

2011 Accessibility Plan



Striving For a Barrier-Free
Huron County



The 2011 Accessibility Plan has been prepared to ensure compliance with ODA requirements and is available to Huron County staff and residents.

If you require this report in alternate formats, please specify what format , ie. electronic, large font, text only, or to request permission to reprint, please contact:

Sandra Thompson, Accessibility Coordinator
Huron County
1 Court House Square
Goderich, ON N7A 1M2

Telephone: 519-524-8394, Ext. 259
Email: sthompson@huroncounty.ca



Dear Residents of Huron County

Huron County Council is pleased to present to you the *2011 Accessibility Plan, Striving For An Accessible Huron County*. This report was written by our Accessibility Coordinator with input and feedback from the Huron County Accessibility Advisory Committee (HCAAC) and the Working Group which is made up of staff from each of the 9 municipalities.

The 2011 Plan provides a brief overview of our successes in 2010 and how the Huron County Accessibility Advisory Committee (HCAAC) plans to assist Huron County Council and its participating municipalities to fulfill the purpose of the *Ontarians with Disabilities Act* in regards to the removal of barriers by 2025. The purpose of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) is to develop accessibility standards that will identify, remove and prevent barriers for people with disabilities in key areas of daily living.

Over the years, society has seen a multitude of emerging opportunities to reduce existing barriers that prevent the disabled population from enjoying full inclusion. There has been increased momentum and energy in society to deal with this inequity since the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA – Bill 118) was introduced in the Legislative Assembly of Ontario on October 12, 2004.

Although our governments have dedicated a lot of energy and resources towards a vision of full inclusion and a barrier-free Ontario, the reality is that persons with disabilities still face barriers, which prevent them from participating in all aspects of society. Canadians with disabilities are no longer viewed as ‘exceptions’ whose needs must be met through segregated programs but are now seen more as fellow citizens, who have a responsibility to one another and that each of us has something of value to contribute. Involvement from all sectors of society, including government departments and agencies, private enterprise and voluntary organizations, are required to achieve the overall goal of full citizenship.

Successful committees know that it takes more than a good plan to succeed in business. It takes an empowered committee, focused on realistic goals, with impassioned leadership. It takes vision, commitment, determination and a sense of purpose. The HCAAC has created a vision to make Huron County accessible for people of all abilities. They articulate their vision, passionately own their vision, and are working to drive it to completion.

I hope you will take a few moments to review our Plan in its entirety. We welcome your feedback.

Sincerely,

Larry C. Adams
Chief Administrative Officer

Acknowledgements

County Council (2010-2014)

Huron County is governed by County Council, which is made up of twenty members from nine area municipalities. Each municipality located within Huron County is represented at County Council by their elected representatives: Mayors or Reeves, Deputy Mayors and Deputy Reeves, along with additional Councillor Representatives.

County Council: Ben Van Diepenbeek, Neil Rintoul, Bill Dowson, Tyler Hessel, Paul Klopp, Jim Ginn, David Jewitt, Brian Barnim, John Grace, Deb Shewfelt, Art Versteeg, Bernie MacLellan, Joe Steffler, Bill Siemon, Paul Gowing, Neil Vincent, David Riach, George Robertson, Jim Dietrich, David Frayne



Members of County Council, 2010-2014

Huron County Accessibility Advisory Committee (HCAAC)

The Huron County Accessibility Advisory Committee is made up of 12 voting members including 7 persons with disabilities as defined in the Ontarians with Disabilities Act (ODA); 2 persons from professional disciplines; 1 elected official; and 2 citizen representatives. The HCAAC is supported by 5 non-voting members including the chair of the ODA working group, 1 person from the County Planning Department, 1 person from the County Social Services Department, 1 Municipal Building Official and the County Clerk.

Voting Members: Joe Austin, Ed Bezaire, Kevin Dickins, Lorie Falconer, David Fayne, Bob Fisher, Chris Knapp, Maureen A. McCauley, Glen McLachlan, Charlene O'Reilly, Barbara Hicks and one vacancy.

