



AGENDA

Accessibility Advisory Committee
Thursday, April 19, 2018 10:00 AM
Oro-Medonte Severn Boardroom
Chair: Doug Mein



Page

1. Call to Order
2. Approval of Agenda

Resolution

That the agenda for the April 19, 2018 meeting of the Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee be approved as circulated.

3. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest
4. Items of Reference

5 - 9 **4.1. Terms of Reference**
[Terms of Reference - 2018](#)

11 - 13 **4.2. Workplan**
[Work Plan - 2018](#)

5. Presentations and Delegations
6. Consent Agenda
7. Matters for Consideration

County of Simcoe

15 - 45 **7.1. AAC 18-005 - County's Accessibility Activity Report (January-March 2018)**
[AAC 18-005](#)
[Schedule 1 to AAC 18-005](#)
[Schedule 2 to AAC 18-005](#)
[Schedule 3 to AAC 18-005](#)

[Schedule 4 to AAC 18-005](#)

Recommendation

That Item AAC 18-005, dated April 19, 2018 regarding the County of Simcoe's Accessibility Program activities for the period of January to March 2018, be received.

47 - 107

7.2. AAC 18-006 - Draft County of Simcoe 2019-2023 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

[AAC 18-006](#)

[Schedule 1 to AAC 16-006](#)

Recommendation

That Item AAC 18-006, dated April 19, 2018 regarding the Draft County of Simcoe 2019-2023 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan, be received; and

That subject to any modifications proposed by the Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee, that the County of Simcoe 2019 – 2023 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan, attached as Schedule 1 to Item AAC 18-006, be approved.

Township of Tay

109 - 121

7.3. Draft Election Accessibility Plan

[2018 Draft Election Accessibility Plan](#)

[Schedule 1 to 2018 Draft Election Accessibility Plan](#)

Recommendation

That the report from the Clerk regarding the Draft Election Accessibility Plan, be received;

And that the Draft Election Accessibility Plan, be approved.

123 - 138

7.4. Township of Tay 2018 to 2022 Accessibility Plan

[Township of Tay 2018-2022 Accessibility Plan](#)

[Schedule 1 to 2018-2022 Accessibility Plan](#)

Recommendation

That the report regarding the 2018 to 2022 Accessibility Plan, be received;

And the Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee review and provide feedback on the Plan.

Township of Springwater

7.5. Verbal Update Regarding Township of Springwater Website

8. Other Matters for Consideration
9. Confidential Matters for Consideration
10. Adjournment

Resolution

That the April 19, 2018 meeting of the Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee be adjourned at [time]a.m.

**The Corporation of the County of Simcoe and
The Corporation of the Township of Springwater and
The Corporation of the Township of Tay
Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee**

Terms of Reference

Purpose

The Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee ("Committee") is established by the Corporation of the County of Simcoe ("Simcoe"), the Corporation of the Township of Springwater ("Springwater") and the Corporation of the Township of Tay ("Tay") in accordance with Ontarians with Disabilities Act 2001, and the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 ("Acts"), and shall act as an advisory body in accordance with both Acts and all related standards.

Mandate

The Committee shall:

- a) Provide input on the preparation of the accessibility plans for consideration by the respective municipal Council.

The plans will address and include steps that each municipality has taken and plans to take with respect to the identification, removal and prevention of barriers to persons with disabilities as required by legislation.
- b) Advise on major accessibility issues related to the significant renovation, operation, purchase or lease of buildings or structures or parts of buildings or structures used as municipal buildings with special attention to those that the public are encouraged to utilize through the review of site plans and drawings as described within the Planning Act.
- c) Advise on opportunities with respect to the identification and removal of barriers to persons with disabilities at facilities owned or operated by the municipalities.
- d) Identify any potential funding that could be available to assist with the removal of barriers for persons with disabilities.
- e) Research and report on specific matters referred to it by the municipal Councils.
- f) Advise on opportunities to increase staff awareness with respect to the provision of municipal programs and services to persons with disabilities.

- g) Advise on ways to improve opportunities for persons with disabilities with respect to programs and services offered by the municipalities.
- h) Perform other functions that are specified in the Regulations of the Acts.

Composition

The Committee shall consist of five to nine members as follows:

- a) The majority of members must be persons with disabilities as defined under the Acts, and are residents of the County of Simcoe. Preference will be given to appointing at least one eligible resident of “Springwater” and at least one eligible resident of “Tay”.
- b) Three elected officials as follows:
 - One member of “Simcoe” Council, and
 - One member of “Springwater” Council, and
 - One member of “Tay” Council

The Councils may, at their discretion, authorize the appointment of:

- a) One citizen at large who may not be a person with a disability but who has special interest or expertise in the identification or removal of barriers or has specific expertise as a care giver to a person(s) with disabilities; and/or
- b) A representative of an organization representing persons with disabilities.

Recruitment

“Simcoe” will be responsible for advertising recruitment opportunities through local newspapers, local libraries, and relevant organizations representing persons with disabilities.

The participating municipalities will each be responsible for promoting recruitment opportunities on their respective website and through their social media accounts.

Enhanced advertising may be done by “Springwater” and “Tay” at their own expense.

Appointment of Members

Elected officials are to be appointed by their respective Council or in accordance with their applicable by-laws or policies.

The elected officials appointed to the “Committee” shall review applications and nominate the balance of the membership to the participating municipal Councils for approval.

Term of Appointment

a) Elected Officials:

- “Simcoe” Warden, or his or her designate, or other appointed County Council member shall serve for the term of office;
- “Springwater” Council Member shall serve for the term as specified by his/her Council.
- “Tay” Council Member shall serve for the term as specified by his/her Council.

b) Non-elected representatives:

- The term shall coincide with the term of Council
- Representatives are eligible for re-appointment

Members may be required to resign from the “Committee” if they have been absent for three consecutive meetings without good cause.

Quorum

More than half of the members eligible to vote must be present in order to transact business.

Voting

All members, when eligible to vote, shall have one vote only.

Chair and Vice-Chair

The Chair and Vice-Chair of the “Committee” shall be elected annually at the first meeting of the “Committee” in each year.

Compensation and Reimbursement of Expenses

Non-elected representatives shall be compensated in accordance with the existing policies of the Corporation of the County of Simcoe.

Elected officials shall be compensated in accordance with existing policies of their respective municipalities.

Non-elected representatives who are persons with disabilities will be provided, at the “Simcoe’s” expense, with the resources related to their disability that are deemed necessary for them to fully participate in the “Committee’s” activities. The resources

could include such things as transportation, sign language, Braille translation etc. Any equipment shall remain the property of “Simcoe”.

Exception

“Springwater” shall reimburse “Simcoe” for all expenses associated with holding special meetings of the “Committee” or conducting “Springwater” facility reviews that may be required by “Springwater” from time-to-time.

“Tay” shall reimburse “Simcoe” for all expenses associated with holding special meetings of the “Committee” or conducting “Tay” facility reviews that may be required by “Tay” from time-to-time.

Reporting Structure

The “Committee” shall report to the respective Councils, in accordance with the provisions of their respective Procedure By-laws. The presentation of the Committee’s activities will be in the form of a report containing a record of those present at the meeting, the items considered, and the recommendations of the “Committee”. The respective Councils may only consider and act on the recommendations within their jurisdiction.

The “Committee” does not have the authority to specifically direct the activities of staff.

Resources

The Clerk’s Departments for “Simcoe”, “Springwater” and “Tay” will share the responsibility for administrative support as appropriate, including co-ordination of meetings, compilation of agenda material, and meeting support.

Responsibility for creating and distributing the agendas and record of proceedings will reside with “Simcoe”.

Other staff resources by “Simcoe”, “Springwater” and “Tay” will be available as required.

Meetings

Meetings may be scheduled as may be required each year to support staff reporting and the advisory committee providing guidance and conducting facility reviews resulting in improved accessible services and facilities. All meetings shall be held during the day at a location to be determined.

Review

The effectiveness of having a joint “Committee” will be subject to review by all participating municipal Councils at least once per term.

Approved by County Council February 13, 2018 (CCW-40-18)

Approved by Township of Springwater Council March 7, 2018 (C081-2018)

Approved by Township of Tay Council March 28, 2018

**County of Simcoe and Township of Springwater
Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC)
2018 Work Plan**

2018 Meeting Dates (Thursdays at 10:00 a.m.):

January 18

April 19

July 19 and August 16 - Facility Review

October 4

Task / Activity	Objectives	Action Plan	Target Date	Completion Date
Community accessibility partnerships and awareness	To continue existing partnerships and cultivate new ones in order to further improve accessibility and disability awareness	1. Participate in accessibility events within the County and surrounding area (AAC members and staff) 2. Advise of events in which County and Township staff may consider participating 3. Explore opportunities for promotion of accessibility at community events with the Township and across the County	Ongoing	Ongoing
Promotion of accessibility through acknowledgement of significant events	To acknowledge National Access Awareness Week (May 28 – June 3) and International Day of Persons with Disabilities (December 3), which recognize accessibility and persons with disabilities	1. County staff will request that the Warden declare a proclamation to recognize National Access Awareness Week 2. County and Township staff will use social media to inform the public of the event and promote accessibility 3. County staff will request that the Warden declare a proclamation to recognize International Day of Persons with Disabilities 4. County and Township staff will use social media to promote the event 5. Advise staff of other significant events that arise which may warrant a Council proclamation to raise awareness	1. April 2. May-June 3. November 4. December 5. Ongoing	Ongoing

Last Updated: April 2018

Task / Activity	Objectives	Action Plan	Target Date	Completion Date
2018 County-wide Accessibility Events	To further promote awareness of accessibility and disability, and further celebrate National Access Awareness Week across Simcoe County	1. Participate in municipal events across the County, held during National Access Awareness Week 2. Assist staff in communicating and promoting events (County to coordinate communication and prepare communication materials)	1. May-June 2. April	Ongoing
Accessibility planning and reporting	To identify, remove and prevent barriers to County and Springwater goods, services and facilities and meet legislative planning requirements	1. Advise staff of barriers to County and Township goods, services, and facilities and recommend solutions as part of accessibility planning process 2. Review and comment on draft accessibility plans, annual progress reports, and Committee work plans	1. Ongoing 2. October	Ongoing
Monitoring of legislation	To ensure that any new proposed legislation and amendments to existing legislation are reviewed and comments are provided to the province, when requested	1. Monitor the release of any new proposed accessibility standards or amendments to existing legislation 2. Review proposed legislation and provide comments to staff for County and Township submission to the province	Ongoing	Ongoing
Response and tracking of resident feedback and requests	To bring accessibility concerns to staff's attention to help ensure that barriers are identified, removed and prevented	1. Advise County and Township staff of accessibility concerns regarding County and Township goods, services and facilities	Ongoing	Ongoing
Facility reviews	To identify barriers that may exist in County and Springwater facilities	1. Review facility review checklist and recommend modifications, if required 2. Conduct review of County of Simcoe's Long Term Care Facility 3. Work with staff to prioritize review of other County and Springwater facilities	July	As required

Last Updated: December 2017

Task / Activity	Objectives	Action Plan	Target Date	Completion Date
Barrier-free design features in facilities	To review and provide recommendations on accessible features within County and Township facilities (new construction or extensive renovations)	1. As required and requested, review drawings and plans for construction and extensive renovations to County or Township-owned facilities 2. Suggest improvements as required, to increase accessibility	Ongoing	Ongoing
County of Simcoe's Multi-year Accessibility Plan	To review and update the County's Multi-Year Accessibility Plan	1. Review Multi-Year Accessibility Plan and update 2. Once approved by Council, the plans will be made available to the public (online, in print and in alternative format upon request)	1. April 2. June	Yearly
County of Simcoe Transit	To review and provide recommendations on the new proposed Countywide Transit System	1. As required and requested, review plans to provide accessible bus stops and shelters 2. As required and requested, review accessible features of transit vehicles, routes, services and policies.	Ongoing	Ongoing
Township of Springwater Municipal Election 2018	To ensure a fully accessible election experience that meets the needs of various abilities	1. Operate polling locations within accessible buildings 2. Provide alternative voting methods such as online or by phone 3. Implement policies conducive to an accessible election experience 4. Post-election a review policies, procedures and feedback received	Ongoing	December 2018

Last Updated: April 2018



To: **Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee**

Agenda Section: Matters for Consideration
Division: CAO, Clerk's and Communications
Department: Clerk's Department

Item Number: AAC - 18-005

Meeting Date: April 19, 2018

Subject: County's Accessibility Activity Report (January – March 2018)

Recommendation

That Item AAC 18-005, dated April 19, 2018 regarding the County of Simcoe's Accessibility Program activities for the period of January to March 2018, be received.

Executive Summary

The County of Simcoe's Accessibility Programs are designed to increase awareness of accessibility for persons with disabilities and to coordinate implementation of activities to ensure compliance with accessibility legislation. The County's Accessibility Programs involve a number of activities including training of employees, responding to inquiries from internal departments and residents, overseeing accessibility planning, as well as networking, gathering best practices, and sharing information amongst municipalities within the County and across the province. This Item provides a summary of accessibility activities for the County of Simcoe during the period of January to March 2018.

Background/Analysis/Options

I. Legislative Compliance Activities

Staff Training

Training on the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disability Act, 2005 (AODA) and its Regulations, the Ontario Human Rights Code, and general accessibility and disability awareness to new County of Simcoe employees is completed via the County's online Learning Management System (LMS). All in-person or customized accessibility training that is required is coordinated by the Clerk's Department and the Training Consultant in the Human Resources Department.

All new employee records are kept on file, upon completion of the training as per the legislation's requirements. During the period of January to March 2018, 80 new employees received the training.

Accessibility Planning and Reporting

The County continues to work towards meeting the goals and compliance requirements outlined in the 2013-2018 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan. The County of Simcoe and Township of Springwater staff developed a 2018 Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee Work Plan, which outlines tasks and goals for the Joint Committee related to items in the County of Simcoe and Township of Springwater Multi-Year Accessibility Plans. The AAC Work Plan is used to guide the activities of the Joint Committee in 2018 and is updated regularly as activities are completed.

A comprehensive review and update of the County's Multi-Year Accessibility Plan has been completed. The draft 2019 – 2023 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan is being presented to the Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee at the April 19, 2018 meeting.

II. Networking, Workshops and Gathering of Information on Best Practices

Simcoe County and Area Accessibility Group

The Simcoe County and Area Accessibility Group is comprised of staff from the County of Simcoe, 16 member municipalities, the cities of Barrie and Orillia, and neighbouring municipalities who are responsible for accessibility activities and legislative compliance at their respective organizations. Meetings are generally held on an as needed basis. In between meetings, the group continues to share information via email and telephone as required.

Ontario Network of Accessibility Professionals

The Ontario Network of Accessibility Professionals (ONAP) is a network of accessibility professionals from the broader public sector throughout the province. Membership consists of employees who are associated with the coordinating and reporting of accessibility initiatives for their employers. The mandate of the network is to share information, resources and best practices. Meetings are generally held twice per year and hosted by various municipalities.

In addition to meetings, regular contact with network members continues via email and telephone. Questions and discussions from the group have been related to the types of training provided to employees, the retention of the training records and the replacement of flooring in a public building. Discussions occur and information is shared on implementation of various legislative requirements that will assist the County of Simcoe with moving forward on its accessibility initiatives.

South Western Accessibility Group

The South Western Accessibility Group is a sub-group of the Ontario Network of Accessibility Professionals, consisting primarily of accessibility staff in South Western Ontario. This group also shares information, resources and best practices on matters related to accessibility. Meetings are usually held two to three times per year. The sharing of information amongst members also continues through email and telephone. The Legislative Coordinator and Council and Committee Coordinator participated via conference call on the February 23, 2018 meeting that took place at the University of Waterloo. Members discussed Apps available on smartphones, developed to assist people with disabilities like the Australian App 'Toilet Finder' and the 'Be My Eyes' App and there was discussions around the updating of Multi-Year Plans.

III. Response to Inquiries

The Clerk's Department and Customer Service Department continue to work collaboratively to receive and respond to resident inquiries, requests and feedback regarding the accessibility of County services and facilities. The majority of the inquiries are received and handled directly by the Customer Service Department and forwarded to the Clerk's Department only as needed for additional follow up. The Customer Service Department tracks all contact from County residents. During the period of this activity report, the Customer Service Department logged one accessibility-related inquiry in regards to accessible County trails.

IV. Other Accessibility Activities

Advocacy Letter to the Province

On November 28, 2017, County Council approved the following recommendation from the October 19, 2017 Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee meeting:

"Whereas the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) and its standards set Ontario on a path forward to support achieving the goal of a fully accessible Ontario by 2025;

That the Warden and Chair of the Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee write a letter to the Province of Ontario to advocate for increased infrastructure grants for municipalities to be used to modify social housing units to ensure they are accessible."

Social housing staff drafted the advocacy letter for the Warden and Chair of the Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee to sign. On February 12, 2018 the County received confirmation from the Premier that the advocacy letter had been received and forwarded on to Honourable Peter Milczyn, Minister of Housing and Honourable Tracy MacCharles, Minister Responsible for Accessibility. On March 12, 2018, the County received a response from the Minister of Housing outlining the Province's Long-Term Affordable Housing Strategy released in 2016 which recognizes the need for accessible housing options. The County's advocacy letter and the responses received are attached as Schedule 1 to the subject Item.

Consultation of Accessibility Advisory Committees

At the January 18, 2018 Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee meeting members were advised that the Accessibility Directorate of Ontario was planning on conducting a review of Accessibility Advisory Committees. The County Clerk's Department received the survey via email on January 24, 2018 which was circulated to the Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee members to complete. This is the first component of the consultation process. The goal of this consultation is to learn about the work of Accessibility Advisory Committees, conditions that are required for them to be successful and how the Directorate might support Committees going forward.

