



2024 Update

Halton Region

Accessibility Plan 2024-2028



If you require this document in an alternate format, please email accesshalton@halton.ca or call 311.

Halton Region Statement of Organizational Commitment

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*, S.O. 2005, c. 11 (“AODA”) and Ontario Regulation 191/11: Integrated Accessibility Standards (“O.Reg. 191/11”).

2024 Update – Halton Region Accessibility Plan, 2024-2028

The development of multi-year accessibility plans is required by O. Reg. 191/11. In spring 2024, Council approved Halton’s third multi-year accessibility plan which set out how the Region would address compliance obligations under O. Reg. 191/11 for the years 2024 to 2028.

O. Reg. 191/11 also requires the development of annual progress updates on the activities identified in multi-year plans. This document sets out actions that Halton Region took in 2024 that are specifically focused on meeting compliance obligations in the AODA and O. Reg. 191/11. In addition, it highlights Halton-led initiatives and projects not related to compliance, but that improve the accessibility of Regional programs and services. Also included are initiatives such as the Halton Region Community Investment Fund that, although not exclusively focused on accessibility, have provided funding to community organizations that support people with disabilities. This information is set out in Tables 1 and 2 of this document.

Background

Federal Accessibility Legislation

The *Accessible Canada Act*, S.C. 2019, c. 10 (“ACA”) came into force in 2019. Its goal is to realize a barrier-free Canada by 2040. The ACA applies to federally regulated sectors such as banking, telecommunications, transportation industries and the federal civil service. There are 12 standards being developed under the ACA. Although it is unlikely that the federal standards will impact the municipal sector directly, Halton Region staff will continue to monitor their development and report back to Council as required.

Provincial Accessibility Requirements

The AODA:

- aims to achieve accessibility for Ontarians with disabilities with respect to goods, services, facilities, accommodation, employment, buildings, and premises; and,
- requires the establishment of accessibility advisory committees, the filing of accessibility reports and the development and implementation of accessibility standards.

O Reg. 191/11, under the AODA, includes accessibility standards with specific requirements in the following areas:

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

Halton Region Accessibility Advisory Committee

The AODA requires that Halton Region establish an accessibility advisory committee to provide advice on the prevention and removal of barriers to people with disabilities with respect to Regional services, programs, and facilities.

Halton's current Accessibility Advisory Committee was appointed by Council following the 2022 municipal election and includes Halton residents, a member of Council, and a member of Halton Region's Older Adult Advisory Committee. Since its establishment, Halton's Accessibility Advisory Committee has provided input on a number of Halton Region initiatives and projects. The Committee is a key resource and contributor to Halton Region's continuing work on identifying and removing barriers and promoting accessibility. As with other Regional citizen advisory committees, the current Accessibility Advisory Committee will be in place until the next municipal election.

Next Steps

Halton Region staff will continue to address compliance, reporting and consultation requirements identified in the AODA and O. Reg. 191/11 and undertake additional actions to improve the accessibility of Halton Region programs, services, and facilities and support people with disabilities. This includes the following:

- submitting the 2025 Accessibility Compliance Report to the Ministry for Seniors and Accessibility;
- providing updates to the Ministry for Seniors and Accessibility on Halton Region's Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0 Level AA Compliance Plan;
- continuing to advance the Design of Public Spaces audit;
- seeking feedback from the Halton Region Accessibility Advisory Committee on Regional projects and initiatives;
- reviewing Halton Region's accessibility policies, procedures, and training materials and revising, as required;
- continuing to participate in the Ontario Network of Accessibility Professionals; and,
- monitoring changes to federal and provincial accessibility legislation and the revision and development of accessibility standards to determine their impact on Halton Region.

Table 1- 2024 Accessibility Compliance Activities

Activity	Actions
<p>Ongoing Compliance with the <i>Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005</i> S.O. 2005, c. 11 and Ontario Regulation 191/11- Integrated Accessibility Standards</p>	<p>General Requirements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Accessibility policy and procedures in place and available to staff. ▪ Accessibility training provided to new staff as part of the onboarding process. ▪ Training materials and resources for staff and volunteers developed and available to staff. ▪ Halton Region Accessibility Plan, 2024-2028 was developed and approved. <p>Customer Service</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Accessibility procedures and related resources to support staff in providing accessible customer service including assisting people who require an assistive device, service animal or support person developed and are available to staff. ▪ Halton Region website continued to provide public notification that accessible formats and communication supports are available upon request. ▪ Halton Region's website continued to include information for individuals requiring an alternate format or communication support to provide feedback. <p>Design of Public Spaces</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Design of Public Spaces Standards requirements were incorporated into the design of construction/renovation projects. ▪ Requirements relating to accessible pedestrian signals, tactile walking surface indicators and curb ramps were incorporated into intersections under Halton Region's jurisdiction. <p>Maintenance Procedures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Procedure on service disruption notification is in place and continues to include direction to staff on actions to take for planned and unplanned disruptions to Halton Region services and facilities. ▪ Communication regarding planned and unplanned disruptions continued to be provided through a number of methods. ▪ Regular site inspections undertaken on the following elements situated on Halton Region property and repairs are done as soon as practicable. These elements are maintained as part of Halton Region service contracts. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Outdoor public eating areas

