



September 8, 2022

Warden McNamara and Members of Essex County Council
360 Fairview Ave. W., Suite 314
Essex ON
N8M 1Y6

Dear Warden and Members of County Council,

Re: 2023-2027 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan Endorsement

In 2001 the first version of accessibility legislation was passed in Ontario. Over the past 21 years, there have been legislative updates, more robust requirements and compliance deadlines implemented for various sectors, including municipal governments. One requirement, is that municipalities must 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, must be available and posted publicly in accessible formats, and be consistently reviewed at least once, every five years.

Previous versions of the Multi-Year Accessibility plan included provisions for the removal of barriers, elevating public awareness of accessibility issues that exist, and fostering inclusive programs and policies throughout the County of Essex. Since its' first iteration, and adoption many years ago, the mutual support, and partnership effort, between the County Council and the ECAAC has resulted in very positive advancements for accessibility in the County of Essex. The lived experiences of ECAAC members and their network of accessibility experts, have provided vital perspective on the implementation of past initiatives, as well as identifying which projects would have the greatest impact for those living with disabilities in our region. These are the building blocks of the 2023-2027 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan, which endures as a guiding document and plan for the County's future.

For the last several months, the Essex County Accessibility Advisory Committee has been reviewing the draft 2023-2027 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan for the County of Essex. Throughout this process, Committee members received feedback from correspondence, social media, personal interactions, comments received during the public consultation period as well as from internal discussions with County of Essex departments.

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On September 8, 2022, the ECAAC met for their regular meeting, and at that time the members moved the following:

Moved by: Gord Queen

Seconded by: Rachel Jewell

That the Essex County Accessibility Advisory Committee endorse the 2023-2027 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan for County of Essex Council approval, and that a letter be forwarded to the Warden and Council outlining the endorsement by the Committee.

As such, please accept the endorsement of the ECAAC for the 2023-2027 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan for the County of Essex.

Thank you for the continued support and partnership in breaking down barriers, and advancing accessibility inclusion and awareness in our region.

Sincerely,

Christine Easterbrook

Chair, Essex County Accessibility Advisory Committee