
HALDIMAND COUNTY

Memorandum CEC-M03-2024 Inclusive Spaces Fund For Consideration by Council on May 27, 2024



To: Mayor Bentley and Members of Council
From: Kyra Hayes, Supervisor, Customer Experience & Communications

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. THAT Memorandum CEC-M03-2024 Inclusive Spaces Fund be received.

In recent years, Council has deliberately invested in accessibility-related initiatives to help make municipal services, facilities and amenities easier to access for everyone. Most recently, as part of the 2024 Tax-Supported Capital Budget, Council approved \$50,000 to be allocated directly to enhancing accessibility at existing County owned facilities or on County property.

The objectives of the fund are:

- To reduce barriers and promote Haldimand County as a forward thinking and inclusive community;
- To fulfill the County's corporate strategic pillar of Community Vibrancy and Healthy Communities; and
- To mitigate risk and liability associated with non-compliance of legislation.

The fund will enable Haldimand County to:

- Meet legislated standards outlined by The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) and reduce potential litigation under the Human Rights Code;
- Significantly reduce barriers faced by the residents of the County; and
- Help to promote Haldimand as a progressive community that puts the needs of its residents and visitors at the forefront of the planning.

In order to determine which enhancements will proceed in 2024, a number of factors were considered. An initial list of accessibility projects was developed by staff based on Building Condition Assessment (BCA) data, in-person facility visits, community survey feedback and usage/rental statistics. Consideration was given to projects that would enhance access to high-traffic community spaces that currently pose barriers to individuals with disabilities, projects that would have the largest public impact and projects that address the most significant AODA-related compliance issues (i.e. barriers that exist in arenas, libraries, and community centres like automatic door openers & accessible seating). Additionally, efforts were made to ensure projects were equitably distributed across the County.

Proposed projects for 2024 were brought forward by staff to the Accessibility Advisory Committee and considered at length. Discussions resulted in the following projects being selected for the 2024 calendar year:

1. Dunnville Kinsmen Park – accessible parking and pathway to bleachers
2. Haldimand County Caledonia Centre (HCCC) – automatic door opens from lobby to pads A & B

3. Cayuga Kinsmen Community Centre – automatic door opener and restoration of existing wheelchair ramp
4. Hagersville Memorial Arena – automatic door opener from lobby into spectator area
5. Esplanade Park, Port Maitland – accessible picnic table
6. Dunnville Lions Park – accessible seating along pathway to meet approved design standards

Accessibility staff are working closely with the Facilities, Parks, Cemeteries & Forestry division to facilitate these enhancements and an update will be provided to Council in Q4 once completed.

Staff intend to bring forward a request for Inclusive Spaces funding with the 2025 Tax-Supported Capital Budget and annually after that. Moving forward, as part of the information-gathering and project selection process, staff intend to poll members of Council and seek feedback on any accessibility concerns that have been raised specific to their Wards. Consultations with Council and the Accessibility Advisory Committee will be held annually as part of the budget/work plan development process.

After the plan is established, the Accessibility Coordinator will work with divisions and stakeholders to assist with project coordination and reporting.

REFERENCES:

None.

ATTACHMENTS:

None.