session was on the Information and Communications standard with a specific focus on WCAG 2.0. This session was provided to all Lower Tier municipalities and allowed for questions/concerns for each municipality as we approach a bi-annual compliance report deadline in 2021. Moving forward, Perth County staff intend to provide quarterly training sessions to the Lower Tier Municipalities, each focused on one of the five IASR standards.

Records will continue to be maintained for training provided on accessibility, including the dates of the training and the number of individuals who attended.

Perth County Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC)

The Perth County AAC currently has nine (9) voting positions, which provide representation for each Municipality and Township within Perth County, consistent with the expectations of the Ontarians with Disabilities Act (ODA), 2001. Currently, 8 of those seats are filled, with one vacancy at the time of this update. The majority of the members are persons with disabilities. A new Organization member position was added to the Accessibility Advisory Committee in 2018, and was filled by the Alzheimer Society Perth County. They represent the “voice” of the growing numbers of people with dementia across the County.

The AAC is scheduled to meet 10 times over the course of 2021, on the fourth Tuesday of each month (excluding July and August) virtually via ZOOM, unless otherwise noted. Committee agendas and minutes are posted on the Perth County website. At this time, the meetings are being held virtually via ZOOM due to the COVID-19 pandemic – as always, the public is welcome to request to join the meetings at any time. Alternate formats of the agenda packages are available, upon request.

In addition to Accessibility Plans, the County and the Lower Tier Municipalities are required to consult with the Perth County Accessibility Advisory Committee under several of the Accessibility Standards of the IASR, and under the Municipal Accessibility Advisory Committees section of the AODA, including:

- **Transportation Standard**
 - On the proportion of on-demand accessible taxicabs required in the community;
 - Accessibility features required for PC Connect Transit Service
- **Design of Public Spaces Standard**
 - On specific technical requirements for Recreation Trails;
 - On the needs of children and caregivers with various disabilities for Outdoor Play Spaces;
 - On the design and placement of rest areas along the Exterior Paths of Travel; and
 - On the need, location and design of accessible on-street parking spaces
- **Municipal Accessibility Advisory Committees (Part VII of the AODA)**
 - **Site Plan Reviews** – Councils are required to seek advice from the committee on the accessibility for persons with disabilities to a building, structure or premises, or part of a building structure or premises for all municipally owned or leased facilities. In addition to all municipal properties, the Committee is responsible for reviewing the site plans and

drawings described in Section 41 of the Planning Act that the Committee selects.

Feedback

The County of Perth and its Lower Tier Municipalities welcome input from the public in order to help identify ways in which we can improve accessibility in facilities, goods and services. Members of the public are encouraged to share their comments or suggestions by contacting the Clerk at the County of Perth or complete the [Contact Us](#)¹ section on the County of Perth website.

Accessible formats and communication supports are available, upon request.

Phone: 519-271-0531 x 210
Email: clerk@perthcounty.ca
Mail: Corporation of the County of Perth
1 Huron Street
Stratford, ON N5A 5S4

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<https://www.perthcounty.ca/Modules/contact/search.aspx?s=uJRgyPbMwIWHcHH8PySJQQeQuAleQuAl>

Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation Ontario (IASR)

(Ontario Regulation 191/11)

Accessible Customer Service Standard

Commitment

The County of Perth and its Lower Tier Municipalities are committed to providing equal treatment to people with disabilities with respect to the use and benefit of County services, programs, goods and facilities in a manner that respects their dignity, independence, integration and is equitable in relation to the broader public. This commitment extends to residents, employees, visitors and other stakeholders with visible and non-visible disabilities.

Progress

The Corporation of the County of Perth and Lower Tier Municipalities

Accomplishments:

The County and the Lower Tier Municipalities are meeting the requirements of the Customer Service Standard, which includes:

- Establishment of policies governing the provision of goods, services or facilities to persons with disabilities;
- Use of service animals and support persons by persons with disabilities;
- Notice of temporary disruptions to goods, services or facilities used by persons with disabilities;
- Training about the provision of goods, services or facilities to persons with disabilities for staff, volunteers, policy developers, and providers of goods, services or facilities;
- Establishment of a process for receiving and responding to feedback about the manner in which they provide goods, services or facilities, ensuring that the feedback process to accessible to persons with disabilities.
- Provision of accessible formats of documents or communication supports, upon request.