Non-Voting Members: Larry C. Adams, Robyn de Weerd, Claire Dodds, Kirk Livingston, Lynda Rotteau, Sandra Thompson, Barbara Wilson

The HCAAC recognize that people with disabilities regularly face barriers that prevent them from working, traveling in and enjoying their communities. Seniors also experience barriers to activities as part of the natural aging process. The HCAAC appreciates that Ontario's accessibility standards will break down these barriers so that people of all ages and abilities can more easily live, work and travel throughout the Province and for this reason will continue to focus on the implementation of the standards.

Last year's Accessibility Plan focused on Huron County and its Municipalities reaching compliance to the first standard - Customer Service Standard - that was implemented under the Act in January 2010. By January 1, 2012, Ontario businesses will also have to meet the standard. This year's Plan will continue to focus on maintaining and evaluating our compliance to the first standard; ensuring our business sector understands the requirements of the first standard; and working towards the implementation of the Integrated Accessibility Regulation.

PAST SUCCESSES:

Examples of past successes include the Accessible Gas Station Recognition Program, attending community events to raise awareness around the need for accessibility, creation of the HCAAC brochure, review of various site plans such as the Brussels Arena, Seaforth Medical Centre, plans for the Goderich Town Hall renovations, advisory on the Colborne Public School Playground Redevelopment. The HCAAC has revised their Vision, Mission, Mandate and 2011 Priorities. Please follow this link to visit Huron County's website to review these documents http://www.huroncounty.ca/administration/acc_hcaac.php.

COMMITTEES VALUES:



Citizen-Centred Focus: Putting the interests of Canada's disabled and aging populations first with the goal of full inclusion for all.

Teamwork & Relationships: Developing common goals, understanding shared interests and bridging differences.

Trust & Respect: Building long-term relationships founded on trust and respect.



Collaboration: Will work in partnership with those who support the Vision, Mission and Values of Wheeling & Able to achieve shared goals.

Education & Development of People: Increasing the capacity of society as a whole to achieve inclusive societies for people of all abilities.

Integrity: Will work with everyone with compassion, objectivity and openness.



Creativity: Challenging the status quo. Encouraging society to embrace change.

Fair & Equitable Treatment: Treating others in a just and unbiased manner while respecting individual differences, abilities and needs.

Table of Contents

Message from Huron County Chief Administrative Officer.....	3
Acknowledgements	4
Table of Contents	6
Executive Summary	7
Highlights of 2010 Accessibility Plan	9
Highlights of 2011 Accessibility Plan	12
Integrated Accessibility Regulation.....	13
Profile of Huron County	19
Appendix A: County Responsibilities under the Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001 and the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005.....	20
Appendix B: Huron County’s Feedback to the Proposed Integrated Accessibility Regulation	21
Appendix C: Definitions	22

Executive Summary

We go to work. We go shopping. We take in a movie and afterwards grab a bite to eat. We do not think twice about it. At least, most of us do not. But that is not always the case for people with disabilities. Often, obstacles stop people with disabilities from doing the kinds of things most of us take for granted. We call these obstacles, barriers to accessibility. And Ontario is working to break such barriers down.

About 1.85 million people in Ontario have a disability, which is approximately 15.5%, or one in seven people. Over the next 20 years as the population ages, the number will rise to one in five Ontarians. When you add in immediate family members that are affected by someone with a disability this percentage increases to 53% of the population. Ontario needs to be more accessible to people with disabilities.

A disability can happen to any one at any time. Some people are born with a disability. For others, the disability happens because of an illness or an accident. Sometimes it is because the person is getting older. In fact, as the population ages, many of us may eventually face some kind of limitation.



Making Ontario accessible

On June 13, 2005, the government passed the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005.

The Act:

- makes Ontario the first jurisdiction in Canada to develop, implement and enforce mandatory accessibility standards, and
- applies to both the private and public sectors.

Through the Act and the accessibility standards, our Government's goal is to make Ontario accessible by 2025.



The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 calls on the business community, public sector, not-for-profit sector and people with disabilities or their representatives to develop, implement and enforce mandatory accessibility standards. Accessibility standards are the rules that businesses and organizations in Ontario will have to follow to identify, remove and prevent barriers to accessibility.

Appendix A outlines further details on the municipal requirements under both the ODA and AODA legislation.