Review of Ontario's Accessibility Laws

The Province announced on February 7, 2018 that The Honourable David C. Onley has been appointed to conduct the third review of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA). A copy of the announcement is attached as Schedule 2. The review is anticipated to be completed by the end of 2018.

Review of Employment Standards

In March 2017 the Minister Responsible for Accessibility established the Standards Development Committee to conduct a legislative review of the Employment Standards. The Committee made eight initial recommendations which have been posted for public comment. The initial recommendations can be found attached as Schedule 3 and a brief summary is listed below:

Recommendation 1: Improve and strengthen guidelines - Improved clarity between the AODA's accessible Employment Standards and the Ontario Human Rights Code.

Recommendation 2: Scope and interpretation - definition of "employee" should be added to the AODA or IASR and be consistently applied throughout.

Recommendation 3: Recruitment, general (Section 22) – expand the notice of availability of accommodations throughout recruitment by employers to include notice of availability of accommodation during employment.

Recommendation 4: Recruitment, assessment or selection process (Section 23) - guidelines and best practices should be developed on how to make the recruitment, assessment and selection processes and materials inclusive by design.

Recommendation 5: Notice to successful applicants (Section 23 & 24) - the government should review, strengthen and better promote guidelines and best practices to clarify requirements under sections 23 and 24.

Recommendation 6: Emergency response information (Section 27) – remove the reference to "individualized" emergency response information.

Recommendation 7: Centralized portal for individual accommodation plans (Section 28) – the government should be responsible for a centralized portal for updated resources for individualized accommodation plan processes.

Recommendation 8: Monitoring of return to work processes (Section 29) – the government should monitor the implementation of Section 29, including any gaps and challenges to inform the next review of the accessible Employment Standards.

Age-Friendly Community Update

The Legislative Coordinator attended the Age-Friendly Communities Advisory Committee meeting on March 20, 2018. The Committee received an update on some of the County's current initiatives under the Positive Aging Strategy. One initiative is the promotion of the 2-1-1 service. This initiative will see new branding on County ambulances and rapid response vehicles to demonstrate the differences and appropriate use of calling 2-1-1 vs 9-1-1. The Committee was informed that the Alzheimer Society has provided dementia training for the County's paramedics and a Committee member from Independent Living Services gave an update on the Assistive Device Exchange Website to find, sell or give away equipment.

A goal identified in the County's Positive Aging Strategy under Social Participation is to remove barriers that prevent older adults from participating in their community. As a result, the County's Tourism Department developed a checklist to include in their Simcoe County Tourism Development

Fund application package. The Clerk's Department reviewed the checklist and provided feedback and resources around hosting age-friendly and accessible events throughout the County of Simcoe. As a result, the checklist attached as Schedule 4 was developed and will be included in the application package.

Financial and Resource Implications

There are no financial or resource implications associated with this Item.

Relationship to Corporate Strategic Plan

The County of Simcoe's initiatives regarding accessibility are linked to Strategic Direction E – A Culture of Workplace and Operational Excellence and Strategic Priority 1 which provides direction to continue to advance a workplace culture that promotes efficiencies and effectiveness in fiscal management and service delivery.

Accessibility initiatives are also linked to the 2013-2018 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan. The plan outlines the County's strategy to prevent and remove barriers and meet the requirements of accessibility legislation.

Reference Documents

There are no reference documents.

Attachments

Schedule 1 – Advocacy Letter and Response from Province

Schedule 2 – Province's Announcement of Third Review of the AODA

Schedule 3 – 2018 Review of Employment Standards, Initial

Schedule 4 – Age Friendly and Accessibility Criteria Checklist

Prepared By Jennifer Marshall, Legislative Coordinator

Approvals

John Daly, Director of Legislative Services/County Clerk
Trevor Wilcox, General Manager, Corporate Performance
Mark Aitken, Chief Administrative Officer

Date

March 27, 2018
April 3, 2018
April 3, 2018



County of Simcoe
Office of the Warden
1110 Highway 26,
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simcoe.ca

January 19, 2018

The Honourable Kathleen Wynne
Premier of Ontario
Legislative Building, Room 281
Queen's Park
Toronto, ON M7A 1A1

Dear Premier:

Re: Advocacy for Funding to Improve Accessibility of Social Housing Properties

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) and its standards set Ontario on a path forward to support achieving the goal of a fully accessible Ontario by 2025. The County of Simcoe's Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee, at its October 19th 2017 meeting, determined that in order to meet the goal of accessibility social housing properties will need a significant investment in infrastructure funding.

Following devolution of Social Housing to the Municipal Service Managers, it was identified that there were significant shortfalls in capital reserves for most housing projects. Over the past decade, the Province has assisted in rectifying the shortfall through numerous funding programs. The recent Social Housing Improvement Program (SHIP) and the current Social Housing Apartment Improvement Program (SHAIP) have provided much needed funds to assist in upgrading energy efficiency systems and maintaining critical social housing units. Specifically for public housing that is largely owned by Service Managers, municipal decisions to invest in aging infrastructure has been varied across the province.

With regards to accessibility, many of the housing units in Simcoe County are two-storey walk-up apartments designated for seniors as well as other residents with varying physical limitations. In order to meet the needs of these residents, the County of Simcoe respectfully advocates that funding be made available to improve the accessibility of social housing properties. This type of program would align with the Provincial mandate to support seniors and residents to age in place in our communities greatly increasing the quality of life for many residents.

We hope that the Province will review the possibility of establishing such a program. Simcoe County Housing Corporation and the County of Simcoe would look forward to working with the Province to improve access in social housing buildings, bringing the overall portfolio into alignment with the Province's goal of making Ontario barrier-free.

Yours Sincerely,

A blue ink signature of Gerry Marshall, consisting of a stylized 'G' and 'M'.

Gerry Marshall
Warden

A blue ink signature of Doug Mein, consisting of a stylized 'D' and 'M'.

Doug Mein
Chair, Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee

The Premier of Ontario
Legislative Building, Queen's Park
Toronto, Ontario M7A 1A1



La première ministre de l'Ontario

Édifice de l'Assemblée législative, Queen's Park
Toronto (Ontario) M7A 1A1

February 12, 2018



Mr. Gerry Marshall
Warden
Mr. Doug Mein
Chair, Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee
County of Simcoe
1110 Highway 26
Midhurst, Ontario
L9X 1N6

Dear Messrs. Marshall and Mein:

Thank you for your letter regarding accessibility of social housing properties. I appreciate the time you took to share your input.

I have noted your committee's request for infrastructure funding. As the issue you raised would also interest my colleagues the Honourable Peter Milczyn, Minister of Housing, and the Honourable Tracy MacCharles, Minister Responsible for Accessibility, I have sent copies of your correspondence to them for their review.

Thank you once again for writing. Please accept my best wishes.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kathleen Wynne".

Kathleen Wynne
Premier

c: The Honourable Peter Milczyn
The Honourable Tracy MacCharles

Ministry of Housing**Minister Responsible for the
Poverty Reduction Strategy****Office of the Minister**

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Ontario



18-75963

MAR 12 2018

Mr. Gerry Marshall
 Warden
 Mr. Doug Mein
 Chair, Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee
 County of Simcoe
 1110 Highway 26
 Midhurst, Ontario
 L9X 1N6

Dear Messrs. Marshall and Mein:

The Honourable Kathleen Wynne, Premier of Ontario, has kindly shared with me your letter regarding accessibility of social housing properties.

The Long-Term Affordable Housing Strategy update released in 2016 laid the groundwork for the long-term transformation required to change Ontario's housing and homelessness system into an outcomes-focussed system that better meets the housing needs of all Ontarians. To this end, the province continues to implement programs that support the repair of social housing buildings.

Since its release, our government has been working with our federal counterpart to collaborate and advance Ontario's interests in the finalization and implementation of the National Housing Strategy, which the federal government released in November 2017.

As part of the strategy, the federal government will partner with the provinces to address distinct housing priorities, including affordability, repair and construction. In the strategy there is recognition of the need for accessible housing options. Social housing receiving funds from a program within the strategy, both newly built and under renewal or repair, will have targeted accessibility requirements.

.../2

-2-

The province will continue to work with all government partners to transform the housing and homelessness system to meet the needs of all Ontarians, including those with accessibility challenges.

Sincerely,



Peter Milczyn
Minister

c: The Honourable Kathleen Wynne
Premier of Ontario

The Honorable Tracy MacCharles
Minister Responsible for Accessibility

**NEWS**Accessibility Directorate of Ontario

Province Selects The Honourable David C. Onley to Review Ontario's Accessibility Laws

Ontario Continues to Make Progress toward Becoming a Barrier-free Province
February 7, 2018 9:00 A.M.

Ontario has appointed the Honourable David C. Onley to conduct the third review of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA).

The reviewer will consult with the public and will analyze accessibility progress made in other jurisdictions. The review will be completed by the end of 2018 and will consider the evolution of the current AODA and its goals for an accessible Ontario by 2025 and beyond.

David C. Onley is a former broadcast journalist. He served as the 28th Lieutenant Governor of Ontario from 2007 to 2014, and was the first person with a physical disability in the role. He has consulted on accessibility in the private and public sector, including as Special Advisor on Accessibility. Mr. Onley has been inducted into the Canadian Disability Hall of Fame and was named to the Order of Canada in 2017.

Ensuring that everyone in Ontario can contribute to their community and achieve their goals is part of Ontario's plan to create fairness and opportunity during this period of rapid economic change. The plan includes a higher minimum wage and better working conditions, free tuition for hundreds of thousands of students, easier access to affordable child care, and free prescription drugs for everyone under 25 through the biggest expansion of medicare in a generation.

QUOTES

" The third legislative review of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act is a substantial project and a valuable step in our journey to becoming an accessible province by 2025. Its broad scope will have a significant impact on our work to remove barriers for people with disabilities in our province. The Honourable David C. Onley is a committed accessibility advocate and brings unique experience to the role. We look forward to his recommendations."

- Tracy MacCharles

Minister Responsible for Accessibility

" It is an enormous privilege to be asked to conduct the third review of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, and a pleasure to accept. Since the act's introduction in 2005, Ontario has made great progress towards becoming a functionally accessible province by the target date of 2025. While much remains to be done, I believe the goal is achievable and look forward to making recommendations that will get us there. I thank the Honourable Tracy MacCharles for the confidence she has shown in appointing me and I am eager to begin."

- The Honourable David C. Onley

QUICK FACTS

- The second review of the act was conducted by Mayo Moran, Provost and Vice-Chancellor of Trinity College at the University of Toronto, and was completed in 2015. The government has since implemented a number of Moran's recommendations, including the appointment of a Minister Responsible for Accessibility and the development of new accessibility standards.
- With the passage of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, Ontario became an accessibility leader, establishing standards in key areas of daily life and implementing them within clear timeframes.
- Accessibility standards have been developed in five key areas of daily living: customer service, information and communications, employment, transportation and the design of public spaces.
- The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act includes legislative requirement for a comprehensive review of the effectiveness of the act and its regulations every three years after tabling.
- Ontario is working to develop new accessibility standards for health care and education to remove barriers.

LEARN MORE

- [Find details on the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005.](#)
- [Read about how we're moving towards accessibility through Access Talent: Ontario's Employment Strategy for People with Disabilities.](#)
- [Learn the steps for businesses to comply with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005.](#)

Mahreen Dasoo Minister's Office
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2018 Review of the Employment Standards - Initial Recommendations Report

Draft recommendations from the Employment Standards Development Committee. The committee works to ensure employment is more accessible to people with disabilities.

Background

The purpose of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (AODA) is to achieve an accessible Ontario by 2025 through the development, implementation and enforcement of accessibility standards that apply to the public, private and not-for-profit sectors.

The initial Employment Standards Development Committee (SDC), whose work informed the creation of the accessible Employment Standards, which first came into effect July 1, 2011, established the standards' long-term objective, which is to set out policies, procedures and requirements for the identification, removal and prevention of barriers across all stages of the employment life cycle for persons with disabilities.

Implementation of the standard was staggered based on size and type of organization with the last sector, small organizations (1-49 employees), coming into effect January 1st, 2017. The AODA requires the review of accessibility standards five years after the Standards become law and every five years subsequently to determine whether the standard is working as intended and to allow for adjustments to be made as required.

Under the AODA, the Standards Development Committee must review a standard as follows:

- re-examine the long-term objectives of the standard
- if required, revise the measures, policies, practices, and requirements to be implemented on or before January 1, 2025, and the timeframe for their implementation
- develop another proposed standard containing modifications or additions that the SDC deems advisable for public comment
- make such changes it considers advisable to the proposed accessibility standard based on comments received and make recommendations to the Minister

In March of 2017, the Minister Responsible for Accessibility established the Standards Development Committee to undertake the legislated review of the Employment Standards.

The Standards Development Committee is comprised of representatives invited by the Minister Responsible for Accessibility to undertake a legislated review of the accessible Employment Standards. The members represent the disability community and the sectors of obligated organizations (broader public sector, private sector). In addition, non-voting members from the Accessibility Directorate of Ontario and its partner ministry (Ministry of Labour) also sit on the SDC.

The Minister also wrote to the SDC Chair to provide terms of reference and a mandate letter for the review. The SDC was asked to focus the review on requirements for sectors that have been in effect for more than 24 months, as well as to identify any gaps that may remain in the standards.

The SDC was asked to take into account the development of “Access Talent: Ontario’s Employment Strategy for People with Disabilities.” The strategy has multiple facets including helping more people with disabilities connect to job opportunities and more businesses to connect to a talented and underutilized labour pool. The strategy is also engaging employers as active partners in breaking down employment barriers for people with disabilities and promoting inclusive workplaces.

The employment strategy complements the regulatory foundation of the accessible Employment Standards. Any considerations pertaining to the advancement of employment opportunities for persons with disabilities will continue to align with discussions around the strategy.

The SDC has met its legislated obligations by undertaking a rigorous review of the current Employment Standards, including their long-term objective and all the requirements that obligated organizations must follow. The following report is the SDC’s proposed direction on the Employment Standards. Where the SDC is proposing regulatory amendments or alternative approaches, an explanation of the proposed change is provided.

As required under the AODA, the SDC is submitting its report on initial proposed Employment Standards to be made available for public comment. Following the public posting period, the SDC will make such changes it considers advisable to the proposed Standards, based on public feedback received and submit its final proposed Standard to the Minister Responsible for Accessibility.

Introduction: Summary of SDC recommendations

This section of the document provides a quick reference to the recommendation made for each item of discussion. Detailed explanations of how the SDC arrived at each recommendation are contained at the end of the document, in the section titled “Initial Recommendations for Public Comment.” The title of each section here contains a hyperlink to the full recommendation providing further detail.

The SDC recognizes the importance and priority of reducing barriers and accordingly the timing of each regulatory recommendation should be implemented considering the timing of other changes to the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation, impact on the disability community, business community and obligated organizations. The recommendations below should be read with the above considerations in mind.

Long-term objective

The AODA requires Standards Development Committees to establish long-term objectives to inform the development of accessibility standards. During a review the SDC is required to re-examine the long-term accessibility objectives. Long-term objectives do not appear in Standards. They are presented in guidelines and communications materials.

The establishment of long-term objectives at the beginning of the standards development process and during the review process helps guide and inform Standards Development Committees in determining which accessibility requirements will help achieve the identified goals. Long-Term Objectives are the intended outcome of the Standards.

The initial long term objective of the accessible Employment Standards was described as follows:

“The long term objective of this initial proposed employment accessibility standard is to set out policies, procedures and requirements for the identification, removal and prevention of barriers across all stages of the employment life cycle for persons with disabilities.”

The SDC recommends a new long term objective:

“The long term objective of the Employment Standards is to identify, remove and prevent barriers across all stages of the employment life cycle for persons with disabilities by 2025.”

SDC members believe the new objective more clearly captures the intended outcome of the accessible Employment Standards. However, the SDC agreed to use the consultation period following the posting of this report to seek public comment on whether the objective fully supports the AODA's goal of an accessible Ontario by 2025.

Improved clarity with the Ontario Human Rights Code

Recommendation 1: Improve and strengthen guidelines

Improved clarity between the AODA's accessible Employment Standards and the Ontario Human Rights Code's duty to accommodate is required.

The SDC recommends the government and the Ontario Human Rights Commission review and strengthen guidelines and clarification for employers with regard to the differences between Ontario Human Rights Code and the AODA's Employment Standards.

Note: By “review” the Committee intends the government and the OHRC to explore the causes of confusion regarding the relationship between the AODA and the Ontario Human Rights Code as a first step.

Timing:

To be completed within two years of the government accepting the recommendation.

Scope and interpretation

Recommendation 2: Scope and interpretation (Section 20)

The SDC believes a gap exists because a definition of “employee” is not included in the AODA and Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR). The SDC recommends a definition of “employee” should be added to the AODA or IASR and be consistently applied throughout. This definition should be consistent with the intent and purpose of the AODA and should be based on the employer–employee relationship.

Note: The SDC intends that any definition of employee added to the AODA or IASR align with and consider existing employment legislation.

Timing:

The SDC recommends the definition should be implemented 12 months from effective date.

Recruitment, assessment and selection**Recommendation 3: Recruitment, general (Section 22)**

In order to fully inform job applicants, the SDC recommends Section 22, notice of availability of accommodations throughout recruitment by employers, should be expanded to include notice of availability of accommodation during employment.

