



Halton Region

Accessibility Plan 2018-2023

# 2018 Annual Update



This document is available in alternate formats, upon request. If you require an alternate format, please call 311 or email [accesshalton@halton.ca](mailto:accesshalton@halton.ca)

## Introduction

According to the Canadian Survey on Disability 2017, 24.1% of, or 2.6 million, Ontarians have a disability. People with disabilities are one of the fastest growing sectors of the population. As Ontario's population ages, the number of people with disabilities will increase.

### Halton Region Statement of Organizational Commitment

The Regional Municipality of Halton (Halton Region) recognizes the diverse needs of residents and works to provide services that are accessible to everyone.

Halton Region is committed to:

- removing barriers to meet the needs of people with disabilities with respect to Regional programs, services and facilities; and,
- meeting the objectives and requirements of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (AODA) and *Ontario Regulation 191/11 – Integrated Accessibility Standards* (IASR).

### Halton Region Accessibility Progress Report, 2018

The development of multi-year accessibility plans is required by the IASR. The Halton Region Multi-Year Accessibility Plan, 2018-2023 sets out how the Region will address compliance obligations under the IASR over the next five years. It also highlights a number of additional initiatives and projects that Halton will undertake to prevent and remove barriers to people with disabilities when accessing Regional programs, services, and facilities.

The IASR requires that obligated organizations report annually on their progress toward meeting compliance requirements. This document identifies:

- actions that Halton has taken that are specifically focused on meeting compliance obligations in the AODA and IASR;
- Halton-led initiatives and corporate projects, not directly related to compliance requirements, but which improve the accessibility of Regional programs and services; and,
- initiatives directed at supporting people with disabilities such as the Halton Region Community Investment Fund.

This information is set out in Table 1.

## Accessibility Legislation Update

### Federal Accessibility Legislation

In June 2018, the Federal Government introduced *Bill C-81, An Act to ensure a barrier-free Canada* (Accessible Canada Act). The bill outlines how the Government of Canada will require organizations under federal jurisdiction to identify, remove and prevent barriers in the following areas:

- employment;
- the built environment;
- information and communication technologies;
- communication, other than information and communication technologies;
- the procurement of goods, services and facilities;
- the design and delivery of programs and services; and,
- transportation.

On May 29, 2019, the Bill passed Third Reading in the House of Commons and is currently awaiting Royal Assent. Although it appears that the Bill will not impact municipalities, Regional staff will continue to review it and report back to Council, as required.

### ***Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA)***

In 2005, the Government of Ontario enacted the AODA. Its objective is to achieve accessibility for Ontarians with disabilities with respect to goods, services, facilities, accommodation, employment, buildings and premises by 2025. The AODA requires the establishment of accessibility advisory committees, the filing of accessibility reports and the development and implementation of accessibility standards.

To date, accessibility standards have been developed in the areas set out below.

- Customer Service
- Design of Public Spaces
- Employment
- Information and Communications
- Transportation

The standards which are set out in the IASR include a number of requirements that obligated organizations, including municipalities, are required to meet within specified timeframes.

### **Accessibility Standards Review**

Prior to the last provincial election, the Provincial Government was leading a process to review and update the Employment, Information and Communications, and Transportation Standards. This review is a requirement under the AODA. In addition, work was underway to develop a new education standard and a health care standard. Although it appeared that the health care standard would initially only be focused on the hospital sector, it is unclear if its scope will extend to services provided by public health departments or long-term care homes.

The review and development process for the education and health care standards has recently resumed. Staff will continue to monitor developments on these and the other standards under review and will update Council as required.

### **Review of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA)***

In February 2018, the Provincial Government announced that it had appointed the Honourable David Onley (Lieutenant Governor of Ontario from 2007 to 2014) to conduct a review of the AODA's goals, objectives and effectiveness. The review process took place throughout 2018 and included public consultations across Ontario. Mr. Onley's report was provided to the Provincial Government in January 2019 and was made publicly available in March 2019. At the same time, the Provincial Government indicated that in the coming months it would be consulting with businesses, non-profit organizations and the broader public sector on their views on accessibility. To date, no further information has been made available with respect to dates or locations regarding the consultations. Staff will continue to monitor any announcements or actions taken with respect to the report and related consultations, and will update Council as required.

