



**The Corporation of the County of Essex  
Multi-Year Accessibility Plan  
2023-2027**

## Table of Contents

<b>Key Terms</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>Multi-Year Accessibility Plan Requirement</b> .....	<b>8</b>
Background.....	8
<b>The County of Essex</b> .....	<b>11</b>
A Message from the Essex County Accessibility Advisory Committee Chair .....	12
A Message from the Chief Administrative Officer .....	13
A Message from the Warden.....	14
Statement of Commitment to Accessibility .....	15
<b>Executive Summary</b> .....	<b>15</b>
<b>Overview</b> .....	<b>16</b>
The Essex County Accessibility Advisory Committee (ECAAC) .....	16
Facilities Owned and/or Leased by the County .....	16
<i>Essex County Civic Centre and Other Facilities</i> .....	16
<i>Infrastructure and Planning Services</i> .....	17
<i>Sun Parlor Home</i> .....	18
<i>Essex-Windsor Emergency Medical Services Facilities</i> .....	19
<i>Essex County Library Facilities and Services</i> .....	21
<b>Past Achievements to Remove and Prevent Barriers</b> .....	<b>22</b>
Customer Service .....	22
Information and Communications .....	23
Employment.....	24
Procurement .....	25
Self-Serve Kiosks.....	25
Training.....	25
Design of Public Spaces .....	26
Transportation.....	29
Other .....	29
<b>Strategies and Actions (Appendix A)</b> .....	<b>30</b>
Customer Service .....	30
Information and Communications .....	31
Employment.....	33
Procurement .....	34
Self-Serve Kiosks.....	36
Training.....	36

---

Design of Public Spaces ..... 38

Transportation ..... 40

Other ..... 41

**Conclusion..... 42**

Accessibility Strategies and Actions Identified in the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan ..... 42

Review and Monitoring of the Progress ..... 42

Communication of the Plan ..... 42

Feedback ..... 43

## Key Terms

---

**“Ableism”** mean attitudes in society that devalue and limit the potential of persons with disabilities. People with disabilities are assumed to be less worthy of respect and consideration, less able to contribute and take part, and of less value than other people. Ableism can be conscious or unconscious and is embedded in institutions, systems or the broader culture of a society.

**“Accessibility”** a general term for the degree of ease that something (e.g., device, service, physical environment and information) can be accessed, used and enjoyed by persons with disabilities. The term implies conscious planning, design and/or effort to make sure something is barrier-free to persons with disabilities. Accessibility also benefits the general population, by making things more usable and practical for everyone, including older people and families with small children. Accessibility refers to the design of products, devices, services, or environments for people who experience disabilities. Ontario has laws to improve accessibility for people with disabilities, including the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), the [Ontario Human Rights Code](#), and the [Ontario Building Code](#).

**“Accommodation”** a general term for arrangements to ensure that persons with disabilities can fully access and participate in services and programs in an equal way to people without disabilities.

**“Adaptive technologies”** means products that help people (primarily people with vision, hearing, mobility or other disabilities) who cannot use standard versions of products/services.

**“Alternative (alternate) format”** means a method of communication that considers a person’s disabilities. Examples include providing a text version of a website, braille, electronic or a large print version of a document for someone with a visual disability.

**“AODA”** means the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act. AODA seeks to ensure that all Ontarians have fair and equitable access to programs and services and to improve opportunities for persons with disabilities. The Act address barriers in Customer Service; Information and Communication; Employment; Transportation; the Design of Public Spaces

**“Assistive device”** means devices to help people – primarily people with disabilities – to perform a task. Examples are a wheelchair, personal oxygen tank, assistive listening device, electronic device such as a smartphone or tablet with adaptive technology, or visible emergency alarm.

**“Barrier”** means 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, an information or communications barrier, an attitudinal barrier, a technological barrier, a policy or a practice; (“obstacle”)

Barriers are obstacles that limit access and prevent people with disabilities from fully participating in society. Most barriers are not intentional. Barriers usually arise because the needs of people with disabilities are not considered from the beginning.

**“Disability”** covers a broad range and degree of conditions, some visible and some not visible. A disability may have been present from birth, caused by an accident, or developed over time. There are physical, mental and learning disabilities, mental disorders, hearing or vision disabilities, epilepsy, drug and alcohol dependencies, environmental sensitivities, and other conditions. Disability, under the [Ontario Human Rights Code](#), is defined as:

- a) any degree of physical disability, infirmity, malformation or disfigurement that is caused by bodily injury, birth defect or illness and, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, includes 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

**“IASR”** The AODA has five Standards which are included in the [Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation \(IASR\)](#). These include the Customer Service Standard; Employment Standard; Information and Communication Standard; Design of Public Spaces Standard; the Transportation Standard; as well as some general requirements.

**“Inclusive design”** means taking into account differences among individuals and groups when designing something, to avoid creating barriers. Inclusive design can apply to systems, facilities, programs, policies, services, education, etc.

**“OBC”** The Ontario Building Code Act is the legislative framework governing the construction, renovation and change-of-use of a building. The Ontario Building Code (OBC) is a regulation under the Act that establishes detailed technical and administrative requirements as well as minimum standards for building construction. The Act was amended on January 1, 2015 to include requirements that enhance accessibility in newly constructed buildings and existing buildings that are to be extensively renovated.

**“PDF/UA”** means Portable Document File/Universal Accessibility, formally known as ISO 14289, is an International Organization for Standardization (ISO) standard for accessible PDF technology. A technical specification intended for developers implementing PDF writing and processing software, PDF/UA provides definitive terms and requirements for accessibility in PDF documents and applications. For those equipped with appropriate software, conformance with PDF/UA ensures accessibility for people with disabilities who use assistive technology such as screen readers, screen magnifiers, joysticks and other technologies to navigate and read electronic content. PDF/UA has been identified as substantially equivalent to WCAG 2.0 for “appropriate web content”.

**“Service Animal”** Under the AODA, an animal is a service animal if the animal can be readily identified as one that is being used by a person for reasons relating to that person's disability, including where the animal is confirmed as such by a letter from a qualified “regulated health professional.”

The [Blind Person Rights Act](#) specifically pertains to guide dogs used for blind persons and defines a guide dog as, a dog trained as a guide for a blind person and having the qualifications prescribed by the regulations.

The Ontario Human Rights Code defines “disability” under the Code and includes “physical reliance on a guide dog or other animal.” This captures guide dogs, but like the AODA, it is also much broader and includes all types of dogs as well as other animals used for support purposes.

**“Standard”** The AODA operates by bringing accessibility standards into regulation. Accessibility standards are laws that individuals, government, businesses, non-profits, and public sector organizations must follow in order to become more accessible. The accessibility standards contain timelines for the implementation of required measures and help organizations identify, remove, and prevent barriers in order to improve accessibility for people with disabilities.

**“Web Accessibility”** means that websites, tools, and technologies are designed and developed so that people with disabilities can use them. More specifically, people can: perceive, understand, navigate, and interact with the Web and/or contribute to the Web, as well as it encompasses all disabilities that affect access

to the Web, including: auditory, cognitive, neurological, physical, speech and visual.

