

Huron County Accessibility Advisory Committee's 2015 Accomplishments

The Huron County Accessibility Advisory Committee has worked diligently to achieve the goals defined within the approved plan. Recognized achievements include:

- **Accessibility Plans:** The County of Huron has created an Annual Accessibility Plan under the Ontarians with Disabilities Act 2001 and a Multi-Year Accessibility Plan update under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act 2005, with annual updates on successes. The County of Huron has completed both requirements with the documents approved by County Council at the December 2015 County Council meeting.
- **Site Plan Reviews:** The Huron County Accessibility Advisory Committee has been actively engaged with county staff as well as private businesses and organizations in conducting Site Plan Reviews in a timely fashion. The committee believes public awareness will continue to stimulate community participation and the sub-committee's time and commitment.
- **Government Directives and Regulations:** The Accessibility Advisory Committee has provided updates and advice about new government directives and regulations to County Council and the Working Group. The Working Group is made up of one volunteer/staff member from each lower tier. Each member of the group reports back to and shares newly developed resources and material approved by County Council to their Mayor/Councillors.
- **Continued Relations with County Council, Lower Tiers and Businesses:** The Committee has reached out to the community. Aside from regular Council updates shared by County council representatives with their respective municipalities the committee has contacted lower tiers and private business to participate in committee organized awareness events and various speaking engagements with a noticeable increase in Councillor participation in community events.
- **Annual Awards Program.** The Annual Awards Program has been expanded and well received. The awards program was created to promote public awareness of the importance of barrier-free design, and to recognize excellence in accessibility design. Four awards were presented in 2015 (which is double the awards awarded in 2014) in conjunction with National Access Awareness Week to the owner(s) of a building or facility that has been designed or renovated with special regard to accessibility for persons with a disability. Two awards will be presented to private businesses and two to public sector organizations.

- **National Awareness Week:** The HCAAC has successfully hosted its fifth National Awareness Week event in co-operation with the Avon Maitland School Board. Attendance as well as media attention continues to build awareness in our community.
- **Approval of New Resources:** The HCAAC & Huron County Council have approved the “Illustrated Technical Guide to the Accessibility Standard for the Design of Public Spaces” as the official document for Building Officials to ensure that Huron County is in compliance with the standard. The HCAAC provided each lower tier with two printed hard copies of the document (one for each Building Official and one to be kept in the office for residence to use), one copy for each of the Site Plan Review Subcommittee and 2 copies for Huron County residence to use. This additional resource can be found online at: <http://www.gaates.org/DOPS/default.php>
- Huron County’s Planning Department consulted with the HCAAC, County Council, appropriate County Staff and public businesses on Design Elements we are required to be in compliance with and when. (See Appendix 2)
- Huron County’s Planning Department received County Council approval on the revised document entitled “Universal Design and Accessibility Guideline for Site Plan Control, 2015 Edition”. In the interest of assisting municipalities in Huron County, the HCAAC committee has prepared this document, outlining standards for accessibility that can be adopted by municipal councils and implemented locally through the site plan control approval process. The HCAAC committee firmly believes that it is important to implement the same standards of accessibility throughout the province and region; as such, the 2008 guideline has been updated to be consistent with the Design of Public Spaces Standard, a standard under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005. (Will insert hyper link once approved by Council)
- A new HCAAC was elected implementing the newly revised Terms of Reference.
- All new County staff received all required training within an appropriate time frame.
- The HCAAC was represented at Huron County’s Brochure Swap by two disabled young men who are local resident. The event proved to successful as we received thirteen requests for business training on the regulations. This will be completed in early 2016.