

2021 Year-End Status Report

Accessibility Plan 2021-2025

This document is available in alternate formats upon request. Please visit: [The City of St. Catharines website](#) or call 1-905-866-5600 to speak with a representative from Citizen's First

Compliance

As required under the *Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR)* of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA)*, the City of St. Catharines prepares annual status reports on the progress of the organization's strategy to prevent and remove barriers to accessibility. The City's 2021-2025 Accessibility Plan outlines the City's current strategy.

This annual report provides a status update on the corporation's progress achieved in 2021 towards that strategy. This includes a detailed account of the improvements to City services, programs, information, communications, goods and facilities through the completion of accessibility-related initiatives. In addition to meeting statutory requirements, this report demonstrates the City's commitment to the inclusion of persons with disabilities, be they residents, employees or visitors in all the City has to offer.

The City is currently compliant with provisions under the standards of Customer Service, Information and Communication, the Design of Public Spaces, Transportation, Employment and General Standards.

Statement of Organizational Commitment

The Corporation of the City of St. Catharines is committed to developing, implementing, maintaining, and enhancing accessibility as set out under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA)* and its Standards for people with a disability, in a manner that:

- Reflects the principles of dignity and independence;
- Seeks to provide integrated services; and
- Provides opportunity equitable to others to obtain, use and benefit from its goods or services.

Achievements and Activities in 2021

Physical Environment:

Bill Burgoyne Arena - Bowl Isolation & Accessibility Upgrades



Bowl isolation and Lift

Completed project in 2021 to seal openings to help with ice making and energy efficiency. Added a series of doors along openings. Also, added a lift as pictured to improve accessibility for visitors to the arena.

Port Dalhousie Piers Concrete Benches



At the Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC) meeting on September 29, 2021, the AAC, in principle, supported the bench design for the piers. The AAC also asked staff to review and consider the items below regarding the bench design for the piers:

For bench installation, include concealed rods to eliminate external “L brackets”. Also requested was the inclusion of an arm rest or grab bar to select benches to help individuals sit or stand. Other requests were to ensure the space between the benches allows access for a power wheelchair. For individuals with visual impairments, contrasting colours between the bench and the piers surface including indicators on the surface of the pier and to provide priority seating signage for accessibility

Port Dalhousie Library Ramp

Ramp update at Port Dalhousie Library completed in 2021



Pelham Road



High visibility bicycle lanes, tactile plates at sidewalk ramps, dropped sidewalks at driveways to minimize crossfall.

Linear Infrastructure

Accessibility On street parking – Reverse Angle Parking
St. Paul Street at Silver Spire Church



New Sidewalks

Constructed:

Abbot Street (north side, Oakdale Avenue to 40m easterly)
Export Drive (west side, Dieppe Road to Welland Avenue)
Gibson Place (north side from Niagara Street to 70m westerly)
Rykert Street (south side, Louth Street to approx. 80m west of Westland)

Awarded:

Arthur Street (west side – 3 missing sections, East side near Cindy Drive)
Niagara Street (west side – 2 sections, Mapleview Drive southerly to mid-block walkway)

Recreational Trails and Multi-Use Paths

Location	New Trail	Upgrade Existing	Paving Spring 2022	Federal ICIP funded
Fairview Park	✓		✓	✓
Lakeside Park		✓		✓
Pearson Park	✓			✓
Rennie Park		✓	✓	✓
Merritt Trail along Moffatt Street		✓		
Merritt Trail (CNR to Chestnut St. W)		✓	✓	✓
Merritt Trail (Chestnut St. W to Glendale Avenue)	✓		✓	✓
Merritt Mills Multi-use Path (Hartzel Road to Ellis Avenue)	✓		Start spring 2022	

Welland Canal Trail (Parnell to Scott) – by St Lawrence Seaway Corporation		✓	✓	
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2021 Resurfacing

Market Square Parking Lot



Other projects:

Lakeside Park Parking Lot
 Burgoyne Woods Entrance Driveway and Main Loop
 Queen Street (St. Paul to King)
 Lake Street (Linwell to Lakeshore)
 Various Local Streets

Community Recreation and Culture Services

Abilities in Motion (AIM)

A new program introduced where adults (ages 18+) with developmental, physical and cognitive disabilities will be taught skills that train and strengthen the whole body. The instructor-led exercises allow participants the opportunity to maintain mobility, assist in balance and increase coordination

- No swimming skills required
- Support person may participate at no charge



Museum – Sensory Friendly Sunsets

In this after-hours program, lighting and sounds in the Museum will be altered to reduce external stimuli and a several sensory-friendly activities will be made available for families to engage with on your own terms. Activities include the following:

Hands-on-Heritage: children will be encouraged to touch and match objects made of different materials

Play Zone: self-directed play area with a variety of tactile toys and activities to choose from.

Quiet Zone: a place to relax and be calm, with blankets, large stuffed animals, and grounding observation activities.

Financial Management Services

External improvements were made to provide increased accessibility and ease of use to customers and community partners through the following measures:

- updates were made to forms located on the City's website corresponding with the launch of the new website
- 13 of 17 of the forms used for procurement were updated to comply with accessibility requirements leaving only 4 additional forms to be reviewed and updated. The following forms were updated:
 - Purchase Order Master
 - Purchase Requisition
 - RFP – request for proposal, RFT – request for tender & RFQ – request for quotation - templates
 - Addendum template
 - Award Notification Letter template
 - Cancellation Notification template
 - Disqualification Notice template
 - Letter of Intent template
 - Prequalification Notification template
 - Declaration of Accessibility Compliance (will need wording updated to reflect newest AODA info)
 - Landing page for bids & tenders
 - Purchase Authority – Corporation Purchasing Card
 - Purchase Authority – Vouchers or Requisitions
- Staff have increased their requests for the support of the Communications Team to review content and make suggestions based on accessibility requirements
- Improvements were made to the Budget Standing Committee and Council Reports to make them more accessible
- Tax Certificates were made available to purchase online through Tax Certificate Online Tool (TCOL)
- Installation of additional pay and display parking equipment and continued use of Honk Mobile app
- Online payments available for various parking services (parking tickets and reoccurring parking permit payments)

Employment

- Continue to notify the public that accommodations will be provided upon request
- Continue to promote and welcome accommodations throughout recruitment process and employment life cycle
- Rick Hansen audits and certifications for city buildings completed in 2021 with Kiwanis facility achieving Gold Certification
- Partnership with Communications and Clerks & Legal department to offer closed captioning at Council meetings
- Edited accessibility communications guide for staff from the 2016 version to an updated 2021 version
- Expanded LanguageLine services to Fire and Emergency Services
- Created and released to 2021-2025 Multiyear accessibility plan
- IT included update to Licensing that includes voice to text option
- IT has supported staff and committees to make the move to meeting virtually on platforms like zoom and Microsoft Teams

St. Catharines Transit 2021

- One large accessible bus to be received in February
- Twelve standard accessible buses to be received in April/May
- Four paratransit buses ordered in Jan 2021
- New furniture ordered for 33% of the Bus Terminal that is built to CSA National Standard of Canada for Accessible Design.
- Website revisions to meet AODA Accessibility Standards. Launching early 2021
- Installed contrast markings on bus platforms
- New Bus Operator program being updated to include more paratransit training and more mobility training.
- Commence renovations at St. Catharines Bus Terminal to improve accessibility including washroom upgrade and wayfinding.
- Increasing the number of fully accessible doors at the Downtown Bus Terminal