Web accessibility depends on several components working together, including web technologies, web browsers and other "user agents", authoring tools, and websites. The [W3C Web Accessibility Initiative \(WAI\)](#) develops technical specifications, guidelines, techniques, and supporting resources that describe accessibility solutions. These are considered international standards for web accessibility; for example, WCAG 2.0 is also an ISO standard: ISO/IEC 40500.

---

## Multi-Year Accessibility Plan Requirement

---

Municipalities must meet the requirement to develop a multi-year plan to assist and guide them in achieving accessibility goals. These plans must:

- be developed in consultation with people with disabilities and with an accessibility advisory committee while establishing, reviewing and updating your plan;
- be posted on the municipality's website and be publicly available;
- be provided in an alternate accessible format of choice, upon request;
- be reviewed and updated at least once every five years.

### Background

The **Ontarians with Disabilities Act** (ODA) was passed in December, 2001 with the purpose of improving opportunities for people with disabilities in Ontario by identifying, preventing and removing physical and other barriers that may limit opportunities for people with disabilities to fully participate in society.

The **Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act**, (AODA) was passed in 2005 with the vision of creating a fully accessible Ontario by 2025. The AODA gave the Province the mandate to create sets of standards in accessibility which will apply to both public and private sector organizations. The AODA is more comprehensive and prescriptive than the ODA.

The Accessibility Standards for Customer Service (**Ontario Regulation 429/07**) was passed in January, 2008.

The Integrated Accessibility Standards which regulate information and communications, employment and transportation came into effect on July 1, 2011, with requirements under this standard to be phased in over time.

The Design of Public Spaces Standards (**Ontario Regulation 413/12**) came into effect on January 1, 2013. Also known as the Accessibility Standards for the Built Environment, these standards provide technical requirements for the design and construction of external elements, including:

- Recreational Trails and Beach Access Routes
- Public Use Eating Areas
- Outdoor Play Spaces



- Exterior Paths of Travel
- On and Off-Street Parking
- Service Counters, Fixed Queuing Lines and Waiting Areas
- Maintenance

Under the AODA, private, public and non-profit organizations are required to identify, remove and prevent barriers in order to make the Province accessible for all people with disabilities by 2025.

Designated public sector organizations are defined by **Ontario Regulation 191/11** of the AODA. This category consists of the broader public sector, municipalities and other organizations described under the AODA.

Through the AODA, the Provincial Government has identified key areas for the development of “common” accessibility standards intended to set requirements across all organizations and sectors:

### **Customer Service**

Addresses how organizations are required to provide their goods and services in an accessible manner by influencing attitudes and behaviour.

### **Information and Communications**

Outlines how organizations are required to create, provide and receive information and communications in ways that are accessible to persons with disabilities.

### **Employment**

Builds upon the existing requirements under the Ontario Human Rights Code in relation to how to accommodate individuals with disabilities throughout the recruitment process and employment relationship.

### **Transportation**

Intended to prevent and remove barriers in transportation, making it easier for everyone to travel in Ontario including people with disabilities, older Ontarians and families traveling with children in strollers.

### **Built Environment**

Intended to address access to and within buildings and outdoor spaces. The standards for public spaces will only apply to new construction and planned redevelopment. Enhancements to accessibility in buildings were included in the

January 1, 2015 amendment to the Ontario Building Code governing new construction and renovations in buildings.

---

## The County of Essex

---

Essex County is Canada's southernmost county, located on a peninsula of land surrounded by Lake St. Clair to the north, the Detroit River to the West and Lake Erie to the south. The County has a population of over 192,700 (according to the Canada 2021 Census) and an overall area of 1720 km<sup>2</sup>.

The Corporation of the County of Essex is an upper tier municipality comprised of 14 members being the Mayor and Deputy Mayor of each of the 7 local municipalities within the County of Essex. One of the 14 County Councillors is elected as the Warden who serves as the Head of County Council.

The Corporation of the County of Essex is responsible for providing services that are common to all municipalities in Essex County thereby minimizing the need for duplicate services and administration. These services include transportation services, libraries, a long-term care home, planning, emergency management co-ordination, community services, emergency medical services and general government administration.

As well, the County of Essex is a funding partner for regional services including social services, child care, social housing, new regional acute care hospital, public health, economic development, tourism and property assessment.

## **A Message from the Essex County Accessibility Advisory Committee Chair**

The Essex County Accessibility Advisory Committee (ECAAC) continues to work in collaboration with the County of Essex to remove barriers and facilitate and promote improvements to accessibility throughout our region. The committee consists of dedicated individuals who commit their time and lend their expertise to compliment the work that the County of Essex puts forth, as a leader in accessibility. The number of people living with a disability is increasing each year, and through our relationships, connections, peers, family and friends, accessibility truly affects us all.

The County's Multi-Year Accessibility Plan 2017-2022 bridged 2 terms of Council, and was supported by staff, committee members and stakeholders. This year, the County has developed a plan for the next 5 years, with strategies and goals that aim at breaking down barriers, and improving accessibility for the whole region. It covers all aspects of the services and programs that the County of Essex provides, and we look forward to working together to accomplish each item, as a team.

Through the development of this Plan, we consulted with local lower-tier municipalities, stakeholders within the community, service groups, staff members, department heads, elected officials and the public. The feedback we received was considered thoughtfully and incorporated into the strategies and action plan for the next five years.

As a term of Council ends in 2022 (and likewise the ECAAC term), we are determined to leave a plan that will be a legacy of accessibility, accountability and inclusion, for not only the next term, or the next 5 years, but for continued success into the future. We are proud of the work the County of Essex has done, and the positive impact the ECAAC has had with this community. We look forward to working with future Councils to further enhance the accessibility focus we have had to-date, and we remain optimistic about the potential for significant and positive change in the coming years.

In 2005, Ontario established a goal of a fully accessible province by 2025. Although much work has been done, we are still a long way from achieving total compliance with the standards. The plan set forth in the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan 2023-2027, will allow the County of Essex to move toward a completely inclusive community, and meeting the standards and helping to achieve equality for all.

Christine Easterbrook  
ECAAC Chair

## **A Message from the Chief Administrative Officer**

In June of 2005, the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) became law, and Ontarians embarked on a path to achieving a barrier free province. As compliance milestones come and go, we are reminded of the importance of creating and maintaining accessible, inclusive experiences for all. Socrates said that "The secret to 'Change' is to focus all of your energy not on fighting the old, but on building the new." This legislation created change across the province, including in the County of Essex.

The County of Essex endeavours to incorporate the accessibility principles of independence, dignity, integration and equal opportunity into all its' programs, and has been working diligently to make-good on the strategies and workplan outlined in previously adopted Plans. We recognize that there is still work left to be done. We must build accessibility into the first discussions, incorporate accessibility at the onset of project plans and throughout the development of programs, in the building and maintenance of facilities, and each time we communicate the County's message.

This 2023-2027 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan outlines the means by which the County of Essex will identify and ardently remove accessibility barriers, while taking proactive steps to enhance the accessibility of all municipal services. It is the County's commitment to afford all people the opportunity to acquire information, engage in interactions, and enjoy access to services in an equally effective and equally integrated manner for all County programs.