### **Halton Region Accessibility Advisory Committee (HRAAC)**

The AODA requires that Halton Region have an accessibility advisory committee and that a majority of its members be people with disabilities. The Halton Region Accessibility Advisory Committee (HRAAC) reports to Regional Council through the Administration and Finance Committee. As required by provincial legislation, it provides advice on the prevention and removal of barriers to people with disabilities with respect to Regional programs, services and facilities. Since its establishment, the HRAAC has provided input on a number of Regional initiatives and projects and has supported activities aimed at creating awareness on issues relating to people with disabilities.

The composition of the Committee includes a member of Regional Council and a member of Halton Region's Older Adult Advisory Committee. The members bring to the HRAAC a wide range of personal experiences and perspectives related to the challenges faced by people with disabilities and provide invaluable advice and support to Regional staff.

The HRAAC's term coincides with the term of Regional Council. A recruitment process for the 2019-2022 Committee began in April 2019 and it is anticipated that it will be established by Summer 2019.

### **Next Steps**

Halton Region staff will continue to address compliance, reporting and consultation requirements identified in the AODA and the IASR. Additional initiatives will also be undertaken to improve the accessibility of Regional programs and services.

A copy of this document will be posted on Halton's website and will be made available in alternate formats, upon request.

**Table 1 – Halton Region Accessibility Progress Report, 2018**

<p>Ongoing Compliance with IASR Standards</p>	<p><b>General Requirements</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ongoing training provided to new staff as part of the onboarding process.</li> <li>• Procurement documents continued to include accessibility-related language.</li> </ul> <p><b>Customer Service</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policies and procedures updated to align with legislative changes.</li> <li>• Resources to support staff in assisting people who require an assistive device, service animal or support person reviewed and updated.</li> </ul> <p><b>Design of Public Spaces (DOPS)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Design specifications related to accessible pedestrian signals, tactile walking surface indicators and curb ramps incorporated into Regional road projects.</li> <li>• Halton Regional Waterfront Parks             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Completed the majority of construction at Burloak Waterfront Park, implementing design features discussed by HRAAC.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>Employment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Halton’s employment page continued to include information for applicants who require a disability-related accommodation to participate in a recruitment process.</li> <li>• Accommodation planning and other supports to employees with disabilities provided, as required.</li> </ul> <p><b>Information and Communications</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Halton’s website re-design incorporated Web Content Accessibility Guidelines, 2.0 Level AA.</li> <li>• Members of the public encouraged to provide feedback in ways that work for them.</li> <li>• Documents and information provided in alternate formats or through communication supports, as required.</li> <li>• Members of the public encouraged to advise of disability-related accommodation needs when attending Regional events or meetings.</li> </ul>
<p>Halton Region Accessibility Advisory Committee (HRAAC) Consultations</p>	<p>The HRAAC received presentations and provided input on a number of Regional projects and initiatives including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regional Accommodation Strategy</li> <li>• Biosolids Management Centre Operations Building</li> </ul>

**Table 1 – Halton Region Accessibility Progress Report, 2018**

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community Paramedic Program</li> <li>• Emergency Preparedness Materials for People with Disabilities</li> <li>• Halton.ca redesign</li> </ul> <p>Members of the HRAAC also:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participated in consultations led by the Provincial Government on Accessibility Advisory Committees.</li> <li>• Provided feedback and input on consultation’s led by Halton Region on their experience as members of a Regional Citizen Advisory Committee.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Training and Awareness Activities</b></p>	<p>Regional staff participated in a number of ongoing learning, training and consultation opportunities including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ontario Network of Accessibility Professionals Conference– City of Belleville</li> <li>• DoPs in Practice: Understanding and applying the Design of Public Spaces Standards – Canadian Urban Institute, All Access and Human Space</li> <li>• New Halton Consolidated Courthouse-Advisory Team- Ministry of the Attorney General and Infrastructure Ontario</li> </ul>
	<p>Regional staff participated in webinars hosted by the Accessibility Directorate of Ontario on topics including accessible employment practices, and accessible information and technology.</p>
<p><b>Networking and Information Sharing Activities</b></p>	<p><b>Halton staff continued to participate in the:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local Municipal &amp; Regional Accessibility Working Group whose membership includes staff from the City of Burlington, the Town of Halton Hills, the Town of Milton, the Town of Oakville, the Halton Regional Police Service and the Sheridan College Institute of Technology and Advanced Learning.</li> <li>• Ontario Network of Accessibility Professionals (ONAP), an information sharing network with representatives from more than 100 organizations, including municipalities, hospitals, school boards, universities and colleges, and police services.</li> </ul>