The policy intent of this recommendation is to amend Section 22 notice, and not to expand other requirements of the accessible Employment Standards. The rationale of the recommendation is that this provides applicants better awareness of their right to accommodation during the employment lifecycle. The requirement to accommodate throughout employment under the Ontario Human Rights Code may currently not be clear.

Timing:

The change of expanded notice should be implemented 12 months from effective date.

The Committee recognizes the impact this change may have on the disability community, and the impact it may have on employers who may need to review their practices to ensure compliance with this existing obligation.

Recommendation 4: Recruitment, assessment or selection process (Section 23)

The SDC recommends guidelines and best practices should be developed on how to make the recruitment, assessment and selection processes and materials inclusive by design.

Some employers may need additional resources (e.g. how to have conversations with candidates/employees during the recruitment, assessment and selection processes). Government should provide the materials.

Timing:

To be completed within two years of the government accepting the recommendation.

Recommendation 5: Notice to successful applicants (Section 23 & 24)

Too often employers and candidates do not know when or how to have open and successful conversations to accommodate an individual's needs.

In order to address this gap the SDC recommends the government should review, strengthen and better promote guidelines and best practices to clarify requirements under sections 23 and 24.

Timing:

To be completed within two years of the government accepting the recommendation.

Workplace emergency response information**Recommendation 6: Emergency response information (Section 27)**

The desired outcome of Section 27 is to ensure accessible emergency response information is available to all employees with disabilities in accessible formats, upon request.

Section 27 makes references to “individualized” emergency response information. The SDC believes the use of the word “individualized” may result in obligated organizations unnecessarily developing individualized emergency response plans. The SDC recommends the word “individualized” be removed from Section 27.

Questions of individualized emergency plans and emergency accommodations needs are best addressed as part of Section 28 requirements for individualized accommodation plans.

Recommendation Note: If the word “individualized” is removed from Section 27, consequential amendments will need to be made to Section 28(3).

Timing:

The change should be implemented 12 months from effective date.

Individualized accommodation plans**Recommendation 7: Centralized portal for individual accommodation plans (Section 28)**

The tools and resources that exist for individual accommodation plans are not easy to find and use outdated language. The SDC recommends the government should be responsible for a centralized portal for updated resources for individualized accommodation plan processes.

Note: The intent of the recommendation is that the tools and resources align with the OHRC's policies on the procedural duty to accommodate. In addition, the OHRC should be consulted to ensure harmonization.

Timing:

To be completed within two years of the government accepting the recommendation.

Return to work**Recommendation 8: Monitoring of return to work processes (Section 29)**

The Committee believes the desired outcome of this section is that employers create processes that better recognize the needs of persons returning to work. The return to work processes under other legislation are constantly evolving, so more information, research and public feedback may be required. The government should monitor the implementation of Section 29,

including any gaps and challenges to inform the next review of the accessible Employment Standards.

Timing:

Monitoring to begin immediately upon the government accepting recommendation.

Initial recommendations for public comment**Overview**

Barriers to accessible employment can significantly affect the lives of people with disabilities, as employment is an integral factor to financial independence, personal satisfaction, involvement in the community, and more broadly, the economy. The objective of the Employment Standards, established in 2011 as part of the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR) under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (AODA) is to provide for accessibility across all stages of the employment life cycle, including recruitment, workplace accommodation, performance management, career development and advancement and return to work processes.

The original Employment SDC, formed in 2007, whose work informed the creation of the Employment Standards, established its long-term objective “to set out policies, procedures and requirements for the identification, removal and prevention of barriers across all stages of the employment life cycle for persons with disabilities.”

As prescribed in legislation, the Minister wrote to the SDC Chair to undertake specific work during the Employment Standards Review outlined in a mandate letter. This included:

1. re-examine the long-term objectives of the Standards;
2. if required, revise the measures, policies, practices and requirements to be implemented on or before January 1, 2025, and the timeframe for their implementation;
3. develop another proposed accessibility Standards containing modifications or additions that the SDC deems advisable for public comment; and
4. make such changes it considers advisable to the proposed accessibility Standards based on comments received and make recommendations for consideration.

Under this framework, the Minister asked that the review focus on requirements for sectors that were in effect for more than 24 months, as well as to identify any gaps that may remain in the standards, and to consider all possible solutions and tactics, including non-regulatory approaches. The review kicked off during the last year of implementation of the Standard, effective for small organizations January 1st, 2017. Potential focus areas for the review were based on pre-consultation feedback and included:

- clarity of requirements for individual accommodation plans
- desire for clear guidance materials
- disclosure of disability as activation for support and requirements to apply

Each topic covered by the SDC included meaningful discussions benefitting from the diverse viewpoints and knowledge that the members and subject matter experts brought with them. In an effort to ensure a broad range of input, members worked first to identify themes, gaps and

relevant issues associated with each topic under review. After each meeting members sought feedback from their respective communities and networks to bring back and share with the SDC at the following meeting. Input from committee networks and experts informed voting on recommended changes.

The SDC recognized early in the process that:

- full implementation of the standard for organizations was as recent as January 2017 for small organizations
- the Employment Standards are relatively new and a number of requirements have only just been implemented. In these cases, the effectiveness of the requirement in question was difficult to measure due to a lack of evidence based on early implementation of the Employment Standards

The SDC acknowledged that great strides have taken place in achieving accessible employment in Ontario, but there is still work to do. The SDC's discussions got to the core of how best to ensure persons with disabilities have accessible recruitment and employment experiences.

Throughout the SDC's discussions, members brought insightful feedback from their networks, organizations and communities, including lived experience. Through the consultation period following the posting of this report, the SDC hopes to receive feedback from an even wider group of persons with disabilities, obligated organizations, and the general public.

The recommendations voted on by the SDC included proposed regulatory changes and non-regulatory solutions. In some cases, the SDC decided to recommend no changes at this time, but provided commentary on the issue in question for future consideration.

Initial recommendations

The Employment Standards apply to paid employment, including but not limited to, full-time, part-time, apprenticeships and seasonal employment. The Standards set out requirements to help obligated organizations (for example, government, business and not-for-profit) remove employment barriers to create workplaces that are accessible and inclusive, allowing employees to reach their full potential. Since 2011 obligated organizations have been working to implement the requirements designed to achieve the long-term objective of the Employment Standards.

The following is the Employment Standards Development Committee's initial advice and recommendations on the initial proposed Employment Standards, itemized and organized by focus area.

Improved clarity with the Ontario Human Rights Code

Recommendation 1: Improve and strengthen guidelines (accessible Employment Standards and the Ontario Human Rights Code)

Improved clarity between the AODA's Employment Standards and the Ontario Human Rights Code's duty to accommodate is required. The SDC recommends the government and the Ontario Human Rights Commission (OHRC) review and strengthen guidelines and clarification

for employers with regard to the differences between the Ontario Human Rights Code and the AODA's Employment Standards.

Note: By "review" the Committee intends the government and the OHRC explore the causes of confusion regarding the relationship between the AODA and the Ontario Human Rights Code as a first step.

The SDC recognized clarity between the accessible Employment Standards and the Ontario Human Rights Code as a priority issue and chose to make it the first recommendation accordingly.

The Ontario Human Rights Code provides and protects for equal rights and opportunities, and freedom from discrimination for all persons, including disability. The Code protects rights in five social areas: accommodation (housing); contracts; employment; goods, services and facilities; and membership in unions, trade or professional associations.

In contrast, the Employment Standard of the AODA is a regulation that obligates employers to meet certain requirements for the purpose of ensuring accessibility throughout the employment life cycle. Where the Ontario Human Rights Code and other employment laws come into conflict, the Code will prevail.

The SDC received a presentation from the Ontario Human Rights Commission during SDC orientation and also received a presentation clarifying the differences between the Ontario Human Rights Code and the accessible Employment Standards.

The SDC engaged in discussions about the Ontario Human Rights Code (the Code) and its relationship to the Employment Standards, and SDC members sought feedback from their networks. During its fifth meeting, the SDC engaged in a dialogue with a representative from the Ontario Human Rights Commission. SDC members asked questions regarding outreach, education, training and the relationship between the accessible Employment Standards and the Ontario Human Rights Code. SDC members and the OHRC representative discussed confusion from the public regarding the relationship between the Code and the accessible Employment Standards. SDC members also raised questions about the Human Rights Tribunal of Ontario process.

This tribunal tasked with hearing complaints under the Ontario Human Rights Code. The tribunal has the power to grant damages and specific performance to remedy discriminatory acts.

Disability is the most cited ground of discrimination in complaints to the tribunal, making up 50 per cent of all complaints. Employment is the social area most cited by complaints, accounting for 70 per cent of all cited social areas (Social Justice Tribunal Ontario Annual Report).

Throughout their discussion, SDC members acknowledged that the IASR and the Employment Standards do not replace or affect legal rights or obligations that arise under the Ontario Human Rights Code and other laws relating to the accommodation of people with disabilities. The SDC believed the Human Rights Code seeks to guarantee an outcome (rights, employee accommodation) while the accessible Employment Standards require processes and procedures to assist in achieving that outcome.

The SDC also recognized that the Code or other applicable legislation may require additional accommodation measures that go beyond or are different from the standards established by the regulations of the AODA.

In their discussion the SDC concluded there is ultimately still confusion for organizations when they are considering their obligations under the accessible Employment Standards of the AODA and the Ontario Human Rights Code.

The SDC discussed the importance of clarity for employers interpreting the two laws. The SDC also discussed feedback from their networks. The tendency of networks (employers) was to be very familiar with the Code while not necessarily as familiar with their Employment Standards obligations.

The SDC expressed concern about frontline managers understanding the difference between the two laws or small organizations where one person may have responsibility for the Code, the Employment Standards and all other employment law compliance. The SDC expressed a desire in having employers understand how the Employment Standards complement the Ontario Human Rights Code.

Finally, the SDC would like to hear feedback during the public comment period on this issue and the initial recommendation.

Scope and interpretation

Recommendation 2: Scope and interpretation (Section 20)

The SDC believes a gap exists because a definition of “employee” is not included in the AODA and Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR). The SDC recommends a definition of “employee” should be added to the AODA or IASR and be consistently applied throughout.

This definition should be consistent with the intent and purpose of the AODA and should be based on the employer–employee relationship.

Note: The SDC intends that any definition of employee added to the AODA or IASR harmonize with existing employment legislation.

The Employment Standard establishes scope and application in Section 20. The Standard applies to employees and does not apply to volunteers or other non-paid individuals. The term employee is not defined in the AODA or Employment Standards. The SDC considered both the definition of the term “employee” in the Standards and the application of the Standards to volunteers.

The definition of “Employee” in the Employment Standards

The term “employee” is not defined in the AODA or in the Employment Standards. The SDC considered whether this is a potential gap. Having one or more employees is the threshold which determines an organization's requirement to comply with the AODA and its standards. It is not always clear to organizations what the term “employee” means in the context of the AODA, and the Employment Standards. The SDC received examples and discussed the definition of employee in other similar employment legislation. The Ministry of Labour provided

examples of the definition of employees from employment, occupational health and safety legislation.

The SDC recommends defining the term “employee” in the AODA or Employment Standards as this may provide greater clarity for organizations. Employee can be a term that may or may not encompass roles such as unpaid interns or contractors. The SDC also considered the need for the definition to be consistently applied throughout the IASR.

Application of the standard to volunteers

The SDC considered broadening the scope and application of the Employment Standards to volunteers. A vote was held but the motion did not pass. A significant discussion was held on this point.

The SDC heard evidence that 13.3 million people—accounting for 47% of Canadians aged 15 and over—did volunteer work in 2010. Volunteers devoted almost 2.07 billion hours to their volunteer activities, a volume of work that is equivalent to just under 1.1 million full-time jobs (Statistics Canada, 2010). The SDC also considered how volunteers may require accommodation and training in their duties.

The SDC raised concerns about the practicality of mirroring accessible Employment Standards requirements for volunteers when volunteer relationships do not always mirror employment relationships.

The SDC recognized the makeup of persons who volunteer is dynamic and fluid with some volunteer relationships lasting only a few hours (e.g. volunteering in a parade). Training of volunteers was a central part of the discussion.

The SDC voiced concern about adding regulatory burden to organizations (usually not for profit) that may rely on volunteer work. SDC members raised concerns about the implication of new training requirements for organizations that may have small staff but a very large number of volunteers being. The SDC also considered that the proposed Employment Standards under the Accessibility for Manitobans Act do not cover volunteers or unpaid workers.

It was also brought to the attention of the SDC that policy guidelines for the Integrated Accessibility Standards suggests that organizations may want to apply the Employment Standards requirements to volunteers as a best practice. The Guide to the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation provides the following regarding application of the Employment Standards to employees:

“The Employment Standard applies to paid employees. This includes, but is not limited to, full-time, part-time, paid apprenticeships and seasonal employment.”

Recruitment, general

Recommendation 3: Recruitment, general (Section 22)

In order to fully inform job applicants, Section 22 notice regarding availability of accommodations throughout recruitment by employers, should be expanded to include notice of availability of accommodation during employment.

The policy intent is to amend Section 22 notice and not to expand other requirements of the Employment Standards.

The SDC believes this will provide applicants better awareness, of their right to accommodation in a position they are considering applying for, or applying for. Current statements may be incomplete.

Section 22 of the accessible Employment Standards requires that every employer notify its employees and the public about the availability of accommodation for applicants with disabilities in its recruitment processes. Organizations are required to provide notice of availability of accommodations under the accessible Employment Standards at three phases (recruitment, selection, and notice to successful applicants). It is important to note employers have a duty to accommodate under the Ontario Human Rights Code.

The SDC considered that including notice of accommodation in job advertisements specifically referring to the recruitment stage would lead applicants to believe accommodation may only be available at the recruitment stage.

SDC members remarked that applicants may feel discouraged in applying to positions if they believed accommodations are only available during recruitment. The SDC discussed feedback from their networks and concluded that some persons with disabilities may not apply to jobs that do not give notice that accommodation is available throughout the entire employment relationship.

The SDC also noted the importance of accessible notice and accessible job board websites. For example the SDC discussed inaccessible job ads and job application software. SDC members raised the potential of software having embedded algorithmic bias which discriminates against persons with disabilities. SDC members recognized the importance of having these systems remove bias as they may scan out qualified candidates. The SDC suggested that the Standards Development Committee which is tasked with developing the Information and Communications standards under the AODA consider this issue.

The SDC believes that expanding the requirement to include the notice that accommodation is available throughout the employment experience would create a minimal burden to business while providing important awareness to job applicants – as the requirement to accommodate is already provided under the Ontario Human Rights Code.

Recruitment, assessment or selection process

Recommendation 4: Recruitment, assessment or selection process (Section 23)

The SDC recommends that guidelines and best practices should be developed on how to make the recruitment, assessment and selection processes and materials inclusive by design.

Some employers may need additional resources (e.g. how to have conversations with candidates/employees during the recruitment, assessment and selection processes). Government should provide the materials.

Section 23(1) of the Employment Standards require that during a recruitment process, an employer shall notify job applicants, when they are individually selected to participate in an

assessment or selection process, that accommodations are available upon request in relation to the materials or processes to be used.

Section 23(2) requires that if a selected applicant requests accommodation the employer shall consult with the applicant and provide or arrange for the provision of a suitable accommodation in a manner that takes into account the applicant's accessibility needs due to disability.

When considering a recommendation, the SDC discussed how disclosure of disability may affect the consultation process between applicant and employer. The SDC recognized that some organizations and front line managers may not have the required training, comfort or familiarity to have productive conversations with applicants and/or employees with disabilities. The SDC noted the difficulty and potential discomfort for both candidates and employers in initiating discussions.

The intent of the SDC's recommendation is that guidance is provided to assist employers in designing accessible recruitment, assessment, and selection materials, as well as tools and processes to ensure accessibility from the beginning.

The SDC did not choose to propose a regulatory recommendation to address this gap because the committee felt the issue primarily dealt with attitudinal bias that requires a broader cultural shift beyond regulation (e.g., guidance, education and awareness).

Notice to successful applicants

Recommendation 5: Notice to successful applicants (Section 23 & 24)

Too often employers and candidates do not know when or how to have open and successful conversations to accommodate an individual's needs. In order to address this gap the SDC recommends the government should review, strengthen and better promote guidelines and best practices to clarify requirements under sections 23 and 24.

Section 24 of the accessible Employment Standards require every employer, when making offers of employment, to notify the successful applicant of its policies for accommodating employees with disabilities.

When reviewing Section 24, the SDC revisited the issue of disclosure in both Section 23 and 24 jointly. The SDC recognized that in order to receive accommodation a person with a disability may have to disclose this information to the employer themselves, particularly in the circumstances of disabilities that are not readily or easily identifiable. Disclosure and employer's awareness of a need for accommodation is the trigger which brings about accommodation. Without disclosure employers may not be aware of the need to accommodate. On the other side of employee disclosure, SDC members pointed out the fear of discrimination from employers when persons with disabilities disclose their need for accommodation. SDC members recognized that some persons with disabilities may feel they will not be treated equally or discriminated against when disclosing their need.

The SDC also discussed the desire of employers to avoid violating applicant rights under the Ontario Human Rights Code.

The SDC also acknowledged one of the challenges for persons with disabilities and organizations is that an applicant or employee may not know what accommodations they need in their work environment, or how to ask for them. The SDC believed that guidance was needed for both employers and applicants/employees in having these conversations with employers. The SDC believes current guidance focuses exclusively on employer obligations.

Workplace emergency response information

Recommendation 6: Workplace emergency response information (Section 27)

The desired outcome of Section 27 is to ensure accessible emergency response information is available to all employees with disabilities in accessible formats, upon request.

Section 27 makes references to “individualized” emergency response information. The SDC believes the use of the word “individualized” may result in obligated organizations unnecessarily developing individualized emergency response plans. The SDC recommends the word “individualized” be removed from Section 27.