During this past year, the Ministry of Community and Social Services took notable strides forward and laid some important groundwork in the areas of standards development and compliance assistance. The Accessibility Standards for Customer Service Regulation is now the law. As of January 1, 2010, Ontario's hospitals, schools, municipalities and other public sector organizations are required to comply with the requirements. The Province's private and not-for-profit sectors will need to meet the requirements by January 2012.

The Standards Development Committees working in the areas of transportation, information and communications, and employment submitted final proposed standards in late 2008 through to late 2009 and they are now analyzing the recommended direction in those final proposed standards.

The government has recently approved an integrated approach to regulating the standards under the AODA. As a result, the requirements for the Transportation, Information and Communication, and Employment standards will all be aligned into one, single regulation in order to simplify compliance for obligated organizations, increase flexibility and reduce regulatory burden.

The Accessible Built Environment Standard Development Committee released their initial proposed standard for public review in Fall 2009. The committee submitted their final proposed standard to the government for consideration in late 2010. In order to support the hundreds of thousands of organizations that will be affected by these standards, the Ministry developed and launched the Accessibility Compliance Reporting System in Fall 2009. The system allows those businesses and organizations that must submit regular reports on their compliance with the standards to manage their information and complete, certify and submit their reports in one easy place and entirely online.

People with disabilities have dreams, hopes and goals. They have problems, challenges and needs just like those without disabilities. Treat people with disabilities with patience, understanding and courtesy. Making Ontario accessible for people of all abilities starts with changing the way we think about people with disabilities. Changing attitudes starts with learning more about disabilities. For this reason the Huron County Accessibility Advisory Committee has made education and awareness one of their priorities for 2011.



People with disabilities are active participants in our communities, contributing to the local economy and accessing local goods and services. It makes good sense — economically and socially to make the services and facilities of Huron County accessible and welcoming for people with disabilities.

Highlights of the 2010 Accessibility Plan

Huron County focused their energy on meeting all standards set in the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07. This included training staff and volunteers in all aspects of Customer Service, establish a feedback process for suggestions and complaints, set policy for support persons, notices of service disruption, accommodation for service animals, alternate formats of documents and to make available assistive devices as required.




In 2010, Huron County achieved full compliance of the Customer Service Standard. The following are a few highlights:

Feedback Process: The Customer Service Standard requires the County of Huron have a feedback process to receive comments on the way they provide goods or services to people with disabilities. A feedback form is available for staff to access on FirstClass which is an internal portal available to staff.

Feedback may be provided by a person with a disability in the manner deemed most convenient to them, such as in person, by telephone, in writing, or by delivering an electronic text by email or on diskette or otherwise. Feedback may be provided directly to the service provider or to Sandra Thompson, Accessibility Coordinator at sthompson@huroncounty.ca.

When feedback about Huron County's Accessible Customer Service is received, it is forwarded to the most appropriate department for handling. All feedback is kept in strict confidence and used to improve customer service. In addition, the author of the feedback is provided a response in the format in which the feedback was received outlining actions deemed appropriate.

One such avenue for providing feedback is on the Huron County Website Accessibility page at: http://www.huroncounty.ca/administration/acc_accessibility.php

<p>ADMINISTRATION</p> <p>Chief Administrative Officer / Clerk</p> <p>Accessibility ▶</p> <p>Human Resources</p> <p>Information Technology</p> <p>Provincial Offences Administration ▶</p> <p>Treasury</p> <p>User Fees and Charges</p> <hr/> <p>JUMP TO SERVICE</p> <p>Choose service ▼</p>	<h2 style="margin: 0;">Accessibility</h2> <p>The Ontarians with Disabilities Act, (ODA) 2001 is provincial legislation requiring municipalities to address issues around disabilities and barriers to accessibility.</p> <p>The ODA requires all Ontario municipalities to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop an Annual Accessibility Plan, in consultation with people with disabilities Appoint an Accessibility Advisory Committee if over 10,000 in population Make the Accessibility Plan available to the public <p>The Huron County Accessibility Advisory Committee (HCAAC) was established in 2005 and is an advisory committee to County Council. The committee is made up of community members, a majority of whom are people with disabilities. They provide vision, direction and advice towards the removal of barriers to all municipal councils within the County of Huron.</p> <hr/> <h3>Contact Information</h3> <p>If you have a question or concern with issues specific to accessibility, or the Huron County Accessibility Plan, contact the Accessibility Advisory Committee.</p> <p>Huron County Accessibility Advisory Committee 1 Court House Square Goderich, ON N7A 1M2</p> <p>Telephone: 519.524.8394, ext. 259 Toll Free: 1.888.524.8394, ext. 259 (519 area only) Email: accessibility [at] huroncounty.ca</p>	
--	---	---

Accessibility Standards For Customer Service & Use of Assistive Devices: The County of Huron will promote accessibility through the development of policies, procedures and practices and by ensuring they consider people with disabilities. To do this we must ensure the policies, procedures and practices address integration, independence, dignity and equal opportunity.

