



Wellington County Museum and Archives Accessibility Plan

The Wellington County Museum and Archives (WCMA) strives to provide a high-quality visitor experience for persons of all ages and abilities. This Accessibility Plan provides steps taken by staff to ensure the best possible access to the Museum's programmes, services and facilities in a manner that promotes dignity, independence, integration, and equal opportunity. This Plan is a working document as the WCMA recognizes that we are in a continuous learning process as visitors enter our space daily with different abilities, and that there may be real and perceived barriers that make visitors feel unwelcome in our space.

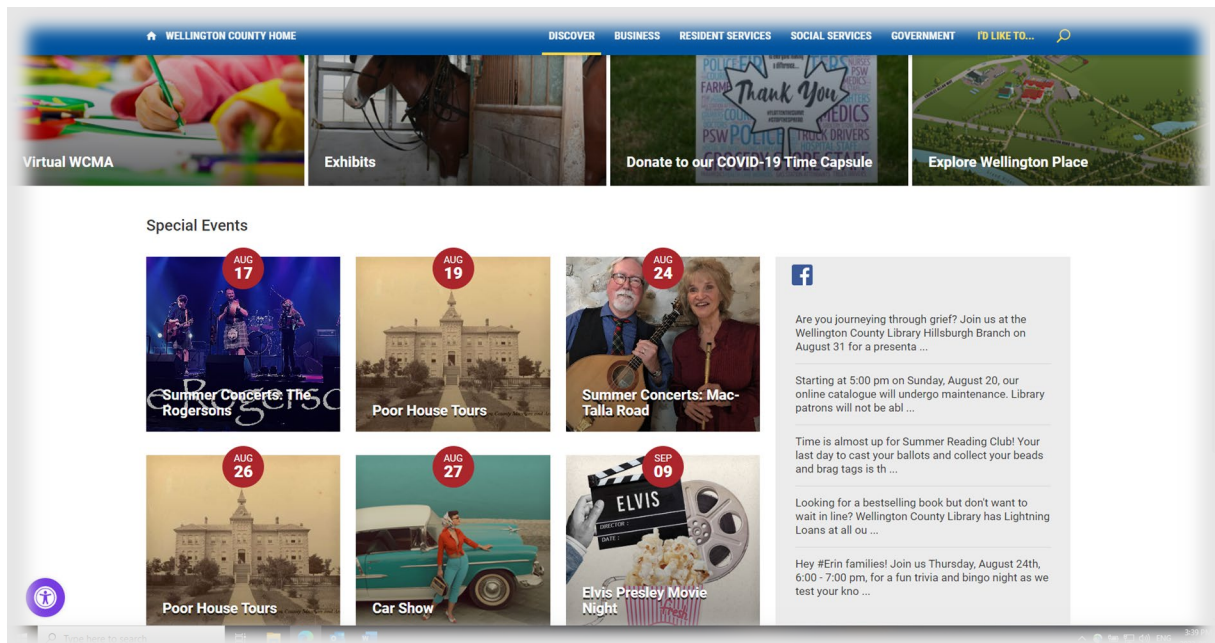
The WCMA will actively support the goal of an accessible province by 2025 by implementing the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA). To do so, the WCMA is aligned with the corporate County of Wellington Accessibility Plan 2022-2026. This is a multi-year plan describing how we will become an accessible organization over the next five years. The Plan was developed by and is updated by the County Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC) which meets regularly to focus on the following areas:

1. Policies, processes, and practices
2. Communications and Technology
3. Infrastructure
4. Transportation



While the corporate Plan is more broad, we have utilized the same framework to develop a more specific Plan for the WCMA, with the following desired outcomes:

- People with disabilities have access to quality services in a timely manner.
- People with disabilities have access to information and communications in alternate formats.
- People with disabilities can participate fully in the programming, services, and the facilities within the WCMA.