The County of Essex Senior Leadership Team, departmental staff, Committee members and County Council are committed to continuous improvement, to working together, to enrich and advance the quality of life for all our citizens, businesses, and visitors alike. As County Council's vision is executed, we remain focused on strengthening our community, removing physical and attitudinal barriers right from the start, and improving accessibility for all.

Mike Galloway, MBA, CMO  
Chief Administrative Officer

## **A Message from the Warden**

The County of Essex is committed to creating and maintaining accessible environments – places where residents and visitors have access to programs and services in a way that respects their dignity and independence. We have made tremendous strides toward achieving that goal, but there is more work to be done. The 2023-2027 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan is our roadmap for moving forward to eliminate the barriers that remain. It is also our written commitment to improving the accessibility of municipal services.

Municipal governments play an important role in the planning and development of accessible, inclusive communities. Through the dedicated efforts of the Essex County Accessibility Advisory Committee, we have established a wide range of municipal processes that ensure public services and facilities are accessible to everyone. The County of Essex was an early adopter of accessibility principles and has been a leader for many years. We have collaborated with federal, provincial and local partners. We have also educated ourselves and the public as we improved our regional facilities, programs and services.

County Council will continue to work with Accessibility Advisory Committee members, County Administration, community stakeholders and citizens to remove barriers and create inclusive spaces. This partnership has been fundamental to our success to date. The promise of growth and a bright economic future for our region provides another opportunity to embrace the contributions and abilities of all community members. True progress is progress that leaves no one behind.

The Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR) and Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) set out the goals for achieving an accessible Ontario by 2025. The County of Essex and our partner municipalities of Amherstburg, Essex, Kingsville, Lakeshore, LaSalle, Leamington and Tecumseh are on board. We understand that accessibility starts with each of us making adherence to the principles of independence, dignity, integration and equal opportunity a priority. Every new building, every new service and every new investment must be accessible from the start. When we begin with accessibility, we build a community that provides equal access and opportunity to all.

Gary McNamara  
Warden, County of Essex

## Statement of Commitment to Accessibility

Essex County Council recognizes that improving accessibility is important to all residents. Approximately 15.5% or 1.85 million people in Ontario have a disability – that’s one in seven. That number is expected to grow significantly in the next 20 years as the population ages.

The Corporation of the County of Essex, is committed to meeting the accessibility needs of persons with disabilities in a respectful, equitable and timely manner and will do so by preventing and removing barriers to accessibility and meeting accessibility requirements under the AODA.

## Executive Summary

---

This Multi-Year Plan outlines Essex County’s strategy to prevent and remove barriers and meet the requirements under the AODA, Accessible Customer Service Standard (**Ontario Regulation 429/07**) and Integrated Accessibility Standards (**Ontario Regulation 191/11**, as amended.) The Corporation of the County of Essex continues to identify new accessibility initiatives which have been incorporated in this Multi-Year Accessibility Plan for the period 2023 to 2027.

This Plan was prepared by the County of Essex, in conjunction with the Essex County Accessibility Advisory Committee. Public consultation was sought on the draft Multi-Year Accessibility Plan prior to the Plan being presented to Essex County Council for adoption.

Our plan shows how we will play our role in making Ontario an accessible province for all Ontarians. The plan is reviewed and updated at least once every 5 years. We train every person as soon as practicable after being hired and provide training in respect of any changes to the policies. We maintain records of the training provided including the dates on which the training was provided and the number of individuals to whom it was provided.

This plan outlines the structure, policies and fundamental practices that have been put into place for the County of Essex over the past several years, in relation to accessibility and removing barriers. It further summarises past achievements and identifies areas of focus, as an action plan, for the further removal of barriers to accessibility, over the next 5 years and into the future, as the County of Essex helps to achieve the goal of an accessible Ontario.

## Overview

---

### **The Essex County Accessibility Advisory Committee (ECAAC)**

The Essex County Accessibility Advisory Committee (ECAAC) was established by Council resolution on September 18th, 2002. The Committee consists of 7 members representing the following groups:

- 1 member from Essex County Council
- 2 members who are professionals from the stakeholder community
- 4 members who are people with disabilities

Members of all the previous and current Essex County Accessibility Advisory Committees (ECAAC) have been instrumental in continuing to identify for the County of Essex, the barriers that they believe should be addressed in the Essex County Accessibility Plans and in County activities/initiatives.

### **Facilities Owned and/or Leased by the County**

#### Essex County Civic Centre and Other Facilities

The building at 360 Fairview Avenue (also known as the Essex County Civic Centre) became home to the County Administration offices in October of 1975.

In November of 2017, the Corporation of the County of Essex assumed full ownership of the Essex County Civic Centre, and continues to lease certain areas of the building to legacy tenants, Essex-Region Conservation Authority, Student Transportation Services, the GECSB Media Centre, Essex-Windsor Solid Waste Authority and Essex County Library Administration.

The primary administrative offices for several County departments and divisions, including the Warden's Office, County Administration, Legislative and Community Services, Communication and Organizational Development, Financial Services, Information Technology, Human Resources, Infrastructure and Planning Services, Facilities Management, as well as Essex-Windsor Emergency Medical Services and Emergency Management are housed at the Essex County Civic Centre. Some departments have satellite locations, bases, and primary facilities at other locations throughout the County and City of Windsor.



The County of Essex Council Chambers, as well as a number of Committee Rooms are utilized primarily by the County of Essex, agencies, boards, committee meetings, tenants of the building and occasionally by community organizations.

Facilities, which are accessed only by vehicular traffic, such as the Essex County Regional Landfill and Transfer Station 2 are owned by the County of Essex and operated by the Essex-Windsor Solid Waste Authority.

Many of the barriers identified in the previous Accessibility Plans which related to physical accessibility barriers in the Civic Centre have been addressed over time. In 2013, improvements to the accessibility of the West building access provided a ground level entrance and access to all floors by means of a new elevator inside the building as well as a new ramp to the patio area under the Council Chambers, and a new ramp at the entrance located on the South side of the building. In 2015 and beyond the replacement of plumbing fixtures, when appropriate, have been installed with automatic features to improve accessibility and water savings. Since the County assumed full ownership of the facility in 2017, several renovations have taken place to large office spaces for Essex-Windsor EMS, IT Services and Infrastructure and Planning Services, while others are still pending for the remaining office spaces and common areas.

In 2020/2021 renovations to the bathroom facilities at the lower level of the building were completed, addressing the need for a universal washroom, including an adult change-table and a lift. In 2022, in response to security and safety concerns with the building accesses, the County commenced the replacement of exterior doors, with automatic touch-free sliding doors.

The Civic Centre is an important gathering place for a cross-section of the community and given that the Civic Centre is approaching 50 years old, a number of significant deficiencies have been identified with the facility which must be addressed in the near future. Many of the issues with the building are not necessarily related exclusively to accessibility, however, the renewal and/or rehabilitation of the existing infrastructure will allow for an opportunity to remove additional barriers in the facility. Each renovation fosters an opportunity for the Essex County Accessibility Advisory Committee to review drawings with the architects, and provide comments on plans, to ensure accessibility is considered and barriers are removed.