Huron County developed Policy No. 1.23 entitled Accessibility Standards For Customer Service and Use of Assistive Devices to address all of the requirements of the Standard.

Customer Service Training: Customer Service training is a legal requirement of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA). The Accessible Customer Service Regulation is about creating a culture of delivering **accessible** customer service to persons with disabilities. In support of this culture change, the Province will be adopting additional regulations requiring change to ensure we are inclusive and address the needs of persons with disabilities. Because Huron County is committed to providing services that are accountable, accessible, responsive, efficient and effective, this culture was systematically implemented.

Huron County has implemented a training program that exceeds the requirements of the standard covering the following areas:

- Support Persons
- Feedback Process
- Service Disruption
- Service Animals
- Format of Documents
- Training
- Assistive Devices

Initially, numerous training sessions were provided at different locations ensuring all employees and volunteers of Huron County completed the training. Training is now provided on an ongoing basis to new staff and volunteers.

Highlights of the 2011 Accessibility Plan



Huron County is committed to being responsive to the needs of all its residents - recognizing the diverse needs of all of our residents and responding by striving to provide services and facilities that are accessible to all. As an employer, and a provider of services, Huron County is committed to ensuring its services are provided in an accessible manner.

Huron County will promote accessibility through the development of policies, procedures and practices and by ensuring they consider people with disabilities by making sure the policies, procedures and practices address **integration, independence, dignity and equal opportunity**.

The main focus for 2011 is to continue to prepare for the release of provincial accessibility standards developed under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005. The identified key accessibility focus areas, which will result in consistent, meaningful improvements in accessibility across the organization are:

1. Ongoing training for the AODA Customer Service Regulation to all new staff and volunteers of the County of Huron. This will include evaluating the training and making any required modifications.
2. Will work with business associations to ensure business have access to required information for the Customer Service Standard in order to be in compliance by January, 2012 on a full cost recovery basis.
3. Improving telephone accessibility, focusing on technologies for people who are deaf, deafened, and hard of hearing, ie) TTY Machines, TextNet
4. Researching accessible website technology.
5. Developing and implementing a policy on alternate document formats.
6. Researching options and working towards implementation by 2013 by our public libraries in the areas of providing equal access to materials; being able to provide information in accessible formats; and have rare books, special collections, and archival materials accessible to all. Note – Although the County of Huron operates the County of Library System, it is the responsibility of our Lower Tier Municipalities to provide an accessible venue.

These focus areas were chosen because they go beyond program-specific everyday business in improving accessibility. They will impact most departments and will result in consistent, meaningful improvements in accessibility across the organization.

Planning Process

County staff from across the organization continue to be committed to improving the accessibility of services and sites. The HCAAC Working Group consists of key staff from across the County. The HCAAC and the HCAAC Working Group sets the direction for accessibility planning to ensure the full participation of all departments and provides regular updates to County Council.

DRAFT INTEGRATED ACCESSIBILITY REGULATION



The proposed Integrated Accessibility Regulation, developed under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, was made available for public comment by the Ministry of Community and Social Services. The regulation outlines provisions for organizations to meet regarding accessible information and communication, employment, and transportation.

A subcommittee of the Huron County Accessibility Advisory Committee (HCAAC) was created and they have provided comments and feedback on the proposed Integrated Accessibility Regulation. Appendix A contains this feedback on the proposed regulation, which was submitted to the Minister of Community and Social Services.

The Accessibility Coordinator will complete an analysis in consultation with key staff and committee members to determine the kinds of effects the proposed regulation may have on Huron County, specifically examining the time and resources that may be required to meet compliance with the proposed regulation. Even though it is anticipated that meeting the provisions outlined in the Integrated Accessibility Regulation will require investments in accessibility, these requirements are made more manageable by the gains Huron County has already made to ensure services and facilities are accessible to people with disabilities.