Goals:

The Councils of the County of Perth and the Lower Tier Municipalities have all committed to working with the Alzheimer Society of Perth County in the roll-out of

training for all front-line staff on Dementia Friendly Communities, which was anticipated to happen in 2020. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic emergency, timelines have been shifted.

County of Perth

Accomplishments:

- Creation of a centralized Central Reception area as first customer service touchpoint for visitors at the Courthouse
- Beginning in April 2020, County Council started live streaming all Council meetings due to restrictions placed on gathering across Ontario and Canada. In the future (beyond the COVID-19 pandemic) virtual streaming for Council may be an alternative access point for public who would like to view/join the meetings.
- Other County Committees followed suit, moving their meetings to a digital teleconference format. Again, this digital format may be an alternative access point for public and for Committee members who would like to attend meetings.
- Staffing shifts at the Courthouse allowed for Planning and Economic Development to move to Level 2 at 1 Ontario St. (Scotiabank building), which is accessible to the public via an elevator.
- Singular Operator phone line now managed by Central Reception staff for best possible internal and external customer service interactions.
- Grant application submitted for the New Horizons for Seniors Fund which has a component for age-friendly initiatives and accessibility specific to seniors.
- Developed a concierge business support line as an alternate method of contacting Economic Development and Tourism staff for assistance.
- Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, POA Court Services was able to offer new remote options for fine payments, filing documents, telephone meetings with prosecutor. This increased accessible options for all POA clients.
- The Planning division designed and reviewed its updated website with accessibility as a top priority.

Goals:

- Pending approval by County Council, Public Works and Facilities will oversee the potential installation of an elevator at the Courthouse for better building-wide access.
- Assessment of Levels 2 and 3 of the Courthouse with regard potential future accessibility upgrades.

- Liaise with the Perth County Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee to continue to progress Customer Service standards at the Courthouse and the County to an exceptional level.
- Continue to reach out to Economic Development and Tourism clients for alternative delivery formats, as required.
- Provide training to Lower Tiers regarding the “Customer Service Standard”, per the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation.
- The Planning division will review and redesign its application forms to ensure that they are designed with accessible formatting.
- Communicate internally with County staff to ensure that the current customer service plan and Central Reception role is meeting the needs of all visitors and customers at Perth County.
- The CAO’s Office plans to undertake a campus review with accessibility as a key component to the overall plan.
- Paramedic Services are working on the implementation of a customer satisfaction survey, which would include accessibility and age-friendly initiatives.
- Paramedic Services to investigate the addition of auto load systems in ambulance units to be able to accommodate patients of different sizes for safe ambulance transport.
- Ensure the use of inclusive and plain language whenever possible in the development of new County policies and communications

Municipality of North Perth

Accomplishments:

- AODA Customer Service Training for front-line staff in November of 2020.
- At the Fire Department, all new recruits completed Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR) and Accessible Customer Service training/signoff.

Goals:

- Mental Health First Aid training prioritization.
- All departments will participate in Dementia Friendly Communities Training, where applicable.
- The Fire Department will continue to provide all new recruits with IASR and Accessible Customer Service training.

Township of Perth South

Accomplishments:

- Continue to promote “Report It and Get Involved Perth South” platforms for resident engagement.
- Post municipal news and activities regularly to Facebook to communicate with entire community.

Goals:

- Continue to ensure that new employees receive the appropriate AODA customer service training.

Township of Perth East

Accomplishments:

- Ensured that corporate policies and procedures requirements meet standards and implementation of enhancements.
- The Clerk’s Office converted some documents to accessible/fillable formats.
- Ensured that distribution materials (ex. Application forms, community guide) met accessible standards.
- Livestreaming of Council meetings to YouTube as a way to enhance accessibility for community members, especially during the COVID-19 crisis.
- Implemented Cloud Permit which allows the public to apply for permits online instead of travelling to the office.
- Distribution of accessible fire safety material that meets accessible standard.