## Infrastructure and Planning Services

The Infrastructure and Planning Services department, which includes, Facilities, Design and Construction, Transportation Planning and Development, and Planning Services divisions currently operate from offices on the upper floor of the Essex County Civic Centre, in Suite 315. In mid-2018 the space underwent a complete renovation, and modernization. Renovations were conducted in accordance with

the Ontario Building Code, consideration for the Integrated Accessibility Standards of Ontario and with a review of the plans by the Essex County Accessibility Advisory Committee.

The Roads Maintenance Operations division operates from four year-round depots and one seasonal depot.

Year-Round Maintenance Facilities:

- Maintenance Depot, 1941 Road 4 E, Kingsville
- West End Depot, 7101 North Sideroad, Amherstburg
- West Pike Creek Depot, 11965 County Rd 42, Tecumseh
- Tilbury North Depot, 2400 Comber Side Rd, Lakeshore.

All Maintenance Depots have varying degrees of material storage, equipment housing, office and washroom facilities. These maintenance depots are not service locations that the general public would readily visit. Primarily, only roads maintenance staff have occasion to frequent these facilities. Improvements to washroom facilities have taken place to reflect accessibility and a more diverse employee roster.

## Sun Parlor Home

The Sun Parlor Home ('the Home'), located at 175 Talbot Street East in Leamington, is a long-term care home that was built in 1992. The Home has a capacity of 206 residents.

While the Home was designed to exceed accessibility standards from the day when it was constructed, over the past decade, general wear on some fixtures and furnishings, as well as the increasingly complex nature of the health needs of the residents, has created some accessibility issues. To address these issues, the management team in cooperation with the Accessibility Advisory Committee continues to investigate options for refurbishing areas of the Home, particularly with respect to enhancing the accessibility of the facility for residents, visitors and staff, and is always pleased to receive suggestions.

Some examples of improvements over the past several years have been related to upgrading the elevators, adding evac-chairs, the purchase of a new telephone system that included options for residents' phones with louder volume controls, flashing ringers, programmable phone numbers and larger buttons; new flooring, doors equipped with automatic openers, doorway widenings, replacement of threshold moldings, accessible walkways in the courtyard, the relocation of

accessible parking spaces from the side to the front of the building and the installation of some directional signage to reflect the changes.

The Home encourages both management and staff to be “thinking accessibility” at all times.

As always, on an individual resident needs basis, the Home makes every effort to facilitate the acquisition of a variety of assistive devices as may be required. The health circumstances of the residents being admitted to the Home highlight the increasing demand for improved accessibility of the facility and the need for bringing accessibility to the forefront of any conversation about updating the Sun Parlor Home’s facilities.

As well as the enhancements to physical assistive devices and removal of physical barriers in the Home, the life enrichment staff provide and coordinate a number of social activities and services designed to promote inclusiveness and enhancements to the quality of life of residents.

## Essex-Windsor Emergency Medical Services Facilities

The administration offices for Essex-Windsor Emergency Medical Services (EWEMS), for Essex County, Windsor and Pelee Island are located on the main floor of the Essex County Civic Centre, in Suite 218. In 2018, this office space was fully renovated in accordance with the Integrated Accessibility Standard and to the Building Code and with a review of the plans by the Essex County Accessibility Advisory Committee.

There are secondary EWEMS offices and an ambulance station located at 920 Mercer Street in Windsor. This facility is closed to the public, and is a two-storey structure. In 2004, this facility was partially renovated to modernize the office spaces on the main and second floor. An accessible washroom was constructed on the main floor during this renovation.

There are two other ambulance stations in Windsor located at:

- 3180 Jefferson Avenue - The County of Essex leased this property until 2010, at which time it was purchased.
- 2620 Dougall Avenue - The County of Essex leased this property until purchase and re-construction in 2017.

Throughout the County, Ambulance stations are situated at the following locations:

- LaSalle Station – 1902 Normandy St., LaSalle ON - A joint Police, Fire and EMS facility constructed in 2014 by the Town of LaSalle,

to replace the existing municipal complex. The LaSalle station is leased from the Town of LaSalle.

- Leamington Station – 10 Wilkinson Dr., Leamington ON - Formerly the Leamington Day Care building, this station was renovated into an ambulance station in 2010. The Leamington station is owned by the County of Essex.
- Lakeshore Station – 419 Renaud Line, Emeryville ON - Constructed in 2011, the Lakeshore station is owned by the County of Essex.
- Tecumseh Station – 975 Lesperance Rd., Tecumseh ON - Formerly the Tecumseh Day Care building, this station was renovated in 2013. The Tecumseh station is owned by the County of Essex.

Kingsville Station – 1720 Division Rd., Kingsville ON - A joint facility with the Town of Kingsville Fire Department. The Kingsville station is leased from the Town of Kingsville.

Construction of a new facility is planned for the Kingsville service area and that facility has been designed with accessibility considerations in accordance with the Ontario Building Code.

- Harrow Station – 660 Queen St., Harrow ON - Constructed in 2010, the Harrow station is owned by the County of Essex.
- Amherstburg Station – 549 Simcoe St., Amherstburg ON - Purchased and renovated in 2009. The Amherstburg station is owned by the County of Essex.
- Essex Station – 55 Alice St. N., Essex ON - In 2013, the Essex EMS base was constructed as a joint facility with the Town of Essex Fire Department. The Essex station is leased from the Town of Essex.
- Pelee Island Station – 1047 West Shore Road, Pelee Island, ON - The Pelee Island Station is a joint facility with the Medical Centre.

None of the ambulance stations are intended for public access. Newly constructed or renovated stations have been designed with accessibility features in mind. Future bases are designed in accordance with the Built Environment Standard and amended Ontario Building Code.

## Essex County Library Facilities and Services

The Essex County Library operates a system of 14 branch libraries that provide library materials and services, free of charge, to all residents of Essex County.

Library facilities are provided by the local municipalities with one facility located in each of Amherstburg, LaSalle, Leamington and Tecumseh, three facilities in both Essex and Kingsville and four in Lakeshore. The local municipalities are responsible for access into the buildings and for designating accessible parking adjacent to the facilities. While the local municipalities provide the facility for the Library Branches, the Essex County Library Board is responsible for furnishing the inside of the buildings with shelving, furniture, equipment, library resources and employs the staff who deliver all the services the Essex County Library provides.

Library administration offices are located in the lower level of 360 Fairview Avenue West, Essex in Suite G01, where Administration, computer network services, ordering and processing of library materials are centralized. Only library staff have access to the library administration offices.

The Essex County Library is funded primarily through the County of Essex. A Library Board, appointed every four years by Essex County Council, in accordance with the Public Libraries Act, has four members from the current County Council. There are 3 lay appointees. The Board is responsible for setting policy and reviewing the overall performance of the Library. The Board's budget is approved annually by County Council and some administrative and operational services are shared with the County of Essex.

The Essex County Library produces its own Accessibility Plan and Policies and Procedures and the library branches are observed for accessibility via the seven municipalities' own accessibility advisory committees.