Questions of individualized emergency plans and emergency accommodations needs are best addressed as part of Section 28 requirements for individualized accommodation plans.

Recommendation note: If the word “individualized” is removed from Section 27, consequential amendments will need to be made to Section 28(3).

Under Section 27 of the Employment Standards employers are required to provide individualized workplace emergency response information under the following conditions:

- when the employee’s disability is such that the information is necessary; and
- the employer is aware of the need for accommodation because of the employee’s disability.

Employers shall provide the information required under this section as soon as practicable after the employer becomes aware of the need for accommodation due to the employee’s disability.

Before developing a recommendation for Section 27 of the Employment Standards, the SDC requested to hear from a first responder organization, and/or experts with practical experience and knowledge in emergency situations.

The SDC heard a presentation provided by a Deputy Fire Chief from the City of Toronto. The SDC was informed about the role of firefighters and the requirements of fire safety plans under the Ontario Fire Code. The presenter explained that the role of firefighters is not to evacuate buildings but rather provide rescue services (when necessary) and to put out fires.

The presenter explained that fire safety plans vary greatly between buildings and depend on the age, nature of type of facility. The presenter also clarified that fire safety plans are the responsibility of the owner of the building. The definition of owner includes the registered owner but also anyone having care or control of any part of the property, so it may encompass tenants.

The presenter also provided that the best practice for fire safety plans is to keep a list of persons with disabilities (this is not required by the Fire Code) and to have a dedicated team to

manage plans, particularly in situations where the owner or tenant has multiple buildings. The presenter also told the SDC the Fire Code does not require individual plans for persons with disabilities.

The SDC engaged in a dialogue with the presenter and continued discussion and questions. In their discussion the SDC noted confusion between the term “information” and the term “plan.” The SDC also viewed guidance material for Section 27 (e.g., sample workplace emergency information) and concluded the guidance material is likely to lead organizations and employers to create plans instead of information.

For example the SDC considered individualized accommodation plans, specifically, section 28(3)(b) which states “if required include individualized workplace emergency response information, as described in section 27.” The SDC considered the potential redundancy of organizations mistakenly creating individual plans instead of information under Section 27. The SDC expressed a desire for more clarity.

The SDC also reviewed feedback from their networks that the requirement for individualized emergency response information may be onerous in multi-facility work arrangements where one individual may work in several offices or locations (for example hospitals, university campuses).

Despite this complexity, the SDC felt safety was the highest priority and organizations must meet their obligated requirements under the Employment Standards and safety standards regardless of their size or multiple work locations.

The SDC continued to have a discussion about compliance with the requirement and explained even with high compliance rates concerns remained about whether Section 27 was achieving the intended outcome. SDC members believed more clarity was required in the Employment Standards to achieve this outcome.

Individualized accommodation plans

Recommendation 7: Centralized portal for individual accommodation plans (Section 28)

The tools and resources that exist are not easy to find and use out-dated language. The SDC recommends the government should be responsible for a centralized portal for updated resources for individualized accommodation plan processes.

Note: The intent of the recommendation is that the tools and resources align with the OHRC’s policies on the procedural duty to accommodate. In addition, the OHRC should be consulted to ensure harmonization.

Section 28 of the accessible Employment Standards requires employers, other than employers that are small organizations (as defined by the IASR), to develop and have in place a written process for the development of documented individual accommodation plans for employees with disabilities.

Section 28(2) lays out the process for the development of a plan which must include the following elements:

1. The manner in which an employee requesting accommodation can participate in the development of the individual accommodation plan.
2. The means by which the employee is assessed on an individual basis.
3. The manner in which the employer can request an evaluation by an outside medical or other expert, at the employer's expense, to determine if and how accommodation can be achieved.
4. The manner in which the employee can request the participation of a representative from their bargaining agent, where the employee is represented by a bargaining agent, or other representative from the workplace, where the employee is not represented by a bargaining agent, in the development of the accommodation plan.
5. The steps taken to protect the privacy of the employee's personal information.
6. The frequency with which the individual accommodation plan will be reviewed and updated and the manner in which it will be done.
7. If an individual accommodation plan is denied, the manner in which the reasons for the denial will be provided to the employee.
8. The means of providing the individual accommodation plan in a format that takes into account the employee's accessibility needs due to disability

To start their discussion the SDC reviewed the policy intent of Section 28 which states "individual accommodation plans under the Employment Standards are a formal way of recording and reviewing the workplace-related accommodations that an employer will provide to an employee with a disability. Accommodation plans are living documents. They are required to be reviewed and updated so that they remain effective and up-to-date."

The SDC considered both the requirement for individualized accommodation plans and the elements of the plan. The SDC also revisited their discussion under Section 27 and emergency response information. More broadly, the SDC noted the importance of recognizing connections between each requirement in the Employment Standards and the elements of the individualized accommodation plan (for e.g., information regarding accessible formats). The SDC acknowledged the individualized accommodation plan requires a robust and meaningful discussion between employer and employee about individual needs. The SDC once again revisited the theme of disclosure as a trigger for accommodation. The SDC continued to discuss the importance of organizations having a clear understanding of their obligations.

The SDC reflected on whether the distinction between individualized accommodation plans and the duty to accommodate under the Ontario Human Rights Code is clear to employers. Based on their stakeholder feedback SDC felt there may still be a lack of clarity for organizations in meeting their requirements under Section 28.

In order to help understand implementation, the SDC reviewed guidelines and resources that provided templates meant for organizations and employers. After discussion and reviewing materials, the SDC expressed a desire for guidelines that were written in plain language, inclusive and up-to-date. The SDC also discussed the value of up-to-date resources that can be found more easily than current materials. The SDC believes best practices evolve frequently and resources should remain up-to-date and centralized to reflect this evolution.

The SDC considered combining other Employment Standards requirements into individualized accommodation plans. Namely, the SDC reflected on performance management, (S.30) career development/advancement (S.31) and redeployment (S.32). The SDC concluded there is value

in keeping these requirements separate. (See below for a discussion on Sections 30, 31 and 32.)

With respect to performance management, the SDC commented that a separate section on performance management, such as the current one, outside the individual accommodation plan, provides an opportunity for the employer and employee to identify accommodations or accommodation needs that may have not been apparent to employee or employee before.

Return to work process

Recommendation 8: Monitoring implementation of return to work processes (Section 29)

The Committee believes the desired outcome of Section 29 is that employers create processes that better recognize the needs of persons returning to work. The return to work processes under other legislation are constantly evolving, so more information, research and public feedback may be required. The government should monitor the implementation of Section 29, including any gaps and challenges to inform the next review of the accessible Employment Standards.

Section 29 of the accessible Employment Standards requires every employer, other than small organizations, to develop and have in place a return to work process for its employees who have been absent from work due to a disability and require disability-related accommodations in order to return to work. Employers are also required to keep the process up-to-date, outline the steps the employer will take to facilitate the return of the employee and use documented individual accommodation plans as part of the process.

Section 29(3) states “The return to work process referenced in this section does not replace or override any other return to work process created by or under any other statute”.

The SDC considered the intent of the requirement. The intent of the requirement is that employers will have in place a documented process for supporting employees who return to work after being away for reasons related to their disabilities. If an individual’s illness or injury is covered by the return to work provisions of another piece of legislation, then the SDC suggested that the other Act’s return to work process should apply.

The SDC discussed potential confusion and burden for employers, as obligated organizations may have to maintain and develop different processes or forms for different return to work situations. The SDC discussed their stakeholder feedback and confidential stakeholder feedback the Accessibility Directorate had gathered. The SDC recognized that most employers already have a return to work process in place and are familiar with other return to work legislation and related requirements and processes.

The Committee considered that return to work processes under other legislation have key differences relating to insurance and compensation. The Committee also recognized the upcoming work of organizations on making unified return to work documents.

Note for Sections 30, 31 and 32

The SDC did not provide regulatory recommendations for Section 30, 31 and 32. However the SDC had significant discussions on these requirements. The SDC provided the following comment:

“One of the aims of the regulation is culture change, thinking about diversity and inclusion by design. Members of the community are facing barriers today and it can be disheartening for them to be told to wait for culture change. This reality is why regulatory change is often pushed for. The goal is to make things better, not to stop things.”

The SDC was also hesitant in folding additional requirements into individual accommodation plans because Section 28 currently does not apply to small employers. Employment Standards requirements for Section 30 (performance management), 31 (career development) and 32 (redeployment) apply to all employers who use those practices – regardless of the number of employees the organization employs. The SDC noted the importance of accessible performance, career development and redeployment and also spoke at length about a broader cultural change that ensures persons with disabilities have opportunities to advance in their careers based on merit and without discrimination.

The Committee also discussed the potential for discrimination in career development and performance management. The Committee agreed on the importance in open and honest discussion between employer and employee in making sure employers meet accommodation needs. Strong communication may help ensure performance or career development can be assessed for employees fairly and on merit.

Conclusion

The Committee looks forward to the public feedback that will follow the posting of these initial recommendations, and to considering this input before final recommendations are made.

Age-Friendly and Accessibility Criteria

The County of Simcoe endeavours to identify, remove and prevent barriers to people with disabilities to ensure that everyone has access to the County's goods, services, and facilities. We respectfully request that recipients of Simcoe County Tourism Development Fund (SCTDF) ensure that their event/project/site are designed with accessibility in mind.

Which of the following accessible features will you provide at your event?

- ☐ **Accessible Parking Spaces** – placed close to venue entries and exits, accessible toilets, pay stations and lifts/ramps.
- ☐ **Paths of Travel** – provide wide, even, slip-resistant paths, without steps or barriers.
- ☐ **Stages and Seating** – provide a ramp for your stage, and ensure it's visible for someone watching from accessible seating or from a wheelchair.
- ☐ **Food Services and Public Eating Areas** – design food areas so that someone who needs mobility support can easily navigate them. Provide options for people using wheeled mobility devices.
- ☐ **Washrooms and Temporary Toilets** – provide accessible toilets or washrooms at ground level, away from crowds and sound systems.
- ☐ **Rest areas and rain/wind/sun shelters** – offer quiet areas and weather shelters.
- ☐ **Signs** – provide high-contrast signs in high and low positions, and make sure signs use sans serif fonts that are readable in all light conditions.
- ☐ **Support Persons** – can go wherever the person they support goes. Admission fees posted in the same place where general admission information is found.
- ☐ **Service Animals** – can accompany a person with a disability to all areas available to the public.
- ☐ **Training Staff and Volunteers** – train staff and volunteers on your festival's accessibility features.
- ☐ **Promote your Festival** – tell people about your accessibility features in the same places you promote your festival.
- ☐ **Ask for Feedback** – collect feedback before, during, and after the festival

See the [Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act \[AODA\]](#) for more information, or reference the [Festival & Events Accessibility Guide](#) when planning your event.

See additional resources [CNIB Clear print Accessibility Guidelines](#)



To: **Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee**

Agenda Section: Matters for Consideration
Division: CAO, Clerk's and Communications
Department: Clerk's Department

Item Number: AAC - 18-006

Meeting Date: April 19, 2018

Subject: Draft County of Simcoe 2019 – 2023 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

Recommendation

That Item AAC 18-006, dated April 19, 2018 regarding the Draft County of Simcoe 2019-2023 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan be received; and

That subject to any modifications proposed by the Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee, that the County of Simcoe 2019 – 2023 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan, attached as Schedule 1 to Item AAC 18-006, be approved.

Executive Summary

The draft 2019 – 2023 Multi-year Accessibility Plan attached has been prepared to meet the planning requirements of the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation. The plan outlines the County of Simcoe's strategy for identifying, removing and preventing barriers for persons with disabilities and meeting its requirements under the Regulation.

Background/Analysis/Options

The County of Simcoe is required under Section 4 (1) of the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR) to establish, implement, maintain and document a multi-year accessibility plan that outlines the County's strategy to prevent and remove barriers and meet its requirements under the Regulation.

Under the IASR the County is also required to review and update the plan at least once every five years in consultation with persons with disabilities and the Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee. Once approved by County Council the plan shall be posted on the website and provided in an accessible format upon request. The IASR requires the County to prepare an annual status report on the progress of the measures taken to implement the strategy outlined in the multi-year accessibility plan.

The draft 2019 – 2023 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan is attached as Schedule 1 to Item AAC 18-006. Staff are requesting approval of the plan, subject to any modifications proposed by the Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee. Following County Council's approval of the plan, staff will work with Corporate Communications Department to prepare a final version of the document with appropriate corporate branding and formatting. Staff will post the plan on the public website and internal Intranet. The document will be made available in alternate format, upon request.

Schedule 2 provides an outline of

Financial and Resource Implications

Financial implications as a result of complying with provincial legislation will be provided for within the appropriate annual budgets.

Relationship to Corporate Strategic Plan

The County of Simcoe's initiatives regarding accessibility are tied to Strategic Direction E – A Culture of Workplace and Operational Excellence and Strategic Priority 1 which provides direction to continue to advance a workplace culture that promotes efficiencies and effectiveness in fiscal management and service delivery.

Reference Documents

There are no reference documents associated with this Item.

Attachments

Schedule 1 – Draft 2019 – 2023 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

Prepared By Jennifer Marshall, Legislative Coordinator

Approvals

John Daly, Director of Legislative Services and County Clerk
Trevor Wilcox, General Manager, Corporate Performance
Mark Aitken, Chief Administrative Officer

Date

April 3, 2018
April 9, 2018
April 9, 2018

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Message from CAO Mark Aitken

I am pleased to present the County of Simcoe's Multi-Year Accessibility Plan for 2019-2023. This plan demonstrates the County's ongoing commitment to enhancing our programs, services and facilities to ensure that they remain accessible and inclusive to residents, employees, and visitors. The plan highlights some of our many accomplishments as well as future strategies to meet our goals and legislative standards.

County Council is committed to these goals, and among other activities, makes annual proclamations to recognize the International Day of Persons with Disabilities and National Accessibility Awareness Week. In conjunction with these proclamations, social media efforts are also deployed to promote and enhance awareness and knowledge of accessibility.

Through consultation with our Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee, the County has made great progress to incorporate accessible features when completing projects, renovations and upgrades to our facilities and assets. For example, the County was pleased to work with the Committee to complete the Hickling Recreational Trail – our first multi-use recreational trail which opened to the public on June 28, 2017.

Looking to the future, the County is implementing our first county-wide public transit system which will include a specialized transit service for persons with accessibility needs. The first route will launch in 2018. This is a very exciting initiative and we look forward to working collaboratively with the Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee to ensure the County is proactive and successful in implementing the Transportation Standards in the Integrated Accessibility Standard Regulation (IASR) under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA).

In closing, the County of Simcoe will continue its compliance with the AODA and meet accessibility standards to ensure our programs, services and facilities remain accessible and inclusive to all our citizens, as we work towards our united goal of making Ontario and Simcoe County accessible by 2025.



Mark Aitken
CAO
County of Simcoe

Plan Overview

Approximately one in seven people in Ontario have a disability. These numbers are expected to increase, making accessibility for persons with disabilities essential. The County of Simcoe is committed to providing persons with disabilities consistent opportunity and access to County of Simcoe goods, services, and facilities. Accessibility planning plays a key role in improving access for County residents, employees, and visitors.

This multi-year accessibility plan outlines the County of Simcoe's strategy for 2019 to 2023 to prevent and remove barriers and meet the requirements of accessibility legislation over the next five years. Some initiatives are short-term projects whereas others may be implemented over several years. Initiatives are organized into target areas that reflect the five standards of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005: customer service, information and communication, employment, transportation, and the built environment. General initiatives are included as a separate target area.

In addition to outlining the initiatives planned by the County of Simcoe, this document outlines the County's accessibility achievements over the past four years as seen in Schedule 2. This multi-year accessibility plan meets the planning requirements of both the Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001 and the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005.

Accessibility planning does not end once a plan is prepared and documented. Monitoring is essential to ensuring that the County is meeting its obligations and commitments. An annual report will be prepared on the progress being made towards implementation. A comprehensive review of this plan will be completed every five years, unless significant changes necessitate an earlier revision of the plan.

County Information

The County of Simcoe is comprised of sixteen municipalities with a total population of 305,516 (according to the 2016 census) with that population being distributed over 4,859 square kilometres. Additionally, over 9 million visitors come to the County of Simcoe each year.

The County's municipalities and their respective populations (according to the 2016 census) are outlined in the following table.

Table 1: List of Municipalities and their Populations

Municipality	Population
Adjala-Tosorontio	10,975
Bradford West Gwillimbury	35, 325
Clearview	14, 151
Collingwood	21,793
Essa	21,083
Innisfil	36,566
Midland	16,864
New Tecumseth	34, 242
Oro-Medonte	21,036
Penetanguishene	8,962
Ramara	9,488
Severn	13,477
Springwater	19,059
Tay	10,033
Tiny	11,787
Wasaga Beach	20,675

The cities of Barrie and Orillia are separated from the County of Simcoe. However, the County provides many services to both cities, including Ontario Works, children and community services, social housing programs, paramedic services, and long term care services.

The County employs approximately 1,850 full- and part-time staff. Administratively, the County of Simcoe is comprised of the following divisions and departments:

Office of the Chief Administrative Officer and Warden

- Customer Service
- Corporate Communications

Statutory and Cultural Services

- Clerk's Department
- Archives
- Library Co-operative
- Simcoe County Museum

Corporate Performance

- Finance
- Information Technology
- Human Resources
- Procurement, Fleet and Property
- Legal Services

Social and Community Services

- Ontario Works
- Children and Community Services
- Social Housing

Engineering, Planning and Environment

- Transportation and Engineering
- Solid Waste Management
- Planning, Economic Development and Tourism
- Forestry and By-Law

Health and Emergency Services

- Long Term Care
- 911 and Emergency Management
- Paramedic Services

Vision, Mission and Values

Vision Statement

Working together to build vibrant, healthy, sustainable communities.