BACKGROUND:

Huron County has a history of improving the accessibility of County services and facilities for people with disabilities. Under the Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001 (ODA), the County has produced annual Accessibility Plans, documenting the actions all Departments have taken to identify, remove, and prevent barriers for people with disabilities.

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA), enacted five years ago, provided the province with the mandate to create accessibility standards that both public and private sector organizations will eventually be required to meet. The AODA standards provide guidance and direction for organizations in the areas of:

- Customer Service
- Information and Communication
- Employment
- Transportation
- Built Environment

To date, the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service are the only standards to be made into regulation. In the fall of 2009, the Province appointed Charles Beer to conduct an independent review of the AODA, as required under the legislation. In the final report on the review of the AODA, Mr. Beer made specific recommendations on the harmonization of the remaining four standards in development (transportation, information and communication, employment, and built environment).

Minister Meilleur recently responded to the recommendations made in the review of the AODA, announcing that three of the four remaining standards: transportation, information and communication, and employment, have been integrated into a single regulation.

- Information and communication, focusing on the way information and communications are sent and received.
- Employment, focusing on the ways in which organizations provide accessibility for people with disabilities across all stages of the employment cycle, including recruitment and retention.
- Transportation, outlining requirements for organizations across the province that provide conventional transit, specialized transit, public school transportation, and taxis.

COMMENTS ON THE PROPOSED INTEGRATED ACCESSIBILITY REGULATION:

It is apparent that the Ministry is continuing to seek input on the proposed Integrated Accessibility Regulation, particularly around the timing outlined for the requirements.



The Accessibility Coordinator will work with the HCAAC and staff from various Departments across the County, to further identify concerns on how the proposed regulation may be implemented at the County. The tables below will be completed during this process. These tables will provide a summary of the requirements outlined in the proposed Integrated Accessibility Regulation for the broader public sector with 50 or more employees. The tables will provide an overview of the County's readiness to meet the requirements using the following scale:

- **Currently Meet:** Very little action would be needed to confirm compliance, such as documenting compliance.
- **Partially Meet:** Moderate amount of actions would be needed to ensure compliance, such as assessing and revising current practices.
- **Do Not Meet:** High level of attention or action would be needed to meet compliance, such as purchasing new equipment, creating new policies or practices, implementing new procedures, etc.

2011 Requirement	Currently Meet	Partially Meet	Do Not Meet
Transportation			
• Technical requirements – signage; indicators; steps; grab bars, handholds, handrails, stanchions; floor surfaces; mobility aid spaces; stop request controls; lighting and colour contrasting			
• Pre-boarding route or destination announcements (verbal)			
• On-board announcements (verbal)			

• Courtesy seating			
• Maintenance of equipment			
• Integration of transportation services (Responsibility of Lower Tiers)			
• Equal fares and fees – Taxis (Responsibility of Lower Tiers)			

2012 Requirement	Currently Meet	Partially Meet	Do Not Meet
General Requirements			
• Policies and practices			
• Accessibility Plans			
• Kiosks			
Transportation			
• Accessible boarding/de-boarding			
• Storage of assistive devices			
• Companions			
• Treatment of support persons			
• Information on accessible equipment and features			
• Operator Responsibilities			
• Emergency preparedness and response			
• Taxi registration on bumper (Responsibility of Lower Tiers)			
Employment			
• Workplace emergency information			

2013 Requirement	Currently Meet	Partially Meet	Do Not Meet
General Requirements			
• Emergency and public safety information			
Information & Communications			
• Public libraries – access to accessible materials			
• Public libraries – information in accessible formats			
• Public libraries – rare books, special collections, and archival material			
Transportation			
• Coordinated services between adjacent municipalities			
• Fair parity for conventional and specialized transportation			
• Service disruptions			
• Visitor service			
• Alternative accessible method of transportation			