Goals:

- Ongoing review to ensure corporate policies and procedures requirements meet standards and implementation of enhancements as required.
- The Clerk’s Office will continue to update documents for best possible accessibility.
- The Clerk’s Office will continue to enhance Council meetings for improved accessibility by all members of the community.
- Building and Planning Department plans to fully implement Cloud Permit (beyond soft launch) to provide more options for clients.
- The Fire Department will continue distribution of accessible fire safety material and investigate making other material accessible.

- Providing more accessible library programming to communities outside of Milverton.
- Purchase and introduce more accessible material formats at the Library – gather feedback from community.

Municipality of West Perth

Accomplishments:

- Live streaming of Council meetings with closed captioning.

Goals:

- Prepare and ensure that 2022 Municipal Election is fully accessible to all eligible electors.

Information and Communications Standard

Commitment

The County of Perth and its Lower Tier Municipalities are committed to ensuring that information and communications about our goods, services and facilities are available and accessible to people with disabilities. The County and its Lower Tier Municipalities will follow universal design principles and best practices as a minimum, based upon the Ontario Human Rights Code and the Information and Communications Standard of the IASR, when developing, implementing and maintaining information and communication strategies and products. This includes website, intranet sites, communication materials, telephone communications and face-to-face interactions. If our organization determines that it is not technically feasible to convert the information or communications, or the technology to convert the information is not readily available, we will be obligated to provide the person who requires the information with an explanation as to why the information or communications are unconvertible, and with a summary of the unconvertible information or communications.

Progress

The Corporation of the County of Perth

Accomplishments:

- Provided training sessions to all Lower Tier municipalities on the “Information and Communications Standard” with respect to WCAG 2.0 legislated standards for municipal operations and the upcoming 2021 compliance reporting deadline.
- The Clerk’s Office implemented the use of iCompass software in 2020 for the creation of agenda packages. This software meets the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 Level AA.

- Provided training sessions to staff regarding the iCompass Software to ensure compliance with WCAG 2.0 Level AA when producing Council Reports.
- County Council meetings have been livestreamed since April of 2020 for best ease of access for those who would like to watch. Recordings are available at www.youtube.com/user/PerthCountydotca to watch after Council meetings have finished. This allows for an additional level of transparency and accessibility regarding our County Council communications. Additionally, YouTube provides a number of integrated accessibility features such as adjustable playback speeds, automated closed captioning and adjustable viewer size.
- The Emergency Management Coordinator continues to distribute public education materials that meet accessibility standards, and consider the needs of seniors and persons with disabilities in all aspects of the emergency program.
- Archives Staff converted approximately 50 sets of unique printed indexes and transcriptions of historic records to electronic files. These are now available on public computers in Reading Room at Stratford-Perth Archives allowing researchers to adjust font size and/or use screen readers to access the contents.
- Microfiche copies of local directories for 1876-1997 converted to electronic files now available on public computers in Reading Room at Stratford-Perth Archives allowing researchers to adjust font size and/or use screen readers to access the contents.
- Review and audit of the County website completed to ensure content is as accessible as possible. Updates to the County websites were made to ensure information is accessible and broken links were removed.
- Delivery of Economic Development and Tourism communications in a variety of formats including physical marketing materials mailed directly to households and businesses.
- POA Court Services changed their delivery model as they moved to a “remote court” model due to the pandemic. This model change allowed for the removal of all physical barriers to persons attending court. Clearly worded instructions are provided to defendants/agents/counsel/prosecution.
- Updated the Fire Evacuation plan and signage for the County Courthouse with accessibility considerations.
- Updated the Wayfinding signage for the County Courthouse with accessibility considerations.
- Accessible formats and communication supports are available for persons with disabilities, upon request, and are responded to in a timely manner. Policies are in place to ensure that accessible formats are provided at a cost no higher than other documents available to the public. This is made clear to all employees as

well as the public on any public communications, including the new County of Perth website.

- All new County employees trained on the Information and Communications Standard through online Moodle module or instructor led sessions, as applicable to their duties.
- Ongoing use of Communications Plan & Policy, which outlines guiding principles, goals and an implementation schedule for improving the quality of internal and external communications, and supporting and encouraging an engaged community, with accessibility considerations.
- Ongoing use of “Administration of Social Media: Guidelines” document created for staff, including section on Accessibility.
- Ongoing conversion of departmental templates to accessible formats.