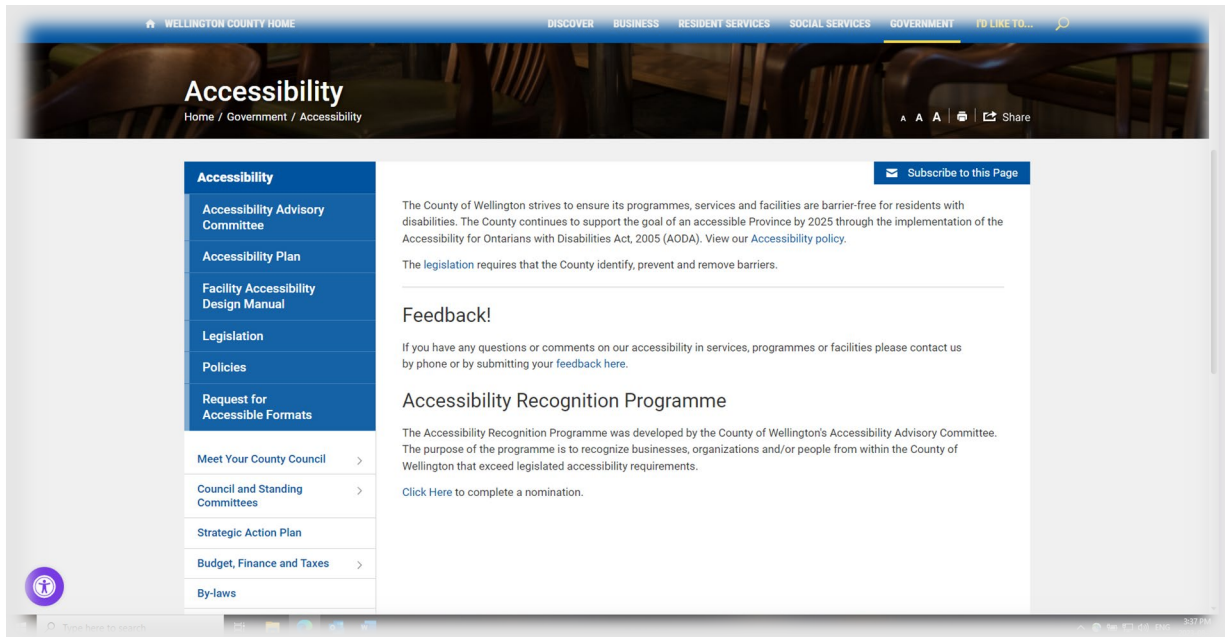


Work completed to date includes:

1. Policies, processes and practices:
 - Developed Accessible Communications Policy, Workplace Accommodations for People with Disabilities Policy, and Accessibility Policy. The above-mentioned policies are available on the County website and in alternative formats upon request. Continue to update the Accessibility Policy as the legislation changes.
 - The County's multi-year accessibility plan sets out how the County will comply with requirements of Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR). The plan has been posted to the County's website for feedback and is available in alternative formats upon request.
 - The County's purchasing procedure has been updated to include accessibility requirements.
 - Training: All staff and volunteers are made sensitive to the various needs of all visitors which is crucial to providing a positive experience. Accessibility Training in New Hire Orientation includes information related to the IASR. Training is provided to all employees at the New Hire Orientation. A training document for volunteers has been

created and is shared with all new volunteers. A review of the County of Wellington Accessibility Plan in addition to this Plan is also provided.

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2. Communications and Technology:

- County advertisements currently include wording that encourages people to let us know if they require accommodations or alternative formats.
- WCMA staff follow the County of Wellington's Accessible Communication Guide, an internal resource created to ensure all County staff can achieve accessibility in written communications. The guide specifies standards for font style, size, formatting, use of plain language, and visual contrast to ensure that all written communication and graphics are accessible.
- The WCMA website directs people to call or email the Accessibility Clerk for alternative formats and communication supports. The website is currently being reviewed, a new vendor will develop the new site with an estimated launch of May 2024. Staff are committed to working with the Accessibility Advisory Committee to ensure the new website is accessible and compliant.
- Currently, all website editors receive education and training on AODA legislation for web content, WCAG 2.0 Level AA compliance requirements, and document accessibility.
- Job advertisements inform applicants about the availability of accommodations in the recruitment process.
- Human Resources employees tell applicants of the opportunity to participate in an interview and of the availability of accommodations throughout the process.
- When making an offer of employment, Human Resources verbally informs the individual of the County's commitment to providing accommodations in the workplace.