• Hours of service			
• Service delays			

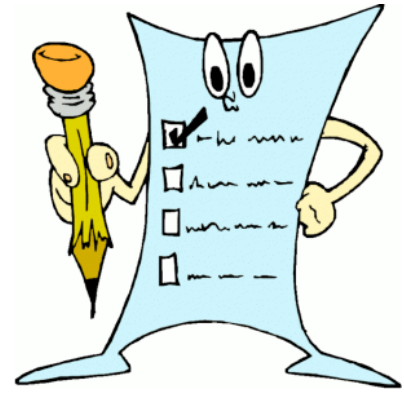
2014 Requirement	Currently Meet	Partially Meet	Do Not Meet
General Requirements			
• Training			
• Accessible feedback processes			
Information & Communications			
• All new internet websites and web content on those sites conforms with WCAG 2.0 level A			
Employment			
• Recruitment			
• Employees returning to work			
• Employees and accommodation			
• Performance management, career development, and redeployment			
Transportation			
• Training			
• Accessibility Plans			

2015 Requirement	Currently Meet	Partially Meet	Do Not Meet
Information & Communications			
• Accessible formats and communication supports			
Transportation			
• Pre-boarding route or destination announcements (electronic)			

2021 Requirement	Currently Meet	Partially Meet	Do Not Meet
Information & Communications			
• All existing internet website and web content conforms with WCAG 2.0 level AA (excluding live captioning and audio description)			

COMMITTEE'S FEEDBACK

Committee members support the general direction outlined in the proposed Integrated Accessibility Regulation (IAR), specifically the flexibility provided in many of the provisions. Committee members believe the proposed IAR can aid in creating an accessible Ontario for both public and private sector organizations by 2025. The key concerns, summarized below, are outlined in Appendix B, which was sent to the Minister of Community and Social Services through the public consultation process before the deadline of October 16, 2010.



- Committee members support the flexibility provided in much of the proposed IAR, allowing the implementation of many of the requirements to meet the priorities of the local community.
- The Ministry of Community and Social Services has been clear about not providing funding to meet the AODA standards; however, committee members are recommending the Minister explore and provide additional funding for the particularly costly components. For example, the Ministry of Transportation could make funding available to municipalities for the Transportation components of the proposed integrated regulation.
- Committee members support the timing on the proposed IAR, requiring the Government of Ontario to meet the requirements before the broader public sector. However, the one-year difference in compliance dates will not provide municipalities with the opportunity to utilize any tools or resources developed by the Government of Ontario. Committee members strongly recommend the province provide tools and templates for organizations to aid in compliance, such as templates for emergency and public safety information, accessibility plans, policies and procedures, individual accommodation plans, in a timely manner.
- The timeline proposed for the IAR is manageable, however, there is considerable staff and financial investment prior to 2015, and little staff and financial impact beyond this time. Committee members recommend that the implementation for a public sector organization of our size to begin in 2012, shifting the requirements by one year until 2015.
- The IAR does not include the Accessible Built Environment, thereby providing an incomplete picture of the accessibility requirements that organizations will be expected to meet over the next 15 years.
- Committee members are concerned that the proposed IAR is not yet the final regulation itself. Committee members recommend that the Ministry ensure the legislation does not add additional requirements beyond the document circulated for feedback.



IMPLICATIONS OF THE PROPOSED INTEGRATED ACCESSIBILITY REGULATION:

Consultation will take place with staff from several departments to evaluate the implications of the proposed Integrated Accessibility Regulation (IAR) to assess the requirements outlined in the proposed regulation, evaluating the County's readiness to meet the requirement and projecting the actions that will be needed to ensure the accessibility of our services and facilities. While

implementation plans cannot be created until the province provides more details, it can be expected that both capital and ongoing investments in accessibility will need to be made to meet compliance once the proposed regulation is made into law.

As outlined in the tables above, the County of Huron will need to meet the majority of requirements in the proposed regulation between the years 2011 and 2014. This means most costs, both capital and operational, are expected over the first five years of implementation. Capital costs include investments in training all existing employees, technical requirements for transit, and costs to upgrade websites and other technologies. In addition, time will be required for assessing, planning, documenting, and implementing the proposed regulation. Ongoing operating costs for compliance are expected to be minimal and include the provision of alternate formats of documents, providing employee accommodation, ongoing employee training, and annual technology costs such as license fees. These costs will be identified in greater detail once the regulation becomes law.

Profile of Huron County



The County of Huron is located in Southwestern Ontario about three hours northwest of Toronto and covers 3,397 km². Huron County is the second largest geographical region in Southwestern Ontario.