---

## Past Achievements to Remove and Prevent Barriers

---

Since September of 2003, when the first-generation Accessibility Plan for the Corporation of the County of Essex was adopted by Essex County Council, the Corporation has been making every effort to implement the initiatives approved in the annual Accessibility Plans. Past achievements to remove and prevent barriers have included:

### Customer Service

- Review and update Accessible Customer Service Policies and Procedures as required, ensuring compliance with legislation.
- Continue to deliver Accessible Customer Service training to all new employees and volunteers
- Ensure Vendor Accessible Training Certificates are being received.
- As new emergency procedures, plans and public safety information becomes available, continue to ensure that the information is developed in formats which are easily convertible to alternate formats upon request.
- Essex County employees advised that workplace emergency response plans and information will be developed to accommodate any employees with disabilities specific accessibility requirements;
- Installation of a Nurse Call System at the Sun Parlor Home addressing safety and accessibility home-wide;
- Implemented the use of a software program, "Site Improve", for the external websites of the County of Essex and CWATS in order to consistently monitor for website accessibility concerns to make speedy corrections in accordance with WCAG 2.0 website standards;
- Construction of a new administration reception desk for greater accessibility at the Essex County Civic Centre.
- Construction of a new EMS reception desk for greater accessibility at the Essex County Civic Centre.
- When planning events, ensuring that accessibility is considered and using the Ontario Planning Accessible Events Guide.

- Continued individual resident needs assessments and procurement of resultant assistive devices for Sun Parlor Home;
- The Sun Parlor Home is continually enhancing the accessibility of the facility and services for residents, visitors and staff;
- Essex County Accessibility Advisory Committee activities which include:
  - Annual Accessibility Workshops and/or events/initiatives
  - Annual Promotion of National Access Awareness Week and International Day of Persons with Disabilities through activities/information sharing.
  - Partnering with the Essex Regional Conservation Authority (ERCA) to provide consultation of matters related to accessibility in regards to ERCA projects such as trail construction and other outdoor spaces.

## **Information and Communications**

- Review, consult on and update 5-year Multi-Year Accessibility Plan
- Training of employees on the Essex County Integrated Accessibility Standard Policy #2012-001, on requirements of the Information and Communications Standard including the use of accessible formats or communication supports.
- Essex County Accessibility Advisory Committee launched a social media platform to help share information and awareness surrounding accessibility;
- Developed templates for letters, documents and presentations for staff use in accessible formats.
- Contracted with National Captioning Services of Canada to provide live closed captioning services for broadcasts of Essex County Council meetings.
- Annual promotion of National Accessibility Awareness Week through activities and education;
- Annual publication of a newsletter providing information on activities of the Accessibility Advisory Committees throughout the region;

- Continue employee training on how to create accessible documents in 'Microsoft Word' and PDF formats.
- Re-development of a new corporate website, ensuring WCAG AA and AAA compliance as well as mobile technology compliance.
- Investigate screen reader technology integration for the new website (i.e.: browsealoud)
- Monitor feedback process to ensure that receiving and responding to feedback is made available in an accessible format upon request or with appropriate communication supports.
- Ensure all items posted to the employee intranet system are in accessible formats and available in additional accessible formats as per the IASR.
- Ensure any marketing and communications efforts reach people with disabilities. Include people with disabilities of all generations in photos, testimonials and other communications. Ensure marketing collateral such as flyers, brochures, podcasts and YouTube videos, are accessible.
- When planning events, ensuring that accessibility is considered and using the Ontario Planning Accessible Events Guide.

## **Employment**

- Training of employees on the Essex County Integrated Accessibility Policy #12-001, on requirements of the Accessible Employment Standard.
- Implementation of employee return to work and accommodation policies for County of Essex employees;
- Developed practices and procedures to notify job applicants who have been invited to participate in the recruitment, assessment or selection process that accommodations for disabilities are available upon request;
- Developed practices and procedures for notifying successful applicants of the policy for accommodating employees with disabilities when offering employment;



- Train staff to interact and communicate with people with different types of disabilities.
- Conduct employee workshops and sensitivity training to help remove attitudinal barriers surrounding working with persons with disabilities.
- Employee workshops and information sessions surrounding mental health, aimed at removing attitudinal barriers surrounding friends and coworkers that may be experience mental health concerns;

## **Procurement**

- Ensure Vendor Accessibility Training Certificates are being received.
- Developed accessible document requirements for consultants and other third parties engaged to prepare public documents on behalf of the Corporation;
- The implementation and use of a formalized electronic procurement system, "Bids & Tenders", that allows for fair and accessible procurement process and documents available in accessible formats;
- Continue to ensure the electronic procurement system for the County of Essex remains accessible and is compliant with the latest accessibility requirements.
- Sun Parlor Home purchase and installation of new resident room furnishings that consider and improve accessibility (ease of opening drawers, space, etc.)

## **Self-Serve Kiosks**

This section was not applicable in previous years.

## **Training**

- Continue to deliver Accessible Customer Service training to all new employees and volunteers
- Training of employees on the Essex County Integrated Accessibility Standard Policy #12-001, on requirements of the

Information and Communications Standard including the use of accessible formats or communication supports.

- Training for County of Essex employees to enhance their awareness of accessibility issues and to provide them with knowledge on how to effectively serve people with disabilities and how to remove attitudinal barriers;
- The annual Accessibility Workshop, designed to provide a day filled with motivational/inspirational speakers and educators who focus on ways in which to make communities barrier free from both physical and attitudinal barriers;
- Employee training on how to create accessible documents;
- Provide training to employees on the requirements of the Ontario Human Rights Code as it relates to people with disabilities

## **Design of Public Spaces**

Many physical changes to County owned or operated facilities have been made to remove barriers. As noted in previous Accessibility Plans these have included:

- Construction of a new administration reception desk for even greater accessibility at the Essex County Civic Centre.
- Construction of a new EMS reception desk for even greater accessibility at the Essex County Civic Centre.
- The removal of the exterior lift at the Essex County Civic Centre and the installation of a new ramp;
- Relocation of accessible parking at the Civic Centre, including line painting and signage;
- The construction of a family washroom on the main floor of the Civic Centre, complete with automatic doors;
- Renovations to other existing washrooms within the Civic Centre to make them more accessible;
- Additional automatic doors were installed at the east entrance of the Civic Centre;
- Ramp to the shade rock garden/fountain at the Civic Centre

- adjustable table in the Civic Centre Cafeteria;
- Renovations to County Administration reception desk to improve Accessibility;
- Continuing renovations to the Sun Parlor Home to improve the accessibility of that entire facility for the residents and visitors.
- Construction of a new West End Depot for Infrastructure Services that was constructed in accordance with the Integrated Accessibility Standard and to the Ontario Building Code;
- Construction of a new Tecumseh Station (2013/14) and Dougall Station (2017/18) for Emergency Medical Services constructed in accordance with the Integrated Accessibility Standard and to the Building Code;
- Redeveloped existing exterior off-street parking and pathways at the Essex Civic Centre that meet the technical and general requirements of 80(21) – 80(23) and 80(32) – 80(37) of the Integrated Accessibility Standard Regulation;
- Continued improvement projects at the Sun Parlor Home including:
  - Flooring renovation to eliminate carpet and flooring in the Special Activation Room for ease of mobility and safety.
  - New dining room chairs which allows for easier sliding
  - Purchase of additional electric hi-low beds, and specialized lifts.
- Sun Parlor Home Exterior Courtyard Refresh to include new concrete with slight ramp, to ease mobility for residents and visitors with wheelchairs and walking aids.
- Consultations with the Infrastructure Services department on the redevelopment of roads and intersections, crosswalks and other infrastructure projects to ensure accessibility compliance;
- Renovations to upgrade washrooms on the upper floor of the Essex Civic Centre to ensure accessibility.
- Renovations to upgrade washrooms on the basement level of the Essex Civic Centre to ensure accessibility.