Table 1- 2024 Accessibility Compliance Activities

Activity	Actions
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Exterior paths of travel ○ Off-street parking ▪ Outdoor play spaces at Halton Community Housing Corporation sites regularly inspected by maintenance staff. <p>Employment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Halton Region's Employment Opportunities pages and job postings continued to include information for applicants who require a disability-related accommodation to participate in a recruitment process. ▪ Interview candidates advised that disability related accommodations are available. ▪ Accommodation planning and other supports for employees with disabilities provided, as required. ▪ Process in place to provide employees, upon request, with workplace emergency response information. ▪ Disability Management Policy and Work Accommodation Procedure are in place. <p>Information and Communications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Documents and information provided in alternate formats or through communication supports, as required. ▪ Members of the public encouraged to advise of disability-related accommodation needs when attending or participating in Halton Region events or meetings. ▪ Ongoing work towards ensuring Halton Region's websites, web content and online documents align with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0 Level AA.
Compliance Reporting to the Provincial Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Update provided to the Provincial Government on the status of Halton's Web Content Accessibility Guidelines Compliance Plan.
Halton Region Accessibility Advisory Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Halton Region Accessibility Advisory Committee received presentations on projects and initiatives including the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 1258 Rebecca Steet, Oakville - Seniors Housing Project (January 2024) ○ Halton Region Accessibility Plan, 2024-2028 (March 2024) ○ 363 Margaret Drive - Housing Project (October 2024) ○ Update to Halton Region's Emergency Preparedness Information for People with

Table 1- 2024 Accessibility Compliance Activities

Activity	Actions
	<p>Disabilities (November 2024)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Design of Public Spaces Audit - Halton Region facilities (November 2024)

Table 2 - Additional Initiatives that Support Accessibility and People with Disabilities, 2024

Activity	Actions
Anti-Ableism Training, Webinar and Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Anti-ableism training was provided to employees, including a webinar hosted on the International Day of Persons with Disabilities and two workshop sessions. These training opportunities aimed to raise awareness about ableism, highlight barriers faced by people with disabilities, challenge biases related to disability, and discuss strategies to increase workplace inclusion. Internal resources available to all employees include an updated ableism intranet section and calendar of observances that provide definitions, raise awareness, and promote strategies for creating a more inclusive workplace.
Community Safety and Well-Being in Halton: A Plan for Collaboration and Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As part of the ongoing implementation of the Community Safety and Well-Being Plan, Action Tables were identified to investigate issues, develop solutions, and carry out local strategies to address a number of objectives including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exploring supportive housing options for adults with complex service needs including adults with a dual diagnosis of a developmental disability and mental health issue; Optimizing access to centralized crisis mental health services for Halton residents; Supporting children and youth with a dual diagnosis of a developmental disability and mental health issue; and, Enhancing access to mental health supports for children and youth.

Table 2 - Additional Initiatives that Support Accessibility and People with Disabilities, 2024

Activity	Actions
Employment & Social Services – Employment Resource Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Halton Region’s Employment Resource Centre continued to offer features to assist job seekers with disabilities including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Adjustable workstations to accommodate mobility devices; ○ Zoom text magnifier; and, ○ Assisted support for people with hearing or vision loss.
Employment & Social Services - Mental Health Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Employment Halton continued to offer support to individuals with mental health disabilities that may present barriers to employment. The support includes vocational/cognitive assessments, developing case plans based on employment goals, and referrals to community mental health programs.
Halton Accessibility Repair Program – Ontario Priorities Housing Initiative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Funding to eligible homeowners for home modifications needed to improve accessibility and independent living (e.g., stair lifts, walk-in showers, grab bars, ramps) was provided through the Halton Accessibility Repair Program. ▪ Funding was made available on a first-come, first-served basis through a dedicated application process.
Halton Region Community Investment Fund	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ In 2024, Halton made a number of investments in programs and services to support residents who are vulnerable to negative health and social outcomes, including people with disabilities. ▪ The Halton Region Community Investment Fund funded several initiatives delivered through organizations including the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Art Gallery of Burlington ○ Bob Rumball Canadian Centre of Excellence for the Deaf ○ Brain Injury Association of Peel & Halton ○ Canadian Mental Health Association, Halton Region Branch ○ Central West Specialized Developmental Services ○ Centre for Diverse Learners ○ Distress Centre Halton ○ Halton Alcohol, Drug and Gambling Assessment, Prevention & Treatment Services (ADAPT) ○ Halton Women’s Place ○ Home Suite Hope Shared Living Corp.

Table 2 - Additional Initiatives that Support Accessibility and People with Disabilities, 2024

Activity	Actions
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Maternal Mind Matters ○ Mind Forward Brain Injury Services ○ Punjabi Community Health Services ○ Shifra Homes Inc. ○ Tetra Society of North America ○ The Canadian National Institute for the Blind (CNIB) ○ The Cedarbrook Society (o/a The Darling Home for Kids)
Network, Information Sharing and Learning Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Halton Region staff continued to participate in the Ontario Network of Accessibility Professionals (ONAP), an information-sharing network with representatives from more than 300 organizations, including municipalities, hospitals, school boards, universities and colleges, and police services.