The County is subdivided into nine lower tier municipalities. Crossed by major rivers like the Maitland, the county boasts many scenic conversation areas and nature preserves. This link to water continues to have a profound influence on Huron's economy, social life and environment. Surrounding areas include Perth County, Middlesex-London, Lambton County, Grey-Bruce and Windsor Essex County.

According to the 2006 census, the population of Huron County was estimated at 59,325. Huron County is one of Ontario's most rural counties with 60% of the population living in non-urban areas and an overall population density of 17.5 people/km².

Between 2006 and 2031, the population of Huron County is projected to grow by 15.4% and 35% across Ontario. There will be rapid growth in the population of 60+ for both Huron and Ontario during this period.

There are two levels of municipal government in Huron County: The county level of government; and lower tier levels of government for the nine municipalities:

- Ashfield-Colborne-Wawanosh
- Bluewater
- Central Huron
- Goderich
- Howick
- Huron East
- Morris-Turnberry
- North Huron
- South Huron

NOTE: This statistical information is sited from the ***Huron County Demographic Report 2010, Creating Healthy Communities Together.***

Appendix A

County Responsibilities under the Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001 and the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005

Ontarians with Disabilities Act

Under the Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001, applicable municipalities must:

- Prepare an annual accessibility plan.
- Seek advice from an Accessibility Advisory Committee.

Annual accessibility plans must:

- Include the identification, removal, and prevention of barriers for people with disabilities in by-laws, policies, programs, practices, and services.
- Report on measures taken to identify, prevent, and remove barriers.
- Report on measures intended to be taken to identify, prevent, and remove barriers.
- Be made available to the public.

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005

Under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, applicable municipalities must:

- Comply with standards once developed.
- File an accessibility report.
- Make the accessibility report available to the public.
- Seek advice from an Accessibility Advisory Committee.

Under the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, applicable organizations must:

- Establish policies, practices, and procedures on providing goods or services to people with disabilities.
- Use reasonable efforts to ensure policies, practices, and procedures are consistent with the principles of independence, dignity, integration, and equality of opportunity.
- Establish policies on allowing people to use their own assistive devices to access goods and services, and about any other measures offered to enable them to access goods and services.
- Communicate to a person with a disability in a way that takes into account his or her disability.
- Allow people with disabilities to be accompanied by their guide dogs or service animal when accessing goods or services, unless excluded by law.
- Allow people with disabilities to bring a support person when accessing goods or services.
- Provide prior notification of any charges applicable to support persons.

- Provide notice when facilities or services that people with disabilities rely on to access goods or services are temporarily disrupted.
- Train staff, volunteers, and relevant third party contractors on the policies, practices, and procedures related to providing accessible customer service, and on the Customer Service Standard.
- Establish a feedback process for people to provide feedback on how goods or services are provided to the public, and make information on the feedback process available to the public.
- Document all policies, practices, and procedures on providing accessible customer service in writing.
- Notify customers that documents required under the standard are available upon request.
- Provide documents required for the standard in a format that takes into account a person's disability.

Appendix B

Huron County's Feedback to the Proposed Integrated Accessibility Regulation

October 9, 2010

Attention: The Hon. Madeleine Meilleur, Minister of Community and Social Services
c/o Accessibility Directorate of Ontario Ministry of Community and Social Services 777 Bay Street, Suite 601a Toronto ON Canada M7A 2J4

RE: Feedback on the Proposed Integrated Accessibility Standard

Dear Minister Meilleur,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on this Proposed Integrated Accessibility Standard. Having all of the components of the Standard integrated into one source has allowed us to complete a comprehensive impact analysis. This memorandum outlines the County of Huron's primary concerns related to the Standard. This feedback has been approved by the Huron County Accessibility Advisory Committee.

As specified in the background documents provided by the Ministry, the proposed Integrated Accessibility Standard does not include the Accessibility Standards for the Built Environment. In evaluating the impact of the proposed Integrated Accessibility Standard, we are mindful that there will be additional expectations regarding the built environment that will be placed on municipalities during the time in which the proposed Integrated Standard is to be implemented.

Our continuing concern is that there will be a significant financial component through both physical and human resources to implement this Standard. We understand that the Ministry of Community and Social Services has often stated that no funding will be forwarded from the Province to assist with implementation.