Goals:

- Perform full-scope audit on current website materials to ensure compliance with WCAG 2.0, make improvements where possible.
- Clerk’s Office will submit the 2021 compliance report on behalf of the County regarding the WCAG 2.0 standard and its current digital content.
- Archives plans to continue to convert existing paper-based finding aids to electronic files.
- Ongoing review of County website to ensure content that is being published is as accessible to all audiences as possible.
- CAO’s Office to review corporate communications strategy to ensure it is continuing to communicate the County’s achievements regarding accessibility to the larger public.
- POA Court Services will be identifying additional needs with the new “remote court” model and may need to adapt to become more accessible (ex. provide access to technology, sign language interpreter, etc.).
- Communicate with Agencies, Boards and Commissions who regularly provide documents for Council Agenda packages and ask for accessible formats of documents instead of scanned documents.
- Organize Accessible Documents Training for new staff and for all staff uploading to the County website.
- Paramedic Services to investigate technological linkages to provincial communication systems and health records. This will improve the patient experience and emergency patient care by providing greater real time information.

- Planning Division will continue to offer alternate formats of documents, upon request, prior to public meetings.
- Planning Division to focus on updating more templates and documents for accessibility, including Notice templates, Application Forms and Reports.
- Work on new Accessibility Standards Policy and Procedure Manual for the County and the Lower Tier Municipalities.
- Continue to ensure that County of Perth website, County of Perth internet and intranet websites and web content, with some exceptions, conform to Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 Level AA.
- Continue to update templates for accessibility.
- Update Accessible Documents Guidelines, and share with applicable staff across the County.

Municipality of North Perth

Accomplishments:

- Participated in Accessibility Training Workshop led by County in November 2020 – focused on accessible documents.
- North Perth Intranet update completed.
- Initiated Live streaming of Council meetings with Closed Captioning available.
- Ongoing implementation of “North Perth Social Media Policy”.
- Adherence to Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG)
- The Recreation department offered virtual programming to participants during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Goals:

- IT Department is planning on the installation of a new audio system, including microphones and speakers, for the County Courthouse Council Chambers.
- Continue to ensure that the Municipal internet websites and web content, with some exceptions, conform to Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 Level AA.
- Ongoing use of the “North Perth Social Media Policy” document created for staff including reference to accessibility.
- Communicate with Agencies, Boards, and Commissions who regularly provide documents for Council Agenda packages and ask for accessible formats of documents instead of scanned documents.

- Organize accessible documents training for all staff uploading content to the Municipal website.
- Update Accessible Documents Guidelines and share with applicable Municipal staff.
- Ongoing conversion of departmental templates to more accessible formats.

Township of Perth South

Accomplishments:

- Participated in Accessibility Training Workshop led by County – focused on accessible documents.
- Printed newsletters in January and August to be included with tax bill mail-outs to keep residents informed.

Goals:

- Received Council approval to update Meeting manager software with iCompass for a more accessible agenda package.
- Continue to update form templates for best possible accessibility.

Township of Perth East

Accomplishments:

- Website content, social media posting and printed documents are provided in accessible format (ongoing, in coordination with staff).
- The Clerk's and CAO's Office updated webpages to meet accessibility standards.
- Accessibility training provided to staff.
- Implemented Cloud Permit which allows the public to apply for permits online.
- Installed a new telephone system at the Municipal Administration Office, Perth East Recreation Centre, and Perth East Library. System provides advanced features for customer accessibility including compatible with alternative devices.
- The Library converted all policies and procedures to an accessible template to ensure the structure can be processed and read correctly by a screen reader.

Goals:

- Continue to ensure that the Township internet websites and web content, with some exceptions, conform to Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 Level AA.
- Continue to update templates for accessibility.

- The Library will be launching a new website that is designed to be fully accessible.
- All public documentation at the Library will be reviewed for accessibility and the ability to access alternative formats, if needed.