**Table 1 – Halton Region Accessibility Progress Report, 2018**

<p>Accessible Customer Service at Halton Region Events</p>	<p><b>Rain Barrel Sales Events</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Actions taken to provide accessible customer service include: portable signage designating accessible parking spots; tables and chairs provided for individuals who prefer or need to sit; staff available to carry rain barrels to residents’ cars; residents given the option of sending someone to the sales event on their behalf or to purchase online if they are unable to attend any of the sales events.</li> </ul> <p><b>Halton Children’s Water Festival</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Actions taken to provide accessible customer service include: accessible buses for participating elementary students or high school volunteers were available upon request; all-terrain wheelchairs provided for participants or volunteers who require them; accessible change areas provided; and, actions taken to ensure children and volunteers with disabilities can participate.</li> </ul>
<p>Community Safety and Well-being in Halton (CSWB): A Plan for Collaboration and Action</p>	<p>The CSWB Plan was developed to enhance how Halton Region and the Halton Regional Police Service collaborate with community partners on issues that impact safety and well-being. The Plan was approved by Regional Council and launched in November 2017.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As part of the operationalization of the CSWB Plan, a number of action tables were identified to be established to investigate issues, develop solutions and implement strategies to address a number of objectives including:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Enhancing access to mental health supports for children and youth by making it easier to access the right services at the right time.</li> <li>○ Establishing a mechanism to facilitate Halton-wide coordination and collaboration in the mental health and addictions sector.</li> <li>○ Exploring a Halton framework to more effectively serve youth and young adults who have developmental and mental health disabilities.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>Employment &amp; Social Services – Employment Resource Centres</p>	<p>Halton Region’s two Employment Resource Centres continued to offer a number of features to assist job seekers who may have a disability including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adjustable workstations to accommodate mobility devices</li> <li>• Jaws screen reader and Zoom Text magnifier.</li> </ul>



**Table 1 – Halton Region Accessibility Progress Report, 2018**

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ubi Duo wireless communications system to support people with hearing loss.</li> </ul>
Employment & Social Services - Mental Health Program	The Mental Health Program, part of the Employment & Social Services Division, provided supports to individuals who have mental health disabilities that may present barriers to employment. The supports include completing assessments and developing case plans based on employment goals.
Halton Region Community Investment Fund (HRCIF)	<p>The HRCIF provides one and multi-year grants to community health and social service programs aligned with funding priorities. In April 2018, Regional Council approved funding to 25 community programs and initiatives to help enhance the health, safety and well-being of Halton residents.</p> <p>A number of the 25 programs and initiatives provide support to people with disabilities through organizations such as the Canadian Mental Health Association (Halton Branch), Central West Specialized Developmental Services, the CNIB, Community Living Burlington, Distress Centre Halton, Schizophrenia Society of Ontario, STRIDE, and Support &amp; Housing - Halton.</p>
Halton Accessibility Repair Program (HARP)	In 2018, HARP provided funding to eligible homeowners for home modifications needed to improve accessibility and independent living (e.g., stair lifts, walk-in showers, grab bars, ramps). Funding is made available on a first come, first served basis through a dedicated application process.