Mission Statement

Providing affordable, sustainable, accessible services and infrastructure through leadership and innovative excellence.

Core Values

Stewardship: Responsible guardians for a sustainable future

Leadership: Inspire, empower, lead by example

Integrity: Honesty, trust and transparency at all times

Innovation: Creative, progressive, leading edge ideas

Respect: Recognizing individualism through fair and equitable interaction

Accountability: Commitment, ownership and follow through

Co-operation: Positive approaches to partnerships, team work and understanding

Guiding Legislation

Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001

The Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001 (ODA) was designed to improve opportunities for Ontarians with disabilities by identifying, removing and preventing barriers that may limit their ability to participate in society. This Act legislated municipalities such as the County of Simcoe to prepare an annual accessibility plan. The Act stipulated that the plan needed to highlight the policies, procedures, programs, services, and building improvements that were done to improve accessibility for persons with disabilities as well as any planned initiatives and that the annual plan be made available to the public.

The Act also legislated the formation of an Accessibility Advisory Committee to advise Council in each year about the preparation, implementation and effectiveness of its accessibility plan.

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005

In 2005, the Ontario government passed the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA), which outlined a strategic direction to make the province accessible to those with disabilities by 2025. The Act reiterated the requirements under the ODA to maintain the completion of annual accessibility plans and Accessibility Advisory Committees. The AODA also provided for the province's implementation of various standards, including those for customer service, information and communication, employment, and transportation. The Act also indicated that additional standards could be developed over time and passed as Regulations under the AODA.

Accessibility Standards for Customer Service Regulation (O. Reg. 429/07)

The first standard to be passed by the Ontario government was the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service Regulation (O. Reg. 429/07). The Regulation applies to all organizations, such as the County of Simcoe, that provide goods or services to the public. It set out standards for providing services and goods in an accessible manner and established a compliance date for the County of Simcoe of January 1, 2010. The County successfully met its obligations under the legislation.

Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (O. Reg. 191/11)

The Ontario government combined standards for information and communication, employment and transportation into the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (O. Reg. 191/11). This Regulation includes a phased-in approach to the many

standards. The County of Simcoe has compliance requirements that range from January 1, 2012 to January 1, 2021.

The Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation also includes general requirements which includes a multi-year accessibility plan. The Regulation requires the County of Simcoe to establish, implement, maintain and document a multi-year accessibility plan that outlines the County's strategy to prevent and remove barriers and meet the requirements of the Regulation.

The regulation was amended in December 2012 to add a fifth AODA standard. The Design of Public Spaces Standards establish requirements for spaces in the built environment, including beach access routes, recreational trails, exterior paths of travel, outdoor play spaces, outdoor public use eating areas, parking, and areas for obtaining service.

Commitment to Accessibility and Planning

The County of Simcoe is committed to providing persons with disabilities consistent opportunity and access to County of Simcoe goods, services, and facilities. The County will ensure that policies, procedures, and practices are provided in a manner that is timely and addresses integration, independence, dignity, and equal opportunity.

As outlined in the Plan Overview section at the beginning of this document, this plan meets the planning requirements of both the Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001 and the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005. This document outlines the County's achievements over the last four years and the County's accessibility strategy for the next five years.

The Clerk's Department consulted with County departments and divisions to identify the existence of barriers, activities completed to overcome them and planned initiatives to remove and prevent barriers. Staff continue to be informed of upcoming and future compliance dates under the Integrated Accessibility Standard Regulation (O. Reg. 191/11) as well as proposed amendments to legislation by the Ontario government to identify the impact of all legislation on the County's many departments, programs, services and facilities.

Through ongoing meetings of the Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee, the Clerk's Department has also gathered information on barriers that exist to those with disabilities. Feedback has also been gathered from County residents through feedback forms and inquiries via telephone, email and in person.

The Clerk's Department will regularly review the progress of this accessibility plan. Consultation will occur with various County staff and departments to discuss progress of planned initiatives and address any additional barriers that are identified. A Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee Work Plan will also be created yearly to allow additional monitoring of this plan's progress and effectiveness. An annual report will be completed to highlight the progress of initiatives outlined in this strategic framework.

Types of Disabilities and Barriers

The purpose of this accessibility plan is to outline the County of Simcoe's strategy for the identification, removal, and prevention of barriers faced by persons with disabilities.

“Disability” means, as per the Ontario Human Rights Code:

- 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;
- A condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability;
- A learning disability or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language;
- A mental disorder; or
- An injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997.

When hearing the word “disability,” it is common to think of visible disabilities, such as a person with a physical disability using a wheelchair or other mobility device, a person with a vision disability using a service dog or a white cane, or a person with a hearing disability using the services of a sign language interpreter. However, many disabilities are not as visible and may be hidden. Disabilities can be organized into the following categories:

Vision disabilities reduce a person's ability to see clearly. There are many degrees of vision loss, and many people have limited vision rather than no vision at all.

Hearing disabilities reduce a person's ability to hear. People who have hearing loss may be deaf (a person with profound hearing loss), deafened (a person who has become deaf), or hard of hearing (a person with some level of hearing loss).

Deaf-Blind disabilities affect a person's ability to see and hear, making it challenging to access information. Many people with deaf-blind disabilities are accompanied by an intervener, a person who helps with communication.

Physical disabilities affect a person's ability to perform physical tasks. Their mobility, including standing, moving, and sitting, as well as dexterity may be affected by their disability. There are many degrees of physical disability, and not all people require an assistive device.

Speech or language disabilities affect a person's ability to communicate. These disabilities are often due to other disabilities such as hearing loss, cerebral palsy or other conditions that make it difficult to pronounce words, cause slurring or stuttering or prevents someone from expressing themselves or understanding written or spoken language.

Mental health disabilities are less visible than many other types of disabilities, as many people do not show signs of their disability. There are varying degrees of disabilities, and some examples include depression, phobias, and bipolar, anxiety, or mood disorders.

Intellectual or developmental disabilities may affect, mildly or profoundly, a person's ability to learn, socialize or take care of their everyday needs. It may be difficult to do many things that most people take for granted each day.

Learning disabilities are information processing disorders that can affect how a person acquires, organizes expresses, retains, understands or uses verbal or non-verbal information.

"Barrier" means anything that prevents a person with a disability from fully participating in all aspects of society because of his or her disability.

Barriers are often seen as physical obstacles that prevent or challenge persons with disabilities from accessing a building or facility. However, barrier are any obstacles that prevent a person with a disability from fully participating in all aspects of society because of a disability. Barrier can be organized into the following categories:

Physical and architectural barriers are facilities, building, spaces or features that restrict or impede physical access. An example is a doorway that is too narrow to accommodate entry by a person using a wheelchair.

Communication barriers are obstacles with processing, transmitting or interpreting information. Examples include a brochure that has small print and cannot be read by someone with a vision disability and is not available in alternate formats.

Attitudinal barriers are prejudgments or assumptions that directly or indirectly discriminate against persons with disabilities. An example is assuming that all people with vision disabilities have no vision or read Braille.

Technological barriers occur when technology cannot be or is not modified to support various assistive devices and/or software. An example is a website that does not provide for increased text size or contrast options.

Systemic barriers are those within an organization's policies, practices and procedures that do not consider accessibility for those with disabilities. An example is listing a driver's license as an employment qualification for a position that does not actually require driving. This might prevent persons with disabilities from applying, even though they may be able to perform all duties of the position.

County of Simcoe Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee

The County of Simcoe Accessibility Advisory Committee was established in 2003 to advise County Council on matters regarding the accessibility of County owned and operated facilities as well as programs and services offered by the County of Simcoe.

In 2015, the County of Simcoe entered into a partnership with the Township of Springwater and established a Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee. On February 13, 2018, County Council approved the Township of Tay's request to join the already established Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee. The updated Terms of Reference for the Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee is attached as Schedule 1.

Members of the 2014-2018 Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee are listed in the table below.

Table 2: List of Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee Members

Committee Member	
Doug Mein	Chair / Member
Susan Hamer	Vice-Chair / Member
Liz Grummett	Member
Fred Heyduk	Member
Peggy Norton-Harris	Member
Katy Austin	Township of Springwater Councillor/Member
Scott Warnock	Township of Tay Mayor/Member
Gerry Marshall	County Warden
Terry Dowdall	Warden's Designate (Deputy Warden)

Accessibility Achievements

The County of Simcoe is required to complete annual status reports. These reports outline the initiatives that have improved accessibility and removed barriers within the County's facilities, programs and services. The annual reports which received Council's approval for 2014, 2015, 2016 and 2017 are attached as Schedule 2.

2019-2023 Accessibility Plan

The following highlights the County of Simcoe's priorities for the next five years for meeting the requirements of accessibility legislation and removing and preventing barriers within the County's facilities, programs and services. The list is organized to reflect the five standards of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, as well as initiatives that address general barriers faced by persons with disabilities and the County's overall commitment to accessibility and awareness.

General

Accessibility Networking Groups (ongoing)

- The County will continue membership in the Simcoe County Accessibility Group, Ontario Network of Accessibility Professionals and the South Western Accessibility Group. This networking will ensure the continued gathering of best practices to help the County in its accessibility initiatives.
- Cultivate additional partnerships with organizations throughout the County of Simcoe to continue improvement of accessibility and disability awareness.

Council Proclamations to Promote Accessibility (annually)

- The Warden will consider annual proclamations of the International Day of Persons with Disabilities and National Access Awareness Week as well as other significant events that arise. Social media posts will follow the proclamations to further promote accessibility and disability awareness.

Accessibility Planning and Reporting (ongoing)

- Once approved by County Council, this multi-year accessibility plan will be posted on the website and made available in accessible formats, upon request. **(2018)**

- An annual status report will be prepared on the progress of the multi-year plan's implementation and will be posted on the website and made available in accessible formats, upon request. **(annually)**
- A comprehensive review of this plan will be completed every five years, unless significant changes necessitate an earlier revision of the plan. **(2023)**
- Annual work plans will be developed for both the Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee and staff to assist with implementation and monitoring of the plan. **(annually)**
- Online compliance reports will be submitted to the Accessibility Directorate of Ontario every two years **(2019, 2021, 2023)**

2019-2022 Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee Orientation (2019)

- After the municipal election in the fall of 2018, a new County Council will be formed for the term of 2019-2022. This will lead to the appointment of members to the Joint Accessibility Advisory for the same four-year term. Orientation for the new Committee will be developed and delivered.

Monitoring of proposed accessibility standards and amendments (ongoing)

- The County will continue to monitor the potential amendments to existing accessibility legislation and the possible introduction of new accessibility standards.
- Staff, Committee, and Council will be asked to review and comment on any proposed legislation and amendments.

Training (ongoing)

- Training will continue to be provided to employees and volunteers as well as ensuring those who provide goods, services and facilities on behalf of the County receive training.
- Records will be kept on the training provided.

Policies (ongoing)

- The County will continue to update the Accessibility Standards Policy as required.

Positive Aging Strategy (ongoing)

- The County's Positive Aging Strategy will continue to align with this Plan and the legislative requirements under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005.
- Updates on Positive Aging initiatives will be brought to the Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee to keep them informed and to seek feedback, as required.

Procuring or Acquiring Goods, Services or Facilities

- The County will continue to incorporate accessibility design, criteria and features when procuring or acquiring goods, services or facilities by regularly reviewing procurement policies and procedures and make any updates as required.

Self-Service Kiosks

- The County will continue to incorporate accessibility features and have regard to the accessibility for persons with disabilities when designing, procuring or acquiring self-service kiosks.

Customer Service**Resident Feedback and Requests (ongoing)**

- The Customer Service Department will continue to respond to and track feedback, concerns and requests from residents. Responses will be provided in a timely manner taking into account each person's needs and the County's abilities to meet such needs.

Accessible Customer Service Policies and Procedures (ongoing)

- In addition to the general policy requirements, the County will continue to review existing and develop new corporate policies, practices and procedures in relations to the AODA requirements under the customer service standards as they relate to the provision of goods, services or facilities to persons with disabilities.

Information and Communication

Accessible Formats and Communication Supports (ongoing)

- The County will continue to arrange for the provision of accessible formats and communication supports for persons with disabilities, upon request.
 - The County will continue to consult with the person making the request to determine the suitability of an accessible format or communication support.

Accessible website and web content (ongoing)

- The County will continue to ensure its website, Intranet and web content meets Level A compliance with the World Wide Web Consortium Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0.
- The County will ensure that its website, Intranet and web content meets Level AA compliance with the World Wide Web Consortium Web Content Accessibility Guidelines by January 1, 2021.
- The County will continue advising staff who contribute to the website as well as the Intranet on how to create accessible documents.

Accessible Feedback Processes (ongoing)

- Under the customer service standard, the County developed a customer service feedback process for receiving and responding to feedback specifically about the manner in which the County provide accessible services to persons with disabilities. The forms are available in alternate format and with communication supports, upon request. Customers have various options for providing their feedback and responses are given in a manner that takes into account the disability needs of the person providing feedback. The County will continue this practice.
- The County will continue to ensure that processes for receiving and responding to any type of feedback is accessible by providing accessible formats and communication supports, upon request. Forms will be modified to improve accessibility as necessary.
- Employees and the public will be notified that accessible formats and communication supports are available, upon request.

Employment

Accessible Employment Policies and Procedures (ongoing)

- The County will continue to document, monitor and update employment policies and procedures, where required, to provide the following:
 - Accommodations in the recruitment, assessment, and selection process, upon request
 - Accessible formats and communication supports for information needed to perform the job and any information that is generally available to employees, upon request
 - Accommodation plans and workplace emergency response information, upon request
 - Return to work process and related accommodation plans
 - Accommodations in performance management, career development and redeployment
- The County will inform staff and the public that accommodations are available throughout all stages of employment and advised of policies that support employees with disabilities.

Transportation

Accessible Vehicles at Long Term Care Facilities (ongoing)

- The County will continue to operate Para-transit vehicles at the long term care facilities. Inspections will continue regularly to ensure accessible and safe transport and to meet requirements of applicable legislation, such as the Highway Traffic Act.

County of Simcoe Transit (2018-2019)

- The County is embarking on providing conventional and specialized transportation services. There will be five inter-municipal hub-to-hub routes, to be implemented over a five year period, providing regional connections between primary settlement areas in the County and the cities of Barrie and Orillia. The specialized transit service will operate within 400 metres of the conventional transit fixed routes, providing a combination of door-to-service and transfers to and from the fixed routes. As required under the Transportation Standard, an accessibility plan as it relates directly to transit is attached as Schedule 3.

Built Environment

Accessible public spaces (ongoing)

- The County will continue to consult the Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee on newly constructed and redeveloped public spaces such as sidewalks, pedestrian signals at intersections, on-street and off-street parking spaces, service counters and trails.
- Procedures for preventative and emergency maintenance of accessible elements will be reviewed and updated where applicable, along with processes for dealing with temporary disruptions.

Facility reviews (2019-2023)

- Members of the Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee will continue to conduct facility reviews of County facilities and provide feedback on the overall accessibility. The Committee will continue utilizing the Facility Review checklist that was approved by County Council in 2016 as a guide when conducting reviews.

Barrier-free design features in County facilities (ongoing)

- The County will continue to meet or exceed the minimum barrier-free design requirements of the Ontario Building Code when constructing any new buildings or completing any renovations on existing buildings.
- Procurement, Fleet and Property staff will continue to utilize the in-house project checklist which incorporates accessibility features at the planning stage of a new project.

Contact Information

This Multi-Year Accessibility Plan is available on the County of Simcoe's website and internal Intranet. Printed copies can be obtained from the County of Simcoe's Administration Centre in Midhurst.

This document is available in alternate format or with communication supports, upon request. This may include, but is not limited to, large print, Braille, and electronic formats.

The County of Simcoe welcomes all questions and comments on the County's Multi-Year Accessibility Plan and accessibility in general.

Please contact:

**County of Simcoe
Clerk's Department**

1110 Highway 26
Midhurst, ON L9X 1N6

Telephone: 705-726-9300 Ext. 1246

Toll Free: 1-866-893-9300

Customer Service: 705-735-6901

Hearing & Voice Carry Over (Bell Relay Service): 1-800-855-0511

Fax: 705-725-1285

Email: clerks@simcoe.ca

Website: www.simcoe.ca

**The Corporation of the County of Simcoe and
The Corporation of the Township of Springwater and
The Corporation of the Township of Tay
Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee**

Terms of Reference

Purpose

The Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee ("Committee") is established by the Corporation of the County of Simcoe ("Simcoe"), the Corporation of the Township of Springwater ("Springwater") and the Corporation of the Township of Tay ("Tay") in accordance with Ontarians with Disabilities Act 2001, and the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 ("Acts"), and shall act as an advisory body in accordance with both Acts and all related standards.

Mandate

The Committee shall:

- a) Provide input on the preparation of the accessibility plans for consideration by the respective municipal Council.

The plans will address and include steps that each municipality has taken and plans to take with respect to the identification, removal and prevention of barriers to persons with disabilities as required by legislation.
- b) Advise on major accessibility issues related to the significant renovation, operation, purchase or lease of buildings or structures or parts of buildings or structures used as municipal buildings with special attention to those that the public are encouraged to utilize through the review of site plans and drawings as described within the Planning Act.
- c) Advise on opportunities with respect to the identification and removal of barriers to persons with disabilities at facilities owned or operated by the municipalities.
- d) Identify any potential funding that could be available to assist with the removal of barriers for persons with disabilities.
- e) Research and report on specific matters referred to it by the municipal Councils.
- f) Advise on opportunities to increase staff awareness with respect to the provision of municipal programs and services to persons with disabilities.