- Handout explaining the procedure for requesting accommodations is given to all new hires on their first day.
- The WCMA will ensure that staff are familiar with the various types of assistive devices that visitors may use and that use of any such devices is welcomed as visitors access our services. WCMA staff will communicate with people with disabilities in ways that respectfully take into account their disability.
- Persons with disabilities are welcome to bring their service animals and/or support persons, whether professional or friend, where they will be acknowledged and admitted to programmes at no charge.
- A Notice of temporary disruptions to services or facilities used by persons with disabilities will be posted at the main entrance, included in the message on the answering machine, and posted online. The Notice will include the reason(s) for the disruption, anticipated length of the disruption, and any alternative services.
- Visitors are welcome to provide feedback on how the WCMA provides services to people with disabilities. This may be done verbally at the reception desk or through the “contact us” page of the website. All comments will be directed to the Administrator, who will respond within 14 business days.



3. Infrastructure

- Access for persons with physical disabilities: Persons with physical disabilities may include those who require the use of a wheelchair, walkers, canes or frequent rest stops. All WCMA buildings have access and elevators, but the Heritage Barn has a stone dust ramp. Four designated accessible parking spaces are provided on the east side of the WCMA, with a further X behind the WCMA. Paved pathways connect all buildings for ease of movement around the site.
- Accessible washrooms are provided on the main floor of the WCMA.
- Adequate space is allowed in exhibit areas for movement of wheelchairs and walkers.
- The height of both persons standing and those sitting in a wheelchair are considered when installing artifacts and labels in cases, and in placement of barriers.
- Both outdoor and indoor chairs and benches for rest stops exist within and around the building, and staff will add additional seating within temporary exhibit spaces whenever possible.
- Light levels are adequate on stairs and ramps to allow those with visual impairments to negotiate these areas more easily. Attention is paid to text sizes on labels and placement of labels to increase readability. Magnifying glasses are kept at reception for use by visitors. For programme situations where a staff person or volunteer is leading a tour and activities, opportunities will be offered for the person who is visually impaired to handle objects where safety and the condition of the artifacts allow.
- Microphones exist for tours where individuals are hard of hearing, and staff are aware to respectfully make use of written notes where an interpreter or lip reading is not possible.
- The WCMA receives approximately 40 visitors per day during the week and circa 100 on weekends. We regularly have international visitors who do not speak English. Just as we keep track of First Aid training, De-escalation Training and Safe Food Handling for our general training categories, we also track language proficiencies of staff. These include French, German and Spanish to better serve those with specific language needs.
- Continue to make facilities accessible in accordance with our FADM.
- WCMA recreational trails, outdoor play spaces and exterior paths of travel strive to be compliant with the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation.



4. Transportation

- While the WCMA does not provide transportation, the County was successful for a provincial grant to implement Ride Well. Ride Well is a ridesharing programme offered Monday to Friday between 7am and 6pm for residents across Wellington County. Providing door to door service, with accessible vehicles, this rural transit service is made available to all WCMA visitors.

RIDE WELL
Rural Transit

WELLINGTON COUNTY
RIDE WELL
RIDESHARE

A safe and convenient way to attend appointments, do your shopping, and visit friends and family.

- RIDE WELL uses full-time dedicated, drivers to offer transit services across Wellington County, between the hours of 6:00 am to 7:00 pm, Monday to Friday.
- Fares range from \$5 to \$40, at \$0.60 per kilometer, per person. Multiple-rider discounts apply.

Book your ride on the **RIDE WELL** app, at www.ridewell.ca/ book or by calling 1.833.900.RIDE (7433). Payment by credit and debit-credit cards.

www.ridewell.ca

Alternate formats available upon request.

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Ontario

Looking forward the WCMA would like to survey the public as to their experience with the accessibility of our site, and request that the County AAC review our space as well. Possible areas of improvement include signage, seating, an accessible washroom on level 1, providing a document on request, or making the barn walkway less steep. Including and welcoming people with disabilities in all aspects is a top priority for the WCMA. We understand that accessibility is an ongoing process, and we are committed to engaging in that process.

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