# Accessibility Activities 2019-2020

Table 2 - IASR Compliance Activities, 2019-2020	
General Requirements	Actions to be Taken
<p>Develop accessibility policies</p> <p>Develop a multi-year accessibility plan</p> <p>Incorporate accessibility in procurement of goods, services or facilities</p> <p>Training</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Existing accessibility policy, procedures and other resources will be reviewed and updated to reflect any changes to the AODA or the IASR.</li> <li>Annual progress reports will be developed and posted on Halton website.</li> <li>Accessibility wording will continue to be included in Halton's procurement documents. Wording to be reviewed and updated, as required.</li> <li>"Accessibility Obligations in Procurement" procedure to be reviewed and updated, as required.</li> <li>New staff to continue to receive training as part of the onboarding process.</li> <li>Tools and resources to be provided to staff and volunteers and updated, as required.</li> </ul>

Table 2 - IASR Compliance Activities, 2019-2020	
Customer Service Standards	Actions
<p>Establishment of policies</p> <p>Use of service animals and support persons</p> <p>Notice of temporary disruptions</p> <p>Training for staff</p> <p>Feedback process</p> <p>Format of documents</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Accessibility policy in place. To be reviewed and updated, as required.</li> <li>Procedures relating to accessible customer service are in place and available to staff (e.g., notification of service disruptions, accessible feedback, provision of accessible formats/ communication supports, support persons, accessing assistive listening system). To be reviewed and updated, as required.</li> <li>Existing accessibility policy, procedures and training materials reflect requirements regarding service animals and support persons. To be reviewed and updated, as required.</li> <li>Service Disruption Notification procedure is in place. To be reviewed and updated, as required.</li> <li>Accessibility training module and supporting resources include information relating to accessible customer service and regulatory requirements. To be reviewed and updated, as required.</li> </ul>

## Table 2 - IASR Compliance Activities, 2019-2020

Customer Service	Actions
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Accessible Feedback” procedure in place.</li> <li>• Accessible Formats and Communications Supports” procedure in place.</li> <li>• Halton’s website to continue to provide public notification that accessible formats and communication supports are available. Website to continue to include information for individuals requiring an alternate format or communication support to provide feedback.</li> <li>• Advertisements for Halton Region events/meetings to continue to include wording asking residents to advise if they require a disability-related accommodation.</li> </ul>

## Table 2 - IASR Compliance Activities, 2019-2020

### Design of Public Spaces Standards

Design of Public Spaces (DOPS)	Actions
<p>This section of the IASR includes a number of technical and consultation requirements related to the following elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• recreational trails and beach access routes</li> <li>• outdoor public use eating areas</li> <li>• outdoor play spaces</li> <li>• exterior paths of travel</li> <li>• accessible parking</li> <li>• service counters, queuing areas</li> <li>• maintenance procedures</li> </ul>	<p>DOPS requirements to continue to be incorporated into the design of construction/renovation projects. Engineering and Construction Division to continue to incorporate DOPS requirements relating to accessible pedestrian signals, tactile walking surface indicators and curb ramps at intersections under Halton Region’s jurisdiction.</p> <p><b>Burloak Regional Waterfront Park</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consultations, as required by the IASR, will be undertaken as work continues on the parks. DOPS design specifications to be incorporated, as appropriate.</li> </ul> <p><b>Outdoor Play Spaces</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Design requirements as outlined in DOPS will be incorporated when new play spaces (on Regional property) are constructed or existing ones are redeveloped.</li> <li>• Consultations will be undertaken, as required in DOPS.</li> </ul> <p><b>Maintenance Procedures</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Procedure on Notification of Service Disruption is in place and includes direction to staff on actions to take for planned and unplanned disruptions to Regional services.</li> <li>• Communication regarding planned and unplanned disruptions is provided through a number of methods.</li> <li>• Daily site inspections are undertaken on the following elements and repairs are done as soon as practicable.</li> </ul>

## Table 2 - IASR Compliance Activities, 2019-2020

### Design of Public Spaces Standards

Design of Public Spaces (DOPS)	Actions
	<p>These elements are maintained as part of grounds-keeping contracts.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ outdoor public eating areas (on Regional property)</li> <li>○ exterior paths of travel (on Regional property)</li> <li>○ off-street parking (on Regional property)</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outdoor play spaces (on Regional property) are inspected as part of daily site inspections. They are inspected and certified annually and maintained as part of a playground inspection and repair service contract.</li> </ul>