- g) Advise on ways to improve opportunities for persons with disabilities with respect to programs and services offered by the municipalities.
- h) Perform other functions that are specified in the Regulations of the Acts.

Composition

The Committee shall consist of five to nine members as follows:

- a) The majority of members must be persons with disabilities as defined under the Acts, and are residents of the County of Simcoe. Preference will be given to appointing at least one eligible resident of "Springwater" and at least one eligible resident of "Tay".
- b) Three elected officials as follows:
 - One member of "Simcoe" Council, and
 - One member of "Springwater" Council, and
 - One member of "Tay" Council

The Councils may, at their discretion, authorize the appointment of:

- a) One citizen at large who may not be a person with a disability but who has special interest or expertise in the identification or removal of barriers or has specific expertise as a care giver to a person(s) with disabilities; and/or
- b) A representative of an organization representing persons with disabilities.

Recruitment

"Simcoe" will be responsible for advertising recruitment opportunities through local newspapers, local libraries, and relevant organizations representing persons with disabilities.

The participating municipalities will each be responsible for promoting recruitment opportunities on their respective website and through their social media accounts.

Enhanced advertising may be done by "Springwater" and "Tay" at their own expense.

Appointment of Members

Elected officials are to be appointed by their respective Council or in accordance with their applicable by-laws or policies.

The elected officials appointed to the “Committee” shall review applications and nominate the balance of the membership to the participating municipal Councils for approval.

Term of Appointment

a) Elected Officials:

- “Simcoe” Warden, or his or her designate, or other appointed County Council member shall serve for the term of office;
- “Springwater” Council Member shall serve for the term as specified by his/her Council.
- “Tay” Council Member shall serve for the term as specified by his/her Council.

b) Non-elected representatives:

- The term shall coincide with the term of Council
- Representatives are eligible for re-appointment

Members may be required to resign from the “Committee” if they have been absent for three consecutive meetings without good cause.

Quorum

More than half of the members eligible to vote must be present in order to transact business.

Voting

All members, when eligible to vote, shall have one vote only.

Chair and Vice-Chair

The Chair and Vice-Chair of the “Committee” shall be elected annually at the first meeting of the “Committee” in each year.

Compensation and Reimbursement of Expenses

Non-elected representatives shall be compensated in accordance with the existing policies of the Corporation of the County of Simcoe.

Elected officials shall be compensated in accordance with existing policies of their respective municipalities.

Non-elected representatives who are persons with disabilities will be provided, at the “Simcoe’s” expense, with the resources related to their disability that are deemed necessary for them to fully participate in the “Committee’s” activities. The resources

could include such things as transportation, sign language, Braille translation etc. Any equipment shall remain the property of "Simcoe".

Exception

"Springwater" shall reimburse "Simcoe" for all expenses associated with holding special meetings of the "Committee" or conducting "Springwater" facility reviews that may be required by "Springwater" from time-to-time.

"Tay" shall reimburse "Simcoe" for all expenses associated with holding special meetings of the "Committee" or conducting "Tay" facility reviews that may be required by "Tay" from time-to-time.

Reporting Structure

The "Committee" shall report to the respective Councils, in accordance with the provisions of their respective Procedure By-laws. The presentation of the Committee's activities will be in the form of a report containing a record of those present at the meeting, the items considered, and the recommendations of the "Committee". The respective Councils may only consider and act on the recommendations within their jurisdiction.

The "Committee" does not have the authority to specifically direct the activities of staff.

Resources

The Clerk's Departments for "Simcoe", "Springwater" and "Tay" will share the responsibility for administrative support as appropriate, including co-ordination of meetings, compilation of agenda material, and meeting support.

Responsibility for creating and distributing the agendas and record of proceedings will reside with "Simcoe".

Other staff resources by "Simcoe", "Springwater" and "Tay" will be available as required.

Meetings

Meetings may be scheduled as may be required each year to support staff reporting and the advisory committee providing guidance and conducting facility reviews resulting in improved accessible services and facilities. All meetings shall be held during the day at a location to be determined.

Review

The effectiveness of having a joint “Committee” will be subject to review by all participating municipal Councils at least once per term.

Approved by County Council February 13, 2018 (CCW-40-18)

Approved by Township of Springwater Council March 7, 2018 (C081-2018)

Approved by Township of Tay Council March 28, 2018

County of Simcoe Accessibility Status Report 2014

Annual Report of Achievements

The County of Simcoe is pleased to present its annual status update to the 2013-2018 Multi-year Accessibility Plan as mandated by the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA).

The County of Simcoe's 2013-2018 Accessibility Plan was prepared in consultation with the Simcoe Accessibility Advisory Committee, the Province of Ontario, other municipalities and members of the public and was adopted by County Council in 2013.

The following highlights the County of Simcoe's past year achievements (for the period of September 2013 to August 2014). These initiatives have improved accessibility and removed barriers within the County's facilities, programs and services. The list is organized to reflect the five standards of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005. The list also includes initiatives that address general barriers faced by persons with disabilities and the County's overall commitment to accessibility and awareness.

This report and other accessibility information related to programs and services will be posted on the County of Simcoe's website at www.simcoe.ca and are made available in alternate accessible formats upon request.

County of Simcoe Accessibility Advisory Committee

The County of Simcoe Accessibility Advisory Committee advises County Council on matters regarding the accessibility of County owned and operated facilities as well as programs and services offered by the County of Simcoe.

Members of the 2010-2014 Accessibility Advisory Committee are listed in the table below. During the period of this report, a vacant citizen appointee position was filled. In addition, an internal staff temporarily filled in for the Accessibility and Development Consultant from March until August 2014.

List of Accessibility Advisory Committee Members

Committee Member	
Doug Mein	Chair / Citizen Appointee
Wayne Yuristy	Vice-Chair / Citizen Appointee
Claudine Cousins	Citizen Appointee
Susan Hamer	Citizen Appointee
Margaretta Papp-Belayneh	Citizen Appointee
Fred Heyduk	Citizen Appointee
County Representatives	
Cal Patterson / Harry Hughes	County Warden / Deputy Warden
Mary Small Brett	County Councillor
Scott Warnock	County Councillor
Staff Resources	
Mark Aitken	Chief Administrative Officer
Brenda Clark	County Clerk
Amanda Flynn	Deputy Clerk
Terry Talon	General Manager, Social and Community Services
Cheryl Caterer	Accessibility and Development Consultant
Cynthia MacDougall	Council and Committee Coordinator

General

Community accessibility partnerships

- The County continued to coordinate and host The Simcoe County Accessibility Group. During the period of this update report, the Group met three times on September 3, 2013, February 6, 2014 and May 1, 2014. Various accessibility issues and best practices were discussed and useful resources were shared. The Accessibility and Development Consultant continues to maintain regular contact with network members via email and telephone.
- The Accessibility and Development Consultant attended the Universal Design Forum at Georgian College on May 20, 2014. This event provided an opportunity to network and to obtain some valuable information regarding current universal design trends.
- The Accessibility and Development Consultant attended two Accessibility Conferences, one in Guelph from May 27-28, 2014 and the other in Ottawa from July 12-15, 2014. Resources and best practices were obtained from these conferences.
- The Accessibility and Development Consultant continued membership in the Ontario Network of Accessibility Professionals, which is comprised of staff at municipalities and other broader public sector organizations. The Accessibility and Development Consultant consulted the group on various occasions to obtain information, resources and best practices. The group also held an informal meeting at the Ottawa International Accessibility Summit and the Accessibility and Development Consultant attended.
- The Accessibility and Development Consultant commenced membership with the South Western Accessibility Group and attended a meeting on May 15, 2014. The Accessibility and Development Consultant continued to maintain regular contact with network members via email and telephone.

Council proclamations to promote accessibility and disability awareness

- On behalf of County Council, the Warden continued his annual proclamation of the International Day of Persons with Disabilities (December 3, 2013) and National Access Awareness Week (June 1 to June 7, 2014). Media releases and social media posts followed these proclamations.

Accessibility planning and reporting

- The 2013-2018 multi-year accessibility plan was completed and approved by County Council. It outlines the County's strategy for removing and preventing barriers faced by persons with disabilities and how the County will meet its legislative requirements. The plan was posted on the website and made available in accessible formats upon request.
- This annual status report was prepared on the progress of the multi-year plan's implementation.
- Annual work plans were developed for both the Accessibility Advisory Committee and staff to assist with implementation and monitoring of the plan.
- An online compliance report was submitted to the Accessibility Directorate of Ontario on December 19, 2013.

Review of procurement policies and procedures

- Procurement policies and procedures were reviewed to ensure accessibility was being incorporated.

Monitoring of proposed accessibility standards and amendments

- The County has continued to monitor the status of proposed amendments to the barrier-free design section of the Ontario Building Code and potential amendments to existing accessibility legislation.

Training

- Training was developed on the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation and the Ontario Human Rights Code. Accessible customer service training modules were also revised and incorporated into the new accessibility training program.
- Training was provided to employees, volunteers, and those who provide goods, services and facilities on behalf of the County. Over the past twelve months, 133 County employees received training; 55 of those employees received Customer Service Training in addition to training for the Integrated Accessibility Standards and the Ontario Human Rights. This training is still in progress and will be ongoing.
- Records were kept on the training provided.

Customer Service

Compliance with the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service Regulation

- The County continued its compliance with customer service standards, including the delivery of training to staff. Topics within the training included accessibility legislation, accessible customer service, interaction with persons of varying disabilities, and general disability awareness. Information was also included in documents to third parties and contractors who provide goods and services on behalf of the County to ensure that those individuals received training.

Review and comments on proposed amendments to the Customer Service Standard

- Staff, Committee, and Council reviewed the proposed amendments to the Customer Service Standard and provided comments. It was determined that formal feedback to the Ministry was not required.

Response and tracking of resident feedback and accommodation requests

- Accessibility staff and the Customer Service Department continued to receive and track feedback, concerns and requests from residents of Simcoe County. Responses were provided in a timely manner that took into account each person's needs and the County's abilities to meet such needs. Service included the provision of alternate formats and information. During the past year, 13 incidents of feedback and inquiry were logged by the Customer Service Department.

Information and Communication

Additional accessible features in promotional materials and other documents

- Various departments have incorporated accessibility into their marketing and promotional materials and other documents.

Accessible website and web content

- The County is in the process of moving to a new website platform and efforts have continued towards meeting WCAG 2.0 compliance. Changes were made to the functionality of the site as well as to documents posted to the site. This is still in progress and is expected to be completed by the end of this year.

Accessible formats and communication supports

- The County has begun to provide information in accessible formats, upon request in advance of the 2015 compliance requirement of the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation. Guidelines for creating accessible documents are being developed and the County's visibility guidelines are being updated to incorporate accessibility. The Accessibility and Development Consultant has been working closely with the Communications Department on this initiative.

Accessible feedback processes

- The County's accessible customer service feedback process has been provided in various formats. Responses were given in a manner that takes into account each person's disability needs. Accessible formats and communication supports were also made available upon request. The feedback form was made more accessible.
- Employees and the public were notified that accessible formats and communication supports are available, upon request.

Employment**Workplace emergency response Information plans**

- Procedures for workplace emergency response information plans were implemented and communicated to all County employees. Worksheets and templates were used when developing a plan for an employee requiring assistance during emergencies.

Accessible employment policies and procedures

- The County continued to develop, document, and monitor employment policies and procedures, where required, to provide the following:
 - Accommodations in the recruitment, assessment, and selection process, upon request
 - Accessible formats and communication supports for information needed to perform the job and any information that is generally available to employees, upon request
 - Accommodation plans and workplace emergency response information, upon request
 - Return to work process and related accommodation plans
 - Accommodations in performance management, career development and redeployment

- The County continued to inform staff and the public that accommodations are available throughout all stages of employment and advised of policies that support employees with disabilities.

Transportation

The County of Simcoe does not have specific requirements under the Transportation section of the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation. The County does not offer conventional or specialized transportation to the public or charge a fee for any transportation. It does however operate Para-transit vehicles at long-term care facilities.

Use and inspection of accessible vehicles at long term care facilities

- The County continued to operate Para-transit vehicles at the long-term care facilities for resident transport. Inspections occurred regularly to ensure accessible and safe transport and to meet requirements of applicable legislation, such as the Highway Traffic Act.

Built Environment

Barrier-free design features in County facilities

- The County incorporated accessible features in renovations and upgrades to facilities. Building Code requirements were followed and considerations given to features that improve accessibility.
- The Accessibility Advisory Committee conducted an audit of the County's Administration Centre, Midhurst, on March 31, 2014. The recommended accessibility improvements, arising from the audit, were identified and communicated to County staff. They included items such as signage, lighting and colour contrasting. The County has now completed most of the committee's recommendations and plan to complete the remaining changes as soon as practicable.

Sensory garden at the Simcoe County Museum

- The sensory garden is designed to be accessible and useable by people of all ages and abilities. It is currently being completed and is expected to be done by the end of August 2014.

Contact Information

This Accessibility Status Report is available on the County of Simcoe's website and internal Intranet. Printed copies can be obtained from the County of Simcoe's Administration Centre in Midhurst.

This document is available in alternate format or with communication supports, upon request. This may include, but is not limited to, large print, Braille, and electronic formats.

The County of Simcoe welcomes all questions and comments on the County's 2014 Accessibility Status Report and accessibility in general.

Please contact:

County of Simcoe
Accessibility Section, Clerk's Department
1110 Highway 26
Midhurst, ON L0L 1X0

Telephone: 705-726-9300 Ext. 1246
Toll Free: 1-866-893-9300
Customer Service: 705-735-6901
Hearing & Voice Carry Over (Bell Relay Service): 1-800-855-0511

Fax: 705-725-1285
Email: accessibility@simcoe.ca
Website: www.simcoe.ca

County of Simcoe 2013-2018 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

2015 Annual Status Report

Overview

The County of Simcoe is pleased to present its annual status report as an update to its 2013-2018 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan, as required under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005.

The County of Simcoe's 2013-2018 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan was prepared in consultation with persons with disabilities, the County of Simcoe's Accessibility Advisory Committee, the Province of Ontario, and other municipalities. The Plan was approved by County Council in October 2013. It outlines the County of Simcoe's strategy to identify, remove and prevent barriers that face persons with disabilities. The Plan also outlines how the County of Simcoe will comply with accessibility legislation.

The 2015 Annual Status Report highlights the County of Simcoe's achievements over the past year (September 2014 to September 2015), which have improved accessibility and removed or prevented barriers within the County of Simcoe's facilities, programs and services. The list is organized to reflect the format of the County's 2013-2018 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan and the five standards of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005. The list also includes initiatives that address general barriers faced by persons with disabilities and the County's overall commitment to accessibility and awareness.

This report and other accessibility information related to the County's programs and services will be made available in alternate formats upon request and will be posted on the County of Simcoe's website.

County of Simcoe and Township of Springwater

Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee

In the fall of 2015, a Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee was formed between the County of Simcoe and the Township of Springwater. This Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee advises the Councils of the participating municipalities on matters regarding the accessibility of County and Township owned and operated facilities as well as programs and services offered by the County and Township. The members of the 2015-2018 Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee are listed below. It should be noted that although the County of Simcoe and the Township of Springwater have formed a Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee, the two participating municipalities continue to maintain and implement two separate multi-year accessibility plans and prepare separate annual status reports.

List of Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee Members

Doug Mein, Chair (Citizen Appointee)

Susan Hamer, Vice Chair (Citizen Appointee)

Liz Grummett (Citizen Appointee)

Fred Heyduk (Citizen Appointee)

Peggy Norton-Harris (Citizen Appointee)

Gerry Marshall (County Warden); Warden's Designate: Terry Dowdall (Deputy Warden)

Katy Austin (Township of Springwater Councillor)

The County of Simcoe and the Township of Springwater provide the following main staff resources for the Committee:

Amanda Flynn (Deputy Clerk, County of Simcoe)

Joanne Lane (Accessibility and Development Consultant, County of Simcoe)

Cynthia MacDougall (Council and Committee Coordinator, County of Simcoe)

Karen Way (Deputy Clerk, Township of Springwater)

Karen Todd (Clerk's Assistant, Township of Springwater)

General**Community accessibility partnerships**

- The County of Simcoe continued to coordinate and host meetings of the Simcoe County Accessibility Group. During the period of this status report, the group met on May 14, 2015 and will meet again on November 19, 2015. Various accessibility topics and concerns were discussed and resources and best practices shared. In addition to in-person meetings, the Accessibility and Development Consultant maintained contact with the group by email and telephone to discuss accessibility matters and share resources.
- The Accessibility and Development Consultant maintained membership in the Ontario Network of Accessibility Professionals (ONAP), which is comprised of staff at municipalities and other broader public sector organizations across Ontario. Meetings were held on November 13, 2014 in Aurora and October 16, 2015 in Stratford. In addition to in-person meetings, the Accessibility and Development Consultant maintains regular contact with the group via telephone and email in order to share information and resources and discuss accessibility questions and concerns.
- The Accessibility and Development Consultant continued membership in the South Western Ontario Accessibility Group, which is a sub-group of ONAP, consisting primarily of

accessibility staff in South Western Ontario. The Accessibility and Development Consultant attended a meeting of the group on June 25, 2015 in London. Various accessibility topics were discussed and resources shared to assist staff in the implementation of accessibility initiatives. In addition to in-person meetings, the Accessibility and Development Consultant maintained contact with the group via telephone and email in order to share information and discuss various accessibility matters.