Our recommendation is that the Ministry use existing funding streams for related components to flow funding for the particularly costly components. For example, the Ministry of Transportation could make funding available for elements of that portion of the Standard. This would build in implementation costs to the operating areas responsible for that component.

As organizations across the Province (public and private) implement these standards, we will all be developing tools and resources independently. We recommend that the Ministry coordinate sharing of these tools and resources or provide tools and resources to municipalities in a timely way. While the Ontario Public Service will be first to implement the Standard, the timing of implementation is too close for us to benefit from their learnings. We

need tools and resources in the initial stages of planning, not as we are approaching implementation.

In general, we think that the timing is manageable for an organization the size of the County of Huron and with our resources. However, we do think that it is unrealistic to have any implementation requirements for 2011 considering the Standard will be released partway through the year. In the proposed timelines for an organization of our size, 2015 appears to be a year without significant requirements. We recommend that timelines be shifted over the years into that time frame to allow more time up front for planning the implementation of these large and complex requirements.

Furthermore, examining the proposed timelines for implementation of the Standard, it is unclear if we will need to be compliant by the beginning or end of the specified year (e.g. January 1, 2011 or December 31, 2011). To this end, we have assumed we will be expected to reach compliance by the end of the specified year, similar to what was outlined in the Customer Service Regulation. However, clarity on this issue would be greatly appreciated.

Our final area of concern is that the Standard that has been circulated for feedback is not the final piece of legislation. We understand this document is to present the intent of the Ministry. We are concerned that there may be areas that are more fully detailed in the final legislation that may have significant impact. There are a number of areas in the current document that are not clearly defined and when introduced into actual legislation could be more restrictive. We recommend that the Ministry ensure the legislation does not add additional requirements beyond the document circulated for feedback.

Thank you once again for providing an opportunity to give feedback on this proposed Standard. We look forward to working with the Ministry to implement this important and groundbreaking piece of legislation.

Should you have any questions regarding this submission, please contact me at (519) 524-8394, ext. 259 or by email at sthompson@huroncounty.ca.

Sincerely,

Sandra Thompson
Accessibility Coordinator

Appendix C

General Definitions

Accessibility

Accessibility means that the ability of people with disabilities will be enhanced to have equal access to opportunities, live independently and contribute to the community. To be sustainable, accessibility must have long term viability as part of the institution's systems and culture.

Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC)

An AAC refers to an Accessibility Advisory Committee that is created according to the ODA. More than 50% of this committee must be individuals with disabilities according to the Act. The duty of the committee is to advise municipal council each year about the preparation, implementation and effectiveness of its accessibility plan.

Barrier

A barrier is anything that prevents a person with a disability from fully participating in all aspects of society because of his or her disability, including a physical barrier, an architectural barrier, information or communications barrier, an attitudinal barrier, a technological barrier, a policy or a practice.

An example of each of the different kinds of barriers is shown below:

Physical	A doorknob that cannot be operated by a person with limited upper-body mobility and strength.
Architectural	A hallway or door that is too narrow for a wheelchair or scooter.
Information	Typefaces in reports or on the website that are too small to be read by a person with low-vision.
Communication	Sign language interpretation is not available at public meetings.
Attitudinal	A receptionist assumes an individual in wheelchair is not intelligent.
Technological	A paper tray on a laser printer that requires two strong hands to open.
Policy/Practice	A practice of not allowing job applicants an opportunity to complete job testing in alternate formats.

Disability

The ODA adopts the broad definition for disability that is set out in the Ontario Human Rights Code.

A “disability” is:

- (a) Any degree of physical disability, infirmity, malformation or disfigurement caused by bodily injury, birth defect or illness and includes, but is not limited to:
 - Diabetes mellitus;
 - Epilepsy;
 - A brain injury;
 - Any degree of paralysis;
 - Amputation;
 - Lack of physical co-ordination;
 - Blindness or visual impediment.
 - Deafness or hearing impediment.
 - Muteness or speech impediment; or
 - Physical reliance on a guide dog or other animal, or on a wheelchair or other remedial appliance or device.
- (b) A condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability;
- (c) A learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language;
- (d) A mental disorder; or
- (e) An injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997.