Municipality of West Perth

Accomplishments:

- Live streaming of Council meetings with closed captioning.
- Accessible documents training for staff with focus on website content.

Goals:

- All new Municipal employees are trained on the Information and Communications Standard.
- Continue to ensure that the Municipal internet websites and web content, with some exceptions, conform to Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 Level AA.
- Continue to develop new accessible templates and update existing templates.

Employment Standard

Commitment & Progress

A commitment has been made by the County of Perth and its Lower Tier Municipalities to inclusive and accessible employment practices that ensure the process of finding, hiring and retaining employees who have disabilities is inclusive. The County and the Lower Tier Municipalities are in compliance with the requirements of this standard.

All of the requirements in the Employment Standard continue to be maintained by the County of Perth and its Lower Tier Municipalities, including those pertaining to the following:

- Recruitment, assessment and selection
- Accessible formats and communication supports for employees
- Workplace emergency response information
- Documented individual accommodation plans
- Return to work process
- Performance management
- Career development and advancement
- Redeployment

Policies and procedures will be adjusted when the legislation is updated.

County of Perth

Accomplishments

- New staff at the County completed AODA training through the County's Moodle platform to ensure an understanding of all Accessibility Standards.
- Have accommodated many staff throughout the year, with both permanent and temporary disabilities, in order to return to or stay at work. This is true during COVID-19 as well with more remote work options available for those who may not feel comfortable working in-office. In each case, an individualized plan is developed.

Goals:

- The Economic Development and Tourism department is working to ensure that the Perth County Inclusivity Charter is reflective of accessibility.
- Paramedic services would like to develop personalized learning plans for employees.

Municipality of North Perth

Accomplishments

- Use of online recruitment available in an accessible format.

Goals

- Continue to ensure online recruitment for new positions is available in an accessible format.

Municipality of West Perth

Accomplishments

- Interviews completed virtually and included script with notification of availability of accommodations in the recruitment process.

Goals

- Develop a standard paragraph to be included in all training documentation; from time of scheduling of training for both internal and external programs. This will inform participants that accessible training will be made available, and encourage confidential self-disclosure/request for accommodation in advance of training, so that all can be accommodated for optimal participation.

Transportation Standard

Commitment

The County of Perth is committed to ensuring that people with disabilities have access to accessible public transportation.

Progress

The Corporation of the County of Perth and Lower Tier Municipalities

The County is committed to ensuring that people with disabilities have information on accessible public transportation services available within the County. There is a listing of available accessible transportation services provided by organizations servicing the Lower Tier Municipalities, the City of Stratford and the Town of St. Marys, and surrounding areas within the County of Perth.

This information is all available and is maintained on the Southwest Healthline website, under “Transportation - Accessible - Huron and Perth” at the following link:

[Southwest Healthline](#)²

This link is provided on the County of Perth website.

Accomplishments

Perth County Community Transportation Network:

Launch of accessible PC Connect community transportation service using two fully accessible buses. The County of Perth and the City of Stratford have each received provincial funding through the Ministry of Transportation’s “Community Transportation Grant Program - Municipal Stream” to establish new public transit for a pilot period from commencement to March 31, 2023.

Perth County, its Lower Tier Municipalities of North Perth, West Perth, Perth East and Perth South, along with the City of Stratford and the Town of St. Marys, worked in partnership to submit the synergistic proposals that will benefit all of Perth County’s residents as one joint project.

The joint project will involve the creation of an inter-regional transit service connecting London, St. Mary’s, Stratford and Kitchener. Service between Listowel and Kitchener is also planned. A separate but related commitment will create a transit system to link the communities of Stratford, St. Marys, Mitchell, Sebringville, Monkton, Atwood, Milverton, Listowel and Millbank.

² <http://www.southwesthealthline.ca/listServices.aspx?id=10109®ion=HuronPerth>

- Coordination with other transit systems (e.g. GO Transit, VIA) is a priority consideration.
- A bus carrier will be selected through a competitive process, and the new transportation services are expected to launch in the spring of 2020. The bus carrier will be required to meet all applicable requirements for accessibility under the Transportation Standard.