- On May 27, 2015, the Accessibility and Development Consultant attended the AODA's 10th Anniversary Celebration held in Fergus. Keynote speakers included Mark Wafer, Owner of several Tim Horton's franchises, Diane Dupuy, Founder of Famous People Players Theatre and the Honorable David C. Onley, special advisor on accessibility to the Accessibility Directorate of Ontario and former lieutenant governor. Several municipalities also presented their accessibility success stories, including the Town of Wasaga Beach, who highlighted the Mobi-Mat Project.

Council proclamations to promote accessibility and disability awareness

- On behalf of County of Simcoe Council, the Warden continued his annual proclamation of the International Day of Persons with Disabilities (December 3, 2014) and National Access Awareness Week (May 31 to June 6, 2015). By observing these events, County Council acknowledges the importance of accessibility and disability awareness. Media releases and social media posts followed these proclamations. In addition to the annual proclamation, media release and social media coverage, the County of Simcoe also designed and completed a banner that is placed at the main entrance of the Administration Centre during National Access Awareness Week to further promote the annual event.

Accessibility planning and reporting

- This annual status report outlines the County of Simcoe's accessibility activities and accomplishments over the past year. This report meets the annual status reporting that is required by both the Ontarians with Disabilities Act and the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act.
- A 2016 Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee Work Plan has been prepared by County of Simcoe and Township of Springwater staff to be reviewed by the Committee at their November 12, 2015 meeting. This work plan outlines projects and tasks for the Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee.

Accessibility policy

- A number of accessible customer service policies were approved by County Council in 2009 in addition to an Integrated Accessibility Standards Policy approved by County Council in 2012. A consolidated corporate accessibility policy was developed by staff and reviewed by the Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee during their meeting on October 6, 2015. County Council will review the Committee's recommendation to approve the policy at its meeting on November 10, 2015.

Training

- The Accessibility and Development Consultant continued to provide training on the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disability Act (AODA) and its Regulations, the Ontario Human Rights Code, and general accessibility and disability awareness to new County of Simcoe employees. Records are kept on the completion of the training as per the legislation's requirements. During the period of this annual status report, approximately 180 new employees received the training.
- The new "Disability, Accessibility, and the Law" training program was launched in September 2014. This training program meets all training requirements under the legislation and was made available in various formats, including online, print-based, and in-person presentation. All existing County of Simcoe employees were required to complete the training, which also included a refresher of the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service Training provided since 2010. During the period of this annual status update, over 1500 employees have completed the training.

Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee

- In the fall of 2015, the County of Simcoe and Township of Springwater formed a Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee. The new 2015-2018 Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee held its first meeting on October 6, at which time County of Simcoe and Township of Springwater staff provided orientation and presented information and reference materials. This Joint Committee will work collaboratively on accessibility matters that affect County and Township programs, services and facilities.

Customer Service

Compliance with the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service

- The County of Simcoe continued its compliance with the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service Regulation, including legislative requirements for use of service animals, support persons, and assistive devices. The County notified the public when there was a service disruption to facilities, programs and services that are used by persons with disabilities. Training on accessible customer service was also provided to new employees in addition to a refresher for existing employees as part of the County's "Disability, Accessibility and the Law" training program. When holding meetings and events and providing registration information, some departments have begun to advise the public of the availability of accommodations, upon request.

Response and tracking of resident feedback and accommodation requests

- The Accessibility and Development Consultant and the Customer Service Department continued to track and respond to all feedback, concerns and requests from residents. Responses were provided in a timely manner that took into account each person's needs and the County's ability to meet those needs and requests. During the period of this annual status report, 6 accessibility-related feedback and inquiries were logged by the Customer Service Department. These included requests for accessible formats of documents, inquiries

about waste collection services, the customer service telephone system, use of the Council Chambers lift, and accessible parking spaces at the County's Administration Centre.

Information and Communication

Accessible formats and communication supports

- The County of Simcoe has been incorporating accessibility features into more of the documents created by its many departments, including internal and external documents. Considerations include font size and style, colour contrast, spacing, use of white space, and use of formatting techniques such as bold, italics, underlining and use of capital letters. Additional resources will be developed to provide further assistance to staff when preparing documents.
- The County of Simcoe provided documents in alternative format and/or with communication support, upon request. Some examples include the provision of waste collection calendars and informational brochures in large print. Communication support has included the provision of verbal information instead of printed materials and the provision of magnifiers for use by persons with vision disabilities when reviewing County documents.

Accessible website and web content

- During the period of this annual status report, the County of Simcoe launched a new website. A software application is utilized that checks the accessibility of the website, based on criteria set out in the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG). The County of Simcoe's Information Technology Department and web content contributors receive reports on the accessibility of their department's webpage. There has been a significant increase in the accessibility of the County's website. Efforts continue to improve the accessibility of documents that are posted to the website.

Employment

Accessible employment policies and procedures

- The County of Simcoe continued to develop, document and monitor employment policies and procedures, where required, to provide the following:
 - Accommodations in the recruitment, assessment and selection process, upon request
 - Accessible formats and communication requests, upon request, for information needed to perform their job and any information that is generally available to employees
 - Accommodation plans and workplace emergency response information, upon request
 - Return to work process and related accommodation plans
 - Accommodations in other stages of employment, including performance management, career development and advancement, and redeployment

- The County continued to advise of the availability of accommodations throughout the employment life cycle. New employees are notified of the availability during their accessibility training sessions.

Transportation

At this time, the County of Simcoe does not have specific requirements under the Transportation section of the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation. The County does not provide conventional or specialized transportation to the public. It does, however, operate para-transit vehicles at its long-term care facilities.

Use and inspection of accessible vehicles at long term care facilities

- The County continued to operate para-transit vehicles at the long term care facilities for resident transport. Inspection occurred regularly to ensure accessible and safe transport and to meet requirements of applicable legislation such as the Highway Traffic Act.

Built Environment

Barrier-free design features in County facilities

- The County continued to incorporate accessible features in renovations and upgrades to facilities. Building Code requirements are followed and consideration given to features that improve accessibility. During the period of this annual status report, there were no extensive renovations or new construction of County facilities.
- An automatic door opener was installed on the door of the Oro Medonte Severn Boardroom of the County's Administration Centre. This boardroom is on an accessible, barrier-free path of travel, near the main entrance and used for meetings of the Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee and other meetings involving members of the public.
- The County's Accessibility Advisory Committee conducted an audit of a portion of the County's Administration Centre in 2014 and recommended a number of accessibility improvements. Improvements completed in this reporting period include the posting of a sign to designate a service animal relief area and the painting of aisles beside accessible parking spaces.

Sensory garden at the Simcoe County Museum

- The sensory garden at the Simcoe County Museum was designed to be accessible and useable by people of all ages and abilities. The Accessibility Advisory Committee had previously provided feedback on the design of the garden and accessibility features, including a ramp, handrails, and seating area. The project was completed, including the planting of various shrubs and plants, and a grand opening occurred during this reporting period. At a future summer or fall meeting of the Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee, members will view the garden and provide feedback to staff on its accessibility features.

Accessible public spaces (recreational trails)

- The County of Simcoe organized and hosted an accessible trails event at the Simcoe County Museum on March 25, 2015. This training event was attended by a number of County staff, staff from the County's member municipalities and surrounding municipalities, Accessibility Advisory Committee members, and other interested parties. Presenters included representatives from the Accessibility Directorate of Ontario, Ontario Trails Council, a consulting group, and the Regional Municipality of York. This event provided information on requirements under the Design of Public Spaces of the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation as well as best practices on the design of accessible trails.

Contact Information

This Accessibility Plan 2015 Annual Status Report will be available on the County of Simcoe's website and internal Intranet. Printed copies can be obtained from the County of Simcoe's Administration Centre.

This document will be available in alternate format or with communication support, upon request.

The County of Simcoe welcomes all questions and comments on the 2015 Annual Status Report and accessibility matters in general. Please contact the County in person, by mail, telephone, email or fax.

County of Simcoe
Accessibility, Clerk's Department
1110 Highway 26
Midhurst, ON L0L 1X0

Telephone: 705-726-9300 Extension 1246
Toll Free: 1-866-893-9300
Customer Service: 705-735-6901
Hearing and Voice Carry Over (Bell Relay Service): 1-800-855-0511

Fax: 705-725-1285
Email: accessibility@simcoe.ca
Website: www.simcoe.ca

County of Simcoe 2013-2018 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan 2016 Annual Status Report

Overview

The County of Simcoe is pleased to present its annual status report as an update to its 2013-2018 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan, as required under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005.

The County of Simcoe's 2013-2018 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan was prepared in consultation with persons with disabilities, the County of Simcoe's Accessibility Advisory Committee, the Province of Ontario, and other municipalities. The Plan was approved by County Council in October 2013. It outlines the County of Simcoe's strategy to identify, remove and prevent barriers faced by persons with disabilities. The Plan also outlines how the County of Simcoe will comply with accessibility legislation.

The 2016 Annual Status Report highlights the County of Simcoe's achievements over the past year (September 2015 to September 2016), which have improved accessibility and removed or prevented barriers within the County of Simcoe's facilities, programs and services. The list is organized to reflect the format of the County's 2013-2018 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan and the five standards of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005. The list also includes initiatives that address general barriers faced by persons with disabilities and the County's overall commitment to accessibility and awareness.

This report and other accessibility information related to the County's programs and services will be made available in alternate formats upon request and will be posted on the County of Simcoe's website.

County of Simcoe and Township of Springwater Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee

The County of Simcoe and Township of Springwater Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee advises the Councils of the participating municipalities on matters regarding the accessibility of County and Township owned and operated facilities as well as programs and services offered by the County and Township. The members of the 2015-2018 Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee are listed below. It should be noted that although the County of Simcoe and the Township of Springwater have a Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee, the two participating municipalities continue to maintain and implement two separate multi-year accessibility plans and prepare separate annual status reports.

List of Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee Members

Doug Mein, Chair (Citizen Appointee)
Susan Hamer, Vice Chair (Citizen Appointee)
Liz Grummett (Citizen Appointee)
Fred Heyduk (Citizen Appointee)
Peggy Norton-Harris (Citizen Appointee)

Gerry Marshall (County Warden); Warden's Designate: Terry Dowdall (Deputy Warden)
Katy Austin (Township of Springwater Councillor)

The County of Simcoe and the Township of Springwater provide the following main staff resources for the Committee:

Amanda Flynn (Deputy Clerk, County of Simcoe)
Joanne Lane (Accessibility and Development Consultant, County of Simcoe)
Jennifer Marshall (Council and Committee Coordinator, County of Simcoe)
Yvonne Aubichon (Deputy Clerk, Township of Springwater)
Karen Todd (Clerk's Assistant, Township of Springwater)

General

Community accessibility partnerships

- The County of Simcoe continued to coordinate and host meetings of the Simcoe County Accessibility Group. This group consists of staff from the County of Simcoe, 16 member municipalities, and the separated cities of Barrie and Orillia who are responsible for accessibility activities and legislative compliance at their respective organizations. In 2016, the group was expanded to include municipalities from the surrounding area that expressed interest in joining the networking group. During the period of this status report, the group met on November 19, 2015, February 18, 2016, May 12, 2016, and August 11, 2016. Various accessibility topics were discussed and resources and best practices shared. In addition to in-person meetings, the Accessibility and Development Consultant maintained contact with the group by email and telephone to discuss accessibility matters and share resources.
- The Accessibility and Development Consultant maintained membership in the Ontario Network of Accessibility Professionals (ONAP), which is comprised of staff at municipalities and other broader public sector organizations across Ontario. A meeting was held on May 13, 2016 in the City of Quinte West. In addition to meetings, the Accessibility and Development Consultant maintained regular contact with the group via telephone and email in order to share information and resources and discuss accessibility questions and concerns.
- The Accessibility and Development Consultant continued membership in the South Western Ontario Accessibility Group, which is a sub-group of ONAP, consisting primarily of accessibility staff in South Western Ontario. Although the County did not attend any in-person meetings during the reporting period, the Accessibility and Development Consultant participated via telephone and maintained email contact with the group. Various accessibility topics were discussed and resources shared to assist staff in the implementation of accessibility initiatives.
- The Accessibility and Development Consultant participated in the University of Guelph's annual accessibility conference on May 30 and 31, 2016. The theme of the 2016 conference was "In Letter and Spirit: Realizing the Vision of the AODA." The conference's sessions were divided into various streams, including accessibility in the workplace, web accessibility, countdown to 2025/accessibility in Ontario, document and media accessibility,

realizing the vision of the AODA, leading for inclusion, and inclusive teaching and learning. Specific sessions were chosen by the Accessibility and Development Consultant that were not specific to universities and other post-secondary institutions and cover implementation of accessibility legislation and general disability and accessibility matters. This conference provided an excellent networking opportunity and allowed the County to gather information on best practices. The Accessibility and Development Consultant provided information, as applicable, with County departments and member municipalities.

Council proclamations to promote accessibility and disability awareness

- On behalf of County of Simcoe Council, the Warden continued his annual proclamation of the International Day of Persons with Disabilities (December 3, 2015) and National Access Awareness Week (May 29 to June 4, 2016). By observing these events, County Council acknowledges the importance of accessibility and disability awareness. Media releases and social media posts followed these proclamations. The County of Simcoe also placed its Access Awareness Week banner at the main entrance of the Administration Centre to further promote the annual event. In anticipation of National Access Awareness Week in 2017, the County has commenced discussions with member municipalities about accessibility events to be hosted by various municipalities across the County during the week. The County will assist in communicating the importance of this week and promoting events across Simcoe County.

Accessibility planning and reporting

- This annual status report outlines the County of Simcoe's accessibility activities and accomplishments over the past year. This report meets the annual status reporting that is required by both the Ontarians with Disabilities Act and the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act.
- A 2017 Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee Work Plan has been prepared by County of Simcoe and Township of Springwater staff to be reviewed by the Committee at its September 22, 2016 meeting. This work plan outlines projects and tasks for the Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee.
- The County of Simcoe completed an Accessibility Compliance Report that was submitted to the Accessibility Directorate of Ontario by the deadline of December 31, 2015. This report confirmed the County of Simcoe's overall compliance with legislative requirements since the implementation of the accessibility standards.

Accessibility policy

- In November 2015, Simcoe County Council approved an Accessibility Standards Policy (CLK 11.0), which was the result of consolidating a number of policies relating to various sections of accessibility legislation. The Ontario government recently made changes to the AODA's Accessibility Standards for Customer Service Regulation and the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation, which came into effect on July 1, 2016. A review of the existing accessibility policy was conducted to ensure its effectiveness and alignment with the legislation. As a result, the County's Accessibility Standards Policy was revised and will

be reviewed by the Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee at its meeting on September 22, 2016.

Training

- The Accessibility and Development Consultant continued to provide training on the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disability Act (AODA) and its Regulation, the Ontario Human Rights Code, and general accessibility and disability awareness to new County of Simcoe employees. Records are kept on the completion of the training as per the legislation's requirements. During the period of this annual status report, approximately 140 new employees received the training. In addition, the Accessibility and Development Consultant attended a number of departmental meetings to provide additional training and answer questions specific to the departments.

Customer Service

Compliance with the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service

- The County of Simcoe maintained its compliance with the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service Regulation, including legislative requirements for use of service animals, support persons, and assistive devices. The County notified the public when there was a service disruption to facilities, programs and services that are used by persons with disabilities. Training on accessible customer service was also provided to new employees, as noted above, as part of the County's "Disability, Accessibility and the Law" training program. It should be noted that the Ontario government amended the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service Regulation, effective July 1, 2016. The main change is that standards for customer service are now part of the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation. This simplifies compliance requirements as there is now just one Regulation under the AODA.

Service Animal Relief Areas

- As recommended by the Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee, the County of Simcoe designated areas at some of its public facilities, including the Simcoe County Museum and Simcoe County Archives, as service animal relief areas. This has included the installation of signage and provision of bags for service animal waste. In addition, the service animal relief area at the County's Administration Centre was moved to a more accessible and safe area, as recommended by the Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee.

Response and tracking of resident feedback and accommodation requests

- The Accessibility and Development Consultant and the Customer Service Department continued to track and respond to all feedback, concerns and requests from residents. Responses were provided in a timely manner that took into account each person's needs and the County's ability to meet those needs and requests. During the period of this annual status report, just two accessibility-related feedback and inquiries were logged by the Customer Service Department. These included requests for accessible formats of documents and inquiries about waste collection services.

- In addition to the response and tracking of resident feedback and accommodation requests, the Accessibility and Development Consultant worked with various departments to enhance accessibility and improve customer service provided to persons with disabilities. For example, some departments ensure that assistive devices such as magnifying glasses and sheets are readily available for customers who need to fill out applications for services or review documents before signing.

Information and Communication

Accessible formats and communication supports

- The County of Simcoe continued to incorporate accessibility features into documents created by its many departments, including internal and external documents. Considerations include font size and style, colour contrast, spacing, use of white space, and use of formatting techniques such as bold, italics, underlining and use of capital letters. In addition, the County provided documents in alternative format and/or with communication support, upon request.

Accessible website and web content

1. The County of Simcoe continued to make further improvements to its public website. A software application is regularly utilized that checks the accessibility of the website, based on criteria set out in the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG). The County of Simcoe's Information Technology Department and web content contributors receive reports on the accessibility of their department's webpage. Although there has been a significant increase in the accessibility of the County's website, efforts continue to improve the accessibility of documents that are posted to the website.