- Renovations of the interior office space of the Essex Civic Centre.
- Installation of security cameras and additional lighting for the Civic Centre parking lot.
- Removing barriers and enhancing the accessibility of the facilities of the County of Essex.
- The Essex County Accessibility Advisory Committee visits the Sun Parlor Home to make recommendations for improved accessibility;
- Infrastructure Services – ensuring new and renovated facilities meet Built Environment Standard and Ontario Building Code;
  - Any improvements or development of depots will be done in accordance with Built Environment Standard and the Building Code.
  - Ensure all consultants follow the AODA, IASR and other accessibility regulations and guidelines for Customer Service, Information and Communications, Employment and Built Environments when working on a project on behalf of the County of Essex.
  - Ensuring all plans for design are brought forward to the Essex County Accessibility Advisory Committee for review and comment prior to final approval.
- Essex-Windsor Emergency Medical Services Station Construction and Renovations, ensure new and renovated facilities meet Built Environment Standard and Ontario Building Code and Any improvements or development of offices/stations will be done in accordance with Built Environment Standard and the Building Code.
- Active Transportation - New initiatives related to the development of on and off-road pedestrian and cycling facilities under the County's jurisdiction will be accessible;
  - The County Wide Active Transportation Strategy (CWATS) is phased over a 20-year period. An Inter- municipal Active Transportation Committee is guiding the process of implementation. Requirements established in the Accessibility Standard for the Built Environment – Design of Public Spaces Standards (Part IV.1 of Ontario

Regulation 413/12) is incorporated into the implementation plans.

The Council of the Corporation of the County of Essex remains committed to ensuring that the facilities, services and programs provided by the County are available to all residents including people with disabilities. The process of identifying barriers is constant.

## **Transportation**

The County does not currently operate or contract public transit services or license taxicabs.

## **Other**

- Development of Accessible Customer Service Policy, Practices and Procedures for services provided by the County of Essex and Accessible Customer Service training for all employees and Council of the County of Essex;
- Development of policies in accordance with the Integrated Accessibility Standard;
- Sun Parlor Home - Annual review of the facility by the Essex County Accessibility Advisory Committee to provide continued suggestions for improvement.
- Maintenance of the accessible elements in public spaces:
  - Develop policies and procedures for preventative and emergency maintenance of the accessible elements of public spaces.
  - Develop procedures for dealing with temporary disruptions when accessible elements are not in working order.

## Strategies and Actions (Appendix A)

***(In the years between MYAP Reporting, the Strategies and Actions will be converted to 'Appendix A' and updated on an ongoing basis and reported out to County Council annually.)***

### **Customer Service**

The County of Essex is committed to providing accessible customer service to people with disabilities. This means that we will provide goods, services and facilities to people with disabilities with the same high quality and timeliness as others. The status of the items indicated will be defined as 'Planned' for items that are not yet started, 'In-Progress' for items that are started, but not yet accomplished or, 'Ongoing' for items that are continual.

<b>Customer Service Actions</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Status</b>
Deliver, on an ongoing basis, and as soon as practicable, Accessible Customer Service training to all new employees and volunteers of the Corporation.	2023-2027	Ongoing
Review and update Accessible Customer Service Policies and Procedures, to ensure compliance with the established policy review parameters and legislative requirements.	2023-2027	Ongoing
Ensure proof of compliance is received for any contractors and vendors doing business with, or on behalf of the County of Essex, as it relates to the AODA requirements for Accessible Customer Service training for employees and volunteers.	2023-2027	Ongoing
Use of 'Site Improve' software program, to monitor and ensure internal and external websites are meeting accessibility compliance requirements according to the WCAG 2.0 Level AA standard (or better as required.)	2023-2027	Ongoing
Ensuring that all departments of the County are utilizing best practices for accessibility when planning events, and consulting the <a href="#">Ontario - Planning Accessible Events Guide</a> to ensure events are barrier-free and inclusive for all.	2023-2027	Ongoing

<b>Customer Service Actions</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Status</b>
Ensure that patient and resident care is provided based on the individual needs of each person, and that accommodations are made when needed.	2023-2027	Ongoing
Ensure that signs and instructions at all facilities meet the guidelines for accessible signage, considering: clear type/font, size in relation to distance, letter and line spacing, location and placement, colour contrast, tactile lettering and surface type.	2023-2027	Ongoing
Use of the NextTalk software for those who require the use of TTY services for customer service via telephone phone communication.	2023-2027	Ongoing
Support and promote ECAAC activities and initiatives in the community.	2023-2027	Ongoing
Support and promote National AccessAbility Week and International Day of Persons with Disabilities.	2023-2027	Ongoing
ECAAC continue to leverage a partnership with the Essex Region Conservation Authority (ERCA) to provide consultation of matters related to accessibility of their facilities and spaces.	2023-2027	Ongoing
Ensuring Access to meeting spaces on the main floor of the Civic Centre, where ramp access and egress is possible.	2023-2027	Ongoing

## Information and Communications

The County of Essex is committed to making our information and communications accessible to people with disabilities.

<b>Information and Communications Actions</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Status</b>
Review, consult on and update 5-year Multi-Year Accessibility Plan. Current plan is for the five-year period of 2023 to 2027, with ongoing annual reviews to Schedule A. Review and consultations for the 2028-2032 will commence in 2031.	2023-2027	Ongoing

<b>Information and Communications Actions</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Status</b>
Training of employees on the Essex County Integrated Accessibility Standard Policy #12-001, on requirements of the Information and Communications Standard including the use of accessible formats or communication supports.	2023-2027	Ongoing
Maintain and update the ECAAC Facebook profile, sharing relevant and current information regarding accessibility initiatives, and social awareness	2023-2027	Ongoing
Maintain and update the ECAAC Twitter profile, sharing relevant and current information regarding accessibility initiatives, and social awareness	2023-2027	Ongoing
Maintain and update the Accessibility page of the County of Essex public website	2023-2027	Ongoing
Maintain and update the Accessibility page of the internal County website (CountyConnect)	2023-2027	Ongoing
Review, update and promote the use of accessible document templates, presentations, correspondence, and reports for use by all staff.	2023-2027	Ongoing
Ensure that live-streamed or video recorded public meetings offer closed captions	2023-2027	Ongoing
Foster communication among local Accessibility Advisory Committees, support and promote their municipal activities where possible	2023-2027	Ongoing
Re-development of a new corporate website, ensuring WCAG AA (January 1, 2021 – Complete) and future levels of compliance, as required for websites as well as mobile technology.	2023-2027	Ongoing
Monitor feedback process to ensure that receiving and responding to feedback is made available in an accessible format upon request or with appropriate communication supports.	2023-2027	Ongoing