Goals

The County of Perth and Lower Tier Municipalities are committed to continuing participation in the Perth County Community Transportation Network, and to ensuring that they meet the requirements under the Transportation Standards. Continue to make improvements (asphalt/paving) to existing PC Connect bus stops to further enhance accessibility.

Duties of Municipalities – Specialized Transportation Services

The County of Perth and three of the Lower Tier Municipalities do not license Specialized Transportation Services for persons with disabilities. However, there are some Specialized Transportation services available within these communities, including:

- **VON – Easy Ride** – for residents of North Perth
- **Perth East Transportation** – for residents of Perth East

There are also Specialized Transportation Services within the City of Stratford and the Town of St. Marys, which travel to locations within the County of Perth, including:

- **Parallel Transit** – Located in the City of Stratford, but will travel to locations in Perth County
- **Easy Ride** – Located in the City of Stratford, but will travel to locations in Perth County
- **St. Marys & Area Mobility Services** – Located in St. Marys, but will travel to locations in Perth County. The Township of Perth South provides grant funding to support these services in their area.

Municipality of North Perth

Accomplishments:

- Met with PCAAC to discuss and review Pedestrian Crossover (PXO) Designs Feb 2020.

Goals:

- Expansion of accessible PXOs project.
- Planning a public meeting to determine the demand for on-demand accessible taxis in North Perth.
- Encourage taxi owners to add more accessible taxis to their fleets.
- Ensure taxis Braille was added to taxi driver's identification documents.

Municipality of West Perth**Accomplishments:**

- Residents of West Perth, and anyone who can show proof of eligibility in any other paratransit service in Ontario, can use the Mitchell and Area Mobility Bus service.
- Worked in coordination for the identification and installation of bus stop locations within Perth East to provide accessible and safe community transportation accessible bus stops for PC Connect.

Goals:

- Continued support through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Ritz Lutheran Villa operating an accessible van. The bookings are managed by Easy Ride.

Township of Perth East**Accomplishments:**

- Repainted accessible parking lines and symbols at the Administrative Office area.
- Worked in coordination for the identification and installation of bus stops locations within Perth East to provide accessible and safe community transportation accessible bus stops.

Goals:

- Maintenance to ensure accessible and safe areas.

Township of Perth South**Accomplishments:**

- Entered into joint partnership with PC Connect for bus services throughout Perth County.

- Provided grant funding to St. Marys and Area Mobility Bus Service.

Goals:

- Continue supporting St. Marys and Area Mobility Bus Service.
- Continue to support PC Connect and monitor for effectiveness.

The Built Environment

Commitment

The Accessibility Standards for the Built Environment focus on removing barriers in two areas:

1. Public spaces, and
2. Buildings

This will make it easier for all Ontarians — including people with disabilities, seniors and families — to access the places where they work, travel, shop and play.

As a large public sector organization, the Design of Public Spaces Standard only applies to new construction and planned redevelopment on or after January 1, 2016.

On January 1, 2020, new construction and renovations are subject to updated accessibility requirements under Section 3.8 Barrier-Free Design of the Ontario Building Code.

Maintenance of Public Spaces

The County of Perth and the Lower Tier Municipalities will reasonably maintain public spaces as required under the Minimum Maintenance Standards for Municipal Highways (Municipal Act, 2011). In addition, the accessible elements of all accessible trails and playgrounds will be maintained from May to October, unless otherwise stated or posted. Elements such as external pathways (sidewalks) will be maintained year-round by the County and the Lower Tier Municipalities to ensure the safety of citizens and to prevent barriers to people with disabilities.

If a public space is temporarily disrupted or not functioning, the public will be notified in a variety of formats about the scope of the disruption.

Please refer to Appendices A through E of the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan for County and Member Municipality specific procedures for Preventative and Emergency Maintenance of Accessible Elements in Public Spaces.

Progress

The Corporation of the County of Perth and the Lower Tier Municipalities

In 2020, the Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee (JAAC) provided feedback across the County for external pathways, play spaces, recreational trails and site plans.