## Table 2- IASR Compliance Activities, 2019-2020

Employment Standards	Actions
<p>Recruitment, selection and notification</p> <p>Accessible formats and communication supports for employees</p> <p>Workplace emergency response information</p> <p>Documented individual accommodation plans</p> <p>Return to work process</p> <p>Performance management, career development and redeployment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Halton's Employment Opportunities page and job postings to continue to include wording advising that disability-related accommodations are available.</li> <li>• Interview candidates to continue to be advised that disability-related accommodations are available.</li> <li>• Offer of Employment letters to continue to include wording advising that Halton will provide disability-related accommodation.</li> <li>• Accessible formats and communication supports to continue to be provided to employees, as required.</li> <li>• Process in place to provide employees, upon request, with a workplace emergency response plan. Process to be reviewed, as required.</li> <li>• Disability Management Policy / Work Accommodation Procedure in place. To be reviewed, as required.</li> <li>• Return-to-work process to be reviewed, as required.</li> <li>• Halton Region's Accessibility Policy reflects requirements for performance management, career development and redeployment. To be reviewed, as required.</li> </ul>

**Table 2 - IASR Compliance Activities, 2019-2020**

Information and Communications Standards	Actions to be taken
<p>Feedback processes</p> <p>Accessible formats and communication supports</p> <p>Emergency procedures, plans or public safety information</p> <p>Accessible websites and web content</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Halton’s website to continue to include information for individuals requiring an alternate format/ communication support to provide feedback and public notification that accessible formats/communication supports are available.</li> <li>• Advertisements for Halton Region meetings/events to continue to include wording asking residents to advise if they require accommodation.</li> <li>• Documents to continue to be provided in alternate formats, upon request.</li> <li>• Information on emergencies and people with disabilities to continue to be made available on Halton Region’s website</li> <li>• Work to continue toward maintaining WCAG 2.0 Level AA compliance.</li> </ul>

**Table 2 - IASR Compliance Activities, 2019-2020**

Compliance Reporting	Actions to be taken
<p>Compliance Reporting to the Provincial Government</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2019 Accessibility Compliance Report to be submitted prior to December 2019 deadline.</li> </ul>

## TABLE 2 - Additional Accessibility Activities, 2019 – 2020

Additional activities to be undertaken to enhance accessibility to Halton Region's programs and services

Halton Region Accessibility Advisory Committee (HRAAC) 2019-2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The 2019-2022 HRAAC will be established through a recruitment process.</li> </ul>
Seeking Input from the Halton Region Accessibility Advisory Committee (HRAAC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regional staff will continue to seek the input of the HRAAC on construction and renovation projects, new leases and other projects and initiatives, as appropriate.</li> </ul>
Halton Region Assisted Housing Design Guidelines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Document to be reviewed and updated.</li> </ul>
Review and Update of Emergency Preparedness for People with Disabilities Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Resources providing information on emergency preparedness for people with disabilities will be updated.</li> </ul>
Review and Update of Resources and Tools to Ensure Alignment with any Changes to Accessibility Legislation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Accessibility resources and tools will be reviewed and updated to ensure they are aligned with any changes to accessibility legislation.</li> </ul>
Training and Awareness Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Halton staff will continue to participate in training and awareness activities, as appropriate.</li> </ul>
Networking and Information Sharing Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Halton staff will continue to participate in accessibility information sharing and networking groups, i.e., the Local Municipal &amp; Regional Accessibility Working Group and the Ontario Network of Accessibility Professionals</li> </ul>
Monitoring Changes to Provincial Accessibility Legislation and Bill C-81 – An Act to ensure a barrier-free Canada	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Halton staff will continue to monitor changes to provincial accessibility legislation and <i>Bill C-81, An Act to ensure a barrier-free Canada</i> (Accessible Canada Act) to determine potential impacts on Regional programs and services.</li> </ul>



CAO-1916598

halton.ca  311