<b>Information and Communications Actions</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Status</b>
Ensure all items posted to the employee intranet system are in accessible formats and available in additional accessible formats as per the IASR.	2023-2027	Ongoing
Ensure any marketing and communications that comprise photographs and graphics, include people with disabilities. Utilize disability inclusive stock photography (such as <a href="#">DisabilityIn</a> ) on marketing collateral such as flyers, brochures, podcasts and YouTube videos, are accessible.	2023-2027	Ongoing
When posting images online, ensure that alternative text options are updated on social media sites in addition to County website.	2023-2027	Ongoing
When planning events, ensuring that accessibility is considered and using the <a href="#">Ontario - Planning Accessible Events Guide</a> .	2023-2027	Ongoing
Include people with disabilities as part of any future County of Essex, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion initiatives or committees.	2023-2027	Planned
Include access to County of Essex committee members, to mental health, accessibility or equity diversity and inclusion, training resources through FSEAP, or other means.	2023-2027	Planned

## Employment

The County of Essex is committed to fair and accessible employment practices.

<b>Employment Actions</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Status</b>
Complete the 6 requirements of the Accessible Employment Standard: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• hiring</li> <li>• workplace information</li> <li>• talent and performance management</li> <li>• communicate accessibility policies</li> <li>• accommodation plans</li> </ul>	2023-2027	Ongoing

<b>Employment Actions</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Status</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>return to work process</li> </ul>		
Notify employees and the public that the County of Essex will accommodate the needs of people with disabilities in the hiring process, by posting this information on the County website and including this language in job postings.	2023-2027	Ongoing
Training of employees on the Essex County Integrated Accessibility Policy #12-001, on requirements of the Accessible Employment Standard.	2023-2027	Ongoing
Adhere to policies regarding employee return to work and accommodation policies for County of Essex employees;	2023-2027	Ongoing
Utilize the developed practices and procedures to notify job applicants who have been invited to participate in the recruitment, assessment or selection process that accommodations for disabilities are available upon request.	2023-2027	Ongoing
Utilize the developed practices and procedures for notifying successful applicants of the County's policy for accommodating employees with disabilities when offering employment.	2023-2027	Ongoing
Conduct employee workshops and sensitivity training aimed at removing attitudinal barriers surrounding friends and coworkers that may be experience intermittent, temporary or permanent mental health, cognitive or physical disabilities.	2023-2027	Ongoing

## Procurement

The County of Essex is committed to fair and accessible employment practices.

<b>Procurement Actions</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Status</b>
Ensure proof of compliance is received for any contractors and vendors doing business with, or on behalf of the County of Essex, as it relates to the	2023-2027	In-Progress

<b>Procurement Actions</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Status</b>
AODA requirements for Accessible Customer Service and IASR training for employees and volunteers. This includes a declaration of compliance for vendors to be provided before any work is performed or payment of invoices.		
Make available the information for the 'Vendor of Record' for accessible document remediation services, used by the County of Essex, and is also obtainable by 3 <sup>rd</sup> parties at their own expense.	2023-2027	Ongoing
All procurement documents have been vetted to ensure solicited products and/or services will meet the criteria required by the Municipality under AODA and O. Reg. 191	2023-2027	In-Progress
Ensure that all procurement documents include a clause that outlines the responsibility of the contractor to provide documents, plans, goods and services that meet accessibility standards.	2023-2027	In-Progress
Continued and expanded use of 'Bids & Tenders' for all procurement activity, as it allows for fair and accessible procurement process and documents available in accessible formats through an online platform, as well as facilitating contractor compliance by providing a means of uploading proof of accessibility training certificates and/or declarations of compliance with AODA etc. as required.	2023-2027	Ongoing
Sun Parlor Home purchase and installation of new resident room furnishings that consider and improve accessibility (ease of opening drawers, space, etc.)	2023-2027	Ongoing
That the County's Procurement Policy and Purchasing By-law include language that provide strategies for accessibility considerations when procuring goods and/or services for the County of Essex.	2023-2027	Planned

## Self-Serve Kiosks

The County of Essex is committed to incorporating accessibility features/ considering accessibility for people with disabilities when designing, procuring or acquiring self-service kiosks.

<b>Self-Serve Kiosks Actions</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Status</b>
Ensure that kiosks used to screen for COVID-19 at the entrance of facilities, comply with accessibility requirements.	2023-2027	Ongoing
Ensure an alternative method of obtaining the service provided at the kiosks is available	2023-2027	Ongoing

## Training

The County of Essex is committed to providing training in the requirements of Ontario's accessibility laws and the Ontario Human Rights Code as it applies to people with disabilities.

<b>Training Actions</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Status</b>
Training of employees on the Essex County Integrated Accessibility Standard Policy #12-001, on requirements of the Information and Communications Standard including the use of accessible formats or communication supports.	2023-2027	Ongoing
Provide fundamental training on the concepts and best practices of creating accessible documents for all employees of the County of Essex, at the time of onboarding for new employees, and as soon as practical for existing employees;	2023-2027	Ongoing
Provide advanced and ongoing training for key employees of the County of Essex who produce documents for circulation and for the public;	2023-2027	Ongoing
Foster a working group of employees who act as departmental experts in the area of document accessibility.	2023-2027	Ongoing

<b>Training Actions</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Status</b>
Provide training and tools for the ease of remediation of documents, and periodically seek out whether new or more advanced programs and tools become available for this purpose.	2023-2027	Ongoing
Train staff to interact and communicate with people with different types of disabilities.	2023-2027	Ongoing
Continue to deliver Accessible Customer Service training to all new employees and volunteers	2023-2027	Ongoing
Produce records of such training, from all service areas, on an annual basis for all employees.	2023-2027	Planned
Training for County of Essex employees to enhance their awareness of accessibility issues and to provide them with knowledge on how to effectively serve people with disabilities and how to remove attitudinal barriers;	2023-2027	Ongoing
Make available events and workshops organized by the ECAAC to members of Council and committees, the public, and to members of staff, ensuring greater reach of the accessibility message and ideals.	2023-2027	Ongoing
Organize and promote attendance at Accessibility Workshop, forums, guest speakers and educators who focus on ways to make workplaces and communities barrier free from both physical and attitudinal barriers.	2023-2027	Ongoing
Provide training to Council, committee members and employees regarding their obligations and requirements under the Ontario Human Rights Code as it relates to people with disabilities.	2023-2027	Ongoing

## Design of Public Spaces

The County of Essex will meet accessibility laws when building or making major changes to public spaces. The Council of the Corporation of the County of Essex remains committed to ensuring that the facilities, services and programs provided by the County are available to all residents including people with disabilities. The process of identifying barriers is constant.