The County and the Lower Tier Municipalities will continue to:

- refer to the Perth County Site Plan Design Guidelines, the Ontario Building Code and the Design of Public Spaces Standards for any new construction or development; and
- consult with the Perth County Accessibility Advisory Committee on accessibility plans, recreational trails, outdoor play spaces, exterior paths of travel and on-street parking spaces; and
- consult with the Perth County Accessibility Advisory Committee on site plans and drawings described in Section 41 of the Planning Act that the committee selects.

The Corporation of the County of Perth

Accomplishments

- Installation of Central Reception area, which has two customer service counter heights to best serve all visitors at the 1 Huron St. Courthouse location.
- Security door installed at Level 1 lobby, where general public accesses the Courthouse building. Central Reception staff has the ability to open the door remotely using a secure button in the Central Reception office. The power door has accessibility buttons located on both sides.
- Wayfinding system placed on the floor at the Level 1 entrance along with 6-foot distance markers for COVID-19 safety. The wayfinding system has been designed both with colour and patterns to allow for maximized accessibility for visually impaired visitors.
- Intercoms were installed on the outside of the County Courthouse building both at the Level 1 entrance and at the St. Andrew entrance. These intercoms ring through to the Operator phone line who, using security cameras, can assess if the person at the entrance needs to be let in remotely. In the event that a person needs accessibility accommodations made or needs to visit Level 2 at the Courthouse, the St. Andrews entrance can be utilized and Central Reception staff can be alerted to a customer outside of the doors using the intercom and security cameras. A remote button in Central Reception can unlock the door to allow the customer access to the building.

- In late 2020, the Public Works department and County Council began costing and design discussions regarding an elevator installation project at the Courthouse. This would improve overall accessibility for all visitors at the Courthouse. Plans also include the addition of a universal public washroom that will meet accessibility standards. Expected construction dates (if the project is approved) are through 2021 and likely into 2022.
- Provincial Offenses Administration upgraded its existing wicket, installed a second wicket, and ensured the design included varying customer service counter heights to provide exceptional service to all Courthouse visitors needing POA services.
- Planning division intends on continuing a dialogue with the Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee at the County for conversations around site plan reviews, built spaces, and other relevant planning/building activities within the County.

Goals

- Economic Development and Tourism will include accessibility considerations in the Perth County Community Improvement Plan.
- Complete the accessible walking path through the native plant garden at Stratford-Perth Archives with accessible signage and seating. (2022).
- Installation of an elevator at 1 Huron Street that can be independently operated to replace the operator-assisted lift.

Municipality of North Perth

Accomplishments

- The newly built childcare centres meet all Accessible Standards for the Built Environment
- Accessible crossings installed at Kincaid Street and Highway 23 Listowel. Accessible PXO installed at Argyle Ave. and Main St. Listowel.
- Ongoing sidewalk and trail upgrades/construction includes widening surfaces and installation of tactile sensor plates.
- Renovated Wastewater Treatment Plant, including accessible washroom facilities and accessible entry system.
- Trail markers added to trails (picture icons and QR code).
- Improvements to G2G trail including Monkton section – widening and grading.

Goals:

- Ensure any plans for new builds considering Accessibility Standards for the Built Environment.

- Completion of updates to Atwood cenotaph, including accessibility improvements.

Township of Perth South

Accomplishments

- Completed parking lot paving project at the Kirkton-Woodham Community Centre (50% ownership with South Huron). Lot includes a smoother surface and includes additional accessible parking spaces.

Goals:

- Old Township Office to be renovated to update for more office space and an accessible entrance (dependent on funding application funding approval).
- Review the trail system at the Kirkton Arboretum (the Kirkton Arboretum Committee has requested assistance from the Township) to enhance and allow for better accessibility.
- Continue to refer to the Perth County Site Plan Design Guidelines, the Ontario Building Code and the Design of Public spaces Standard for any new construction or redevelopment.
- Downie Optimist Hall to receive further renovations to kitchen. Walls and flooring as well as resurfacing and expanding parking lot with more accessible parking spaces (dependent on grant funding application approval).

Township of Perth East

Accomplishments

- Ensuring building permits meets the barrier-free requirements as stated in the building code.
- Painted new accessible parking spaces at the Sebringville & Shakespeare fire stations.
- Ongoing reviews by the Perth County Accessibility Advisory Committee of accessibility plans, recreational trails, outdoor play spaces, exterior paths of travel, on-street parking spaces and site plans.
- Replace 800 meters of sidewalk on Line 34 in Shakespeare, added 170 meters of new sidewalk.

Goals

- Identification and installation of areas for installation of touchless light switches.
- Pave top coat of asphalt at the Milverton fire station to create a smoother surface. Also paint required accessible parking spaces.

- Repainting accessible parking lines and symbols at Recreation and Community Services areas across municipality.
- Keeping up to date with any barrier-free changes to ensure the township is leading the way with accessibility initiatives.
- Design new sidewalk on Thompson street and Galt street to the Public school.
- Continue to refer to the Perth County Site Plan Design Guidelines, the Ontario Building Code and the Design of Public spaces Standard for any new construction or redevelopment.
- Continue to construct sidewalks and pathways in conformance with AODA Standards.
- Continue to liaise with the Ministry of transportation regarding the reconstruction of Highway 7/8 specifically through the Shakespeare corridor.
- Local Zoning Bylaws to be updated to include zoning provisions for accessibility requirements in new developments in accordance with new policy in new County Official Plan.
- Plan to re-paint the accessible parking space at the Perth East Library.

Municipality of West Perth

Accomplishments

- Installed Power Door Operator at the Dublin Hall.
- Review of signage and timing of pedestrian signal at Ontario Rd and St. George Street intersection.
- Addressed sidewalk approaches and installed Tactile Walking Surface indicators at curb depressions.
- Wellington Street Bridge sidewalk access is now accessible with no drop edge.
- Developed Keterson Park Master Plan with a commitment to the accessibility, safety, and comfort within the Municipality's parks system. Plan includes the installation of an accessible pathway around the ball diamonds, and accessible washrooms.

Goals

- Support the Optimist Club of Mitchell for the accessible, inclusive, multi-generational playground
- Work on Henry Street bridge and ensure that it is AODA compliant

- New trail proposed and a new bridge at Henry/Campbell Streets. Tunnel under the bridge will include a trail that links to the Lion's park trail in order to create a loop trail.
- Keterson Park construction of accessible pathway.
- New West Perth Fire Station to be constructed with accessible design consideration and consultation with the Perth County Accessibility Advisory Committee.
- Install Power Door Operator at the Brodhagen Community Centre.
- Plan to refurbish the Dublin Outdoor washrooms near the Community Centre and include an accessible washroom.
- Complete Canada's 150th Legacy Project Gazebo at the Lion's Park in Mitchell. Structure to be accessible.
- To refer to the Perth County Site Plan Design Guidelines, the Ontario Building Code and the Design of Public Spaces Standard for any new construction or redevelopment.
- To consult with the Perth County Accessibility Advisory Committee on accessibility plans, recreational trails, outdoor play spaces, exterior paths of travel and on-street parking spaces.
- To consult with the public and the Perth County Accessibility Advisory Committee on site plans and drawings described in Section 41 of the Planning Act that the committee selects.
- Ongoing reference and updates to Maintenance Procedures for the Design of Public Spaces Standard.

Our Commitment to Accessibility

A commitment has been made by the County of Perth and its Lower Tier Municipalities to make accessibility in County services, programs, goods and facilities a reality. Progress to date has been and will continue to be a collaborative effort between the County and Lower Tier Municipalities. As well, the sharing of knowledge and documentation between Municipalities and other Organizations in Ontario has been invaluable, and illustrates the commitment that the people of Ontario have made to the AODA.

There is much work to be done, and we will continue to identify and remove barriers in order to create accessible spaces and services that everyone can use. Our success is dependent upon continued collaboration and feedback from the public. We encourage employees, residents and visitors to Perth County to share their

suggestions and comments on how we might make improvements in order to create a more accessible County.

Please contact us through one of the following methods:

[County of Perth Website:](#)³

Phone: 519-271-0531 x 210

Mail: Clerk's Division
County of Perth
1 Huron Street
Stratford, ON N5A 5S4

Email: clerk@perthcounty.ca

³ <https://www.perthcounty.ca/en/index.aspx>