<b>Design of Public Spaces Actions</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Status</b>
Renovation of the Essex County Civic Centre main floor office space, creation of universal washroom and common areas for modernization, increased security and increased accessibility;	2023-2027	In-Progress
Renovation of the Essex County Civic Centre upper floor meeting spaces, creation of universal washroom and common areas for modernization, increased security and increased accessibility;	2023-2027	Planned
Renovation of the exterior doors of the Essex County Civic Centre, to improve accessibility, reduce touch surfaces and improve security;	2023-2027	In-Progress
Improve signage for accessible entry to the building and parking area at the Essex County Civic Centre;	2023-2027	Planned
The construction of a universal washroom on the main floor of the Civic Centre, complete with automatic doors;	2023-2027	Planned
General improvements to Essex County Civic Centre, public eating areas, outdoor eating areas and accessible public access to outdoor common space;	2023-2027	Planned
Addition of an accessible second public entrance, with a ramp;	2023-2027	Planned
Exterior access ramp, to common sitting area with shade rock garden/fountain at the Civic Centre	2023-2027	Planned
Accessible furnishings for common areas, meeting rooms, cafeteria etc.	2023-2027	Planned

<b>Design of Public Spaces Actions</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Status</b>
Improved navigation to the facilities, using tactile, audio, or alternative wayfinding tools;	2023-2027	Planned
Continuing renovations to the Sun Parlor Home to improve the accessibility of that entire facility for the residents and visitors	2023-2027	Ongoing
Essex-Windsor Emergency Medical Services Base/Stations - Construction and Renovations, ensure new and renovated facilities meet Built Environment Accessibility Standard and Ontario Building Code and that any improvements or development of offices/stations will be done in accordance with Built Environment Accessibility Standard and the Building Code, and brought forward to the ECAAC for comments prior to final approval.	2023-2027	Planned
Road, bridge, intersection, signalling, crosswalk or other transportation asset construction and remediation – review of draft plans by the ECAAC.	2023-2027	Planned
CWATS developments – Review of plans by ECAAC for expansion or improvements of the network.	2023-2027	Ongoing
New initiatives related to the development of on and off road pedestrian and cycling facilities under the County’s jurisdiction will be accessible;	2023-2027	Ongoing
The County Wide Active Transportation Strategy (CWATS) is phased over a 20 year period. An Inter-municipal Active Transportation Committee is guiding the process of implementation. Requirements established in the Accessibility Standard for the Built Environment – Design of Public Spaces Standards (Part IV.1 of Ontario Regulation 413/12) is incorporated into the implementation plans.	2023-2027	Ongoing
Redevelop existing exterior off-street parking and pathways at the Essex Civic Centre that meet the technical and general requirements of 80(21) – 80(23) and 80(32) – 80(37) of the Integrated Accessibility Standard Regulation;	2023-2027	Ongoing

<b>Design of Public Spaces Actions</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Status</b>
Consultations with the Infrastructure Services department on the redevelopment of roads and intersections, crosswalks and other infrastructure projects to ensure accessibility compliance;	2023-2027	Ongoing
Removing barriers and enhancing the accessibility of the facilities of the County of Essex.	2023-2027	Ongoing
The Essex County Accessibility Advisory Committee visits the Sun Parlor Home to make recommendations for improved accessibility.	2023-2027	Ongoing
Infrastructure Services – ensuring all new and renovated facilities meet Built Environment Standard and Ontario Building Code.	2023-2027	Ongoing
Any improvements or development of depots will be done in accordance with Built Environment Standard and the Building Code.	2023-2027	Ongoing
Ensure all consultants follow the AODA, IASR and other accessibility regulations and guidelines for Customer Service, Information and Communications, Employment and Built Environments when working on a project on behalf of the County of Essex, in accordance with the contract document specifications related to Accessibility compliance.	2023-2027	In-Progress
Ensuring all plans for design for any facility or assets, are brought forward to the Essex County Accessibility Advisory Committee for review and comment prior to final approval.	2023-2027	Ongoing

## **Transportation**

The County does not currently operate or contract public transit services or license taxicabs.



**Other**

<b>Other Actions</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Status</b>
As new emergency procedures, plans and public safety information becomes available, continue to ensure that the information is developed in formats which are easily convertible to alternate formats upon request.	2023-2027	Ongoing
Work with the County Emergency Management division, to develop an awareness campaign specifically targeting emergency preparedness for people with disabilities.	2023-2027	Planned
Essex County employees advised that workplace emergency response plans and information will be developed to accommodate any employees with disabilities specific accessibility requirements.	2023-2027	Ongoing
Development and review of Accessible Customer Service Policy, Practices and Procedures for services provided by the County of Essex and Accessible Customer Service training for all employees and Council of the County of Essex.	2023-2027	Ongoing
Development and review of policies in accordance with the Integrated Accessibility Standard.	2023-2027	Ongoing
<p>Maintenance of the accessible elements in public spaces:</p> <p>Develop policies and procedures for preventative and emergency maintenance of the accessible elements of public spaces. (maintenance may be mechanical, environmental or other)</p> <p>Develop procedures for dealing with temporary disruptions when accessible elements are not in working order and develop procedures for addressing environmental barriers that arise resulting from planned or inadvertent events or incidents. (examples: debris or obstacles on paths of travel, power failure/disruption, weather-related issues etc.)</p>	2023-2027	Ongoing

Other Actions	Timeframe	Status
Regional accessibility flag-raising annually, to commemorate National AccessAbility Week. (Inaugural flag raising was May 30, 2022 and Council passed a resolution to permit the flying of the Accessibility Flag for a week each year to mark National AccessAbility Week.)	2023-2027	Ongoing
That the Strategic Asset Management Plan incorporate accessibility considerations into any future planned investment in corporate assets.	2023-2027	Planned

## Conclusion

---

### Accessibility Strategies and Actions Identified in the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

The outlined items in this document as Strategies and Actions or “Appendix A” of the County of Essex Multi-Year Accessibility Plan outlines various ways to prevent and remove barriers for people with disabilities, to be undertaken over the next five years. These initiatives include the timelines and updated status of initiatives established earlier in this document, and will be updated on an ongoing basis, and reported to Essex County Council annually.

### Review and Monitoring of the Progress

The Multi-year Accessibility Plan will be updated at least once every five years. The County of Essex will review the progress of the initiatives undertaken in the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan on an on-going basis. Progress reports will also be provided to the Essex County Accessibility Advisory Committee. Feedback from the Essex County Accessibility Advisory Committee on the progress of the initiatives will be reported to Essex County Council through their Committee minutes.

The Essex County Accessibility Advisory Committee will also complete a report on their accomplishments from the current year and provide it to County Council annually.

### Communication of the Plan

Copies of the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan for the Corporation of the County of Essex will be available at the County of Essex Administration Office located at 360

Fairview Avenue West, Essex, Suite 202. The Plan will also be posted on the County of Essex website once approved. Copies of the Plan will be available in alternate formats, upon request.

## **Feedback**

Essex County welcomes public input, as feedback helps to identify areas where changes could be considered and help to identify ways in which the County can improve County facilities, programs, and/or services. Should a member of the public wish to provide general feedback, comments or suggestions on how to improve accessibility in County facilities, programs, and/or services, please contact the Accessibility Coordinator at:

Phone: 519-776-6441, ext. 1353

TTY: 1-877-624-4832

Email: [accessibility@countyofessex.ca](mailto:accessibility@countyofessex.ca)

Mail: 360 Fairview Ave. W., Suite 202, Essex, Ontario, N8M 1Y6