Employment

Accessible employment policies and procedures

- The County of Simcoe maintained its compliance with accessible employment standards by monitoring and documenting employment policies and procedures, where required, to provide accommodations in all stages of employment, accessible formats and communications supports to employees, workplace emergency response information, and return to work and related accommodation plans. In addition, the Accessibility and Development Consultant has provided information and suggestions to various departments on how to meet the needs of employees with various types of disabilities.

Transportation

At this time, the County of Simcoe does not have specific requirements under the Transportation section of the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation. The County does not provide conventional or specialized transportation to the public. It does, however, operate para-transit vehicles at its long-term care facilities.

Use and inspection of accessible vehicles at long term care facilities

- The County continued to operate para-transit vehicles at the long term care facilities for resident transport. Inspection occurred regularly to ensure accessible and safe transport and to meet requirements of applicable legislation such as the Highway Traffic Act.

Built Environment**Barrier-free design features in County facilities**

- The County continued to incorporate accessible features in renovations and upgrades to facilities. Building Code requirements are followed and consideration given to features that improve accessibility. In 2014, the Accessibility Advisory Committee reviewed designs for a Social Housing project (expansion of 33 Brooks Street in Barrie) as well as a new design for future paramedic stations across the County and provided feedback on accessibility and barrier-free design features. During this reporting period, these Social Housing and Paramedic Services construction projects have continued.
- An automatic door opener was installed on the second door into the Council Chambers at the County's Administration Centre. This allows easier access to Council Chambers for individuals that do not wish to use, or do not require the full assistance of the Council Chambers lift.

Accessibility facility reviews

- The Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee and staff developed a process, plan and checklist for the completion of accessibility facility reviews of County of Simcoe and Township of Springwater owned and operated facilities. On August 26, 2016, the Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee conducted a facility review of the Simcoe County Museum, including its exterior heritage buildings. The Committee identified a number of accessibility features as well as potential barriers. A summary of the findings will be reviewed by the Committee at its September 22, 2016 and subsequently forwarded to the Simcoe County Museum for consideration. Additional facility reviews will be completed by the Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee in the future.

Contact Information

This Accessibility Plan 2016 Annual Status Report will be available on the County of Simcoe's website and internal Intranet. Printed copies can be obtained from the County of Simcoe's Administration Centre.

This document will be available in alternate format or with communication support, upon request.

The County of Simcoe welcomes all questions and comments on the 2016 Annual Status Report and accessibility matters in general. Please contact the County in person, by mail, telephone, email or fax.

County of Simcoe
Accessibility, Clerk's Department
1110 Highway 26
Midhurst, ON L9X 1N6

Telephone: 705-726-9300 Extension 1246
Toll Free: 1-866-893-9300
Customer Service: 705-735-6901
Hearing and Voice Carry Over (Bell Relay Service): 1-800-855-0511

Fax: 705-725-1285
Email: accessibility@simcoe.ca
Website: www.simcoe.ca

County of Simcoe 2013-2018 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan 2017 Annual Status Report

Overview

The County of Simcoe is pleased to present its annual status report as an update to its 2013-2018 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan, as required under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005.

The County of Simcoe's 2013-2018 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan was prepared in consultation with persons with disabilities, the County of Simcoe's Accessibility Advisory Committee, the Province of Ontario, and other municipalities. The Plan was approved by County Council in October 2013. It outlines the County of Simcoe's strategy to identify, remove and prevent barriers faced by persons with disabilities. The Plan also outlines how the County of Simcoe will comply with accessibility legislation.

The 2017 Annual Status Report highlights the County of Simcoe's achievements over the past year (September 2016 to September 2017), which have improved accessibility and removed or prevented barriers within the County of Simcoe's facilities, programs and services. The list is organized to reflect the format of the County's 2013-2018 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan and the five standards of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005. The list also includes initiatives that address general barriers faced by persons with disabilities and the County's overall commitment to accessibility and awareness.

This report and other accessibility information related to the County's programs and services will be made available in alternate formats upon request and will be posted on the County of Simcoe's website.

County of Simcoe and Township of Springwater Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee

The County of Simcoe and Township of Springwater Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee advises the Councils of the participating municipalities on matters regarding the accessibility of County and Township owned and operated facilities as well as programs and services offered by the County and Township. The members of the 2015-2018 Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee are listed below. It should be noted that although the County of Simcoe and the Township of Springwater have a Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee, the two participating municipalities continue to maintain and implement two separate multi-year accessibility plans and prepare separate annual status reports.

List of Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee Members

Doug Mein, Chair (Citizen Appointee)
Susan Hamer, Vice Chair (Citizen Appointee)
Liz Grummett (Citizen Appointee)
Fred Heyduk (Citizen Appointee)
Peggy Norton-Harris (Citizen Appointee)

Gerry Marshall (County Warden); Warden's Designate: Terry Dowdall (Deputy Warden)
Katy Austin (Township of Springwater Councillor)

The County of Simcoe and the Township of Springwater provide the following main staff resources for the Committee:

Amanda Flynn (Deputy Clerk, County of Simcoe)
Jennifer Marshall (Council and Committee Coordinator, County of Simcoe)
Karen Way (Deputy Clerk, Township of Springwater)
Karen Jameison (Clerk's Assistant, Township of Springwater)

General

Community accessibility partnerships

- The Clerk's Department continued membership in the Simcoe County and Area Accessibility Group. This group consists of staff from the County of Simcoe, 16 member municipalities, and the separated cities of Barrie and Orillia who are responsible for accessibility activities and legislative compliance at their respective organizations. In 2016, the group was expanded to include municipalities from the surrounding area that expressed interest in joining the networking group. During the period of this status report, the group met on September 14, 2017. Various accessibility topics were discussed and resources and best practices shared. In addition to in-person meetings, the Clerk's Department maintained contact with the group by email and telephone to discuss accessibility matters and share resources.
- The Clerk's Department maintained membership in the Ontario Network of Accessibility Professionals (ONAP), which is comprised of approximately 150 members, being staff at municipalities and other broader public sector organizations across Ontario. The Clerk's Department maintained regular contact with the group via telephone and email in order to share information and resources and discuss accessibility questions and concerns.
- The Clerk's Department continued membership in the South Western Ontario Accessibility Group, which is a sub-group of ONAP, consisting primarily of accessibility staff in South Western Ontario. The Legislative Co-ordinator and the Council and Committee Co-ordinator attended a meeting in Guelph on February 16, 2017. The Clerk's Department maintained email contact with the group where various accessibility topics were discussed and resources shared to assist staff in the implementation of accessibility initiatives.
- The Deputy Clerk participated in the University of Guelph's annual accessibility conference on May 30, 2017. The theme of the 2017 conference was "Becoming a Catalyst for Inclusion." The conference's sessions were divided into various streams, including promoting accessibility awareness and how to invoke or inspire a call to action, accessible writing and inclusive language, web accessibility, and using screen readers. Specific session were chosen by the Deputy Clerk that were not specific to universities and other post-secondary institutions and cover implementation of accessibility legislation and general disability and accessibility matters. This conference provided an excellent networking opportunity and allowed the County to gather information on best practices. The Deputy Clerk provided information, as applicable, with County departments and member municipalities.

Council proclamations to promote accessibility and disability awareness

- On behalf of County of Simcoe Council, the Warden continued his annual proclamation of the International Day of Persons with Disabilities (December 3, 2016) and National AccessAbility Awareness Week (May 28 to June 3, 2017). By observing these events, County Council acknowledges the importance of accessibility and disability awareness.

Media releases and social media posts followed these proclamations. The County of Simcoe participated in the Township of Tiny's Accessibility event in conjunction with National AccessAbility Awareness Week. Three divisions participated, Housing Services, Emergency Management and Long Term Care.

Accessibility planning and reporting

- This annual status report outlines the County of Simcoe's accessibility activities and accomplishments over the past year. This report meets the annual status reporting that is required by both the Ontarians with Disabilities Act and the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act.
- A 2018 Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee Work Plan has been prepared by County of Simcoe and Township of Springwater staff to be reviewed by the Committee at its October 19, 2017 meeting. This Work Plan outlines projects and tasks for the Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee for 2018.
- The County of Simcoe completed an Accessibility Compliance Report that was submitted to the Accessibility Directorate of Ontario by the deadline of December 31, 2016. This report confirmed the County of Simcoe's overall compliance with legislative requirements since the implementation of the accessibility standards.

Accessibility policy

- On October 25, 2016, County Council approved an updated Accessibility Standards Policy (CLK 11.1), which was the result of changes made to the AODA's Accessibility Standards for Customer Service Regulation and the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation which combined all accessibility standards as part of one Integrated Accessibility Standards Policy. Once approved by County Council, this updated policy was made available on the internal Intranet and on the public website.

Training

- The County continued to provide training on the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disability Act (AODA) and its Regulation, the Ontario Human Rights Code, and general accessibility and disability awareness to new County of Simcoe employees. This training is completed via the County's online Learning Management System (LMS). All in-person or customized accessibility training that is required is co-ordinated by the Clerk's Office and the Training Consultant in Human Resources. Records are kept on the completion of the training as per the legislation's requirements. During the period of this annual status report, approximately one hundred fifty one (151) new employees received the training.

Customer Service

Compliance with the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service

- The County of Simcoe maintained its compliance with the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service Regulation, including legislative requirements for use of service animals, support persons, and assistive devices. The County notified the public when there was a service disruption to facilities, programs and services that are used by persons with disabilities. Training on accessible customer service was also provided to new employees, as noted above, as part of the County's "Disability, Accessibility and the Law" training program.

Response and tracking of resident feedback and accommodation requests

- The Clerk's Department and the Customer Service Department continued to track and respond to all feedback, concerns and requests from residents. Responses were provided in a timely manner that took into account each person's needs and the County's ability to meet those needs and requests. During the period of this annual status report, there were no accessibility-related feedback or inquiries logged by the Customer Service Department.
- In addition to the response and tracking of resident feedback and accommodation requests, the Clerk's Department worked with various departments to enhance accessibility and improve customer service provided to persons with disabilities.

Information and Communication

Accessible formats and communication supports

- The County of Simcoe continued to incorporate accessibility features into documents created by its many departments, including internal and external documents. Considerations include font size and style, colour contrast, spacing, use of white space, and use of formatting techniques such as bold, italics, underlining and use of capital letters. In addition, the County provided documents in alternative format and/or with communication support, upon request.
- The County of Simcoe has installed video cameras in Council Chambers to begin live streaming their Council and Committee of the Whole meetings, later in 2017. This will make these public meetings more accessible for some who may not be able to attend in person.

Accessible website and web content

- The County of Simcoe continued to make further improvements to its public website. A software application is regularly utilized that checks the accessibility of the website, based on criteria set out in the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG). The County of Simcoe's Information Technology Department and web content contributors receive reports on the accessibility of their department's webpage. Although there has been a significant increase in the accessibility of the County's website, efforts continue to improve the accessibility of documents that are posted to the website.
- The Clerk's Department is working on implementing a new agenda management software which will make Council and Committee agendas and minutes into accessible pdf documents.

Employment

Accessible employment policies and procedures

- The County of Simcoe maintained its compliance with accessible employment standards by monitoring and documenting employment policies and procedures, where required, to provide accommodations in all stages of employment, accessible formats and communications supports to employees, workplace emergency response information, and return to work and related accommodation plans. In addition, the Clerk's Department has provided information and suggestions to various departments on how to meet the needs of employees with various types of disabilities.

Transportation

- At this time, the County of Simcoe does not have specific requirements under the Transportation section of the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation. The County does not provide conventional or specialized transportation to the public. It does, however, operate para-transit vehicles at its long-term care facilities.

Use and inspection of accessible vehicles at long term care facilities

- The County continued to operate para-transit vehicles at the long term care facilities for resident transport. Inspection occurred regularly to ensure accessible and safe transport and to meet requirements of applicable legislation such as the Highway Traffic Act.

Built Environment

Barrier-free design features in County facilities

- The County continued to incorporate accessible features in renovations and upgrades to facilities. Building Code requirements are followed and consideration given to features that improve accessibility. Automatic door openers were installed in two long term care homes, Trillium Manor and Georgian Village. This allows for easier access to public washrooms within the two homes as well as a resident home area within Trillium Manor.
- At the January 19, 2017 Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee meeting, the Committee was consulted on the County's first multi-use trail where they gave their feedback to County staff and the design team. The County held its grand opening of the Hickling Recreational Trail on June 28, 2017.

Accessibility facility reviews

- The Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee and staff developed a process, plan and checklist for the completion of accessibility facility reviews of County of Simcoe and Township of Springwater owned and operated facilities. On May 18, 2017, the Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee conducted a facility review of the Township of Springwater's Administration Centre. A summary of the findings was reviewed by the Committee at its August 17, 2017 meeting and forwarded to Springwater's Council for their review. Additional facility reviews will be completed by the Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee in the future.

Contact Information

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This document will be available in alternate format or with communication support, upon request.

The County of Simcoe welcomes all questions and comments on the 2017 Annual Status Report and accessibility matters in general. Please contact the County in person, by mail, telephone, email or fax.

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County of Simcoe Transit Multi-Year Accessibility Plan 2019-2023		
General		Time Frame
Information on Accessible Equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure all information regarding accessibility equipment and features of the vehicles, routes and services are available to the public by posting on the County's website. 	2018
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide information in accessible format, upon request. 	Ongoing
Non-functioning accessibility equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish, implement and maintain procedures for taking reasonable steps to accommodate persons with disabilities who would normally use the accessibility equipment if that equipment is not functioning. 	2018
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop procedures to ensure the equipment is repaired as soon as practicable. 	2018
Accessibility Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In addition to the general accessibility training requirements, accessibility training will be provided to employees and volunteers including specific training with respect to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The safe use of accessibility equipment and features ○ Acceptable modifications to procedures in situations where temporary barriers exist or accessibility equipment on a vehicle fails ○ Emergency preparedness and response procedures that provide for the safety of person with disabilities. 	2018
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Records of the training will be kept. 	Ongoing
Emergency Preparedness and Response Policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish, implement, maintain and document emergency preparedness and response policies that provide for the safety of persons with disabilities. 	2018
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure those documents are made available to the public by posting on the County's website 	2018
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide documents in accessible format, upon request. 	Ongoing
Fares, Support Persons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure no fare is charged to a support person who is accompanying a person with a disability who needs a support person 	Ongoing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a procedure for granting designations to persons with disabilities for a support person. 	2018

Accessibility Plans		
Multi-Year Transit Accessibility Plan for Conventional and Specialized Transportation Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The transit accessibility plan will be updated every five years, and a status reports completed annually. 	Ongoing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee and any community members in attendance at the meeting, will be consulted and provide feedback regarding the transit plan and annual status reports. 	Annually
Conventional Transportation Service Providers, General		
General Responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish, implement, maintain and provide training on policies and procedures for the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> deploy lifting devices, ramps or portable bridge plates upon the request of a person with a disability ensure that adequate time is provided to persons with disabilities to safely board, be secured and deboard transportation vehicles and that assistance be provided, upon request, for these activities assist with safe and careful storage of mobility aids or mobility assistive devices used by persons with disabilities allow a person with a disability to travel with a medical aid 	2018
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure these policies and procedures are available upon request in an accessible format. 	Ongoing
Fares	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure a person with a disability using conventional transportation services is not charged a higher fare. 	2018
Transit Stops	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that a person with disabilities are able to board or deboard at the closest available safe location along the same transit route, as determined by the operator, that is not an official stop, if the official stop is not accessible, and considering the preference of the person with a disability. 	Ongoing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that operators promptly report to an appropriate authority where a transit stop is temporarily inaccessible or where a temporary barrier exists. 	Ongoing
Storage of Mobility Aids	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that mobility aids and mobility assistive devices are stored in passenger compartments, if safe storage is possible, within reach of the person with the disability who uses the aid or device. 	2018

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If safe storage is not possible within the passenger compartment, then mobility aids and mobility assistive devices are stored in the baggage compartment of the vehicle on which the person with the disability is travelling. ○ Ensure operators secure and return mobility aids and mobility assistive devices in a manner that does not affect the safety or other passengers and does not cause damage to the aid or device where the mobility aid or mobility assistive device is stored in the baggage compartment of the vehicle. ○ Ensure no fee is charge for the storage of a mobility aid or mobility assistive device. 	
Priority Seating	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that there is clearly marked priority seating for persons with disabilities, located close as practicable to the entrance door of the vehicle and indicate that passengers, other than persons with disabilities must vacate the priority seating if its use is required by a person with a disability. • Develop a communications strategy to inform the public about the purpose of priority seating. 	<p>2018</p> <p>2018</p>
Service Disruptions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that when a route or scheduled service is temporarily changed and the change is known in advance of the commencement of the trip; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ available alternate accessible arrangements are made to transfer persons with disabilities to their route destination where alternate arrangements for persons without disabilities are inaccessible; and ○ ensure the information on alternate arrangements is communicated in a manner that takes into account the person's disability. 	2018
Pre-boarding Announcements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that pre-boarding verbal announcements of the route, direction, destination or next major stop are made upon request. • Ensure that there are electronic pre-boarding announcements of the route, direction, destination or next major stop on its transportation vehicles and that these electronic announcements meet the technical requirements outlined for signage. 	<p>2018</p> <p>2018</p>
On-board Announcements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that there are audible verbal announcements of all destination points or available route stops on the transit bus while on route or being operated. 	2018

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that all destination points or available route stops are announced through electronic means and are legible and visually displayed through electronic means and meet the technical requirements outlined for signage. 	2018
Technical Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All transit buses purchased will take into consideration the technical requirements under the Integrated Accessibility Standards such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ grab bars, handholds, handrails, or stanchions; ○ floors and carpeted surfaces ○ allocated mobility aid spaces ○ stop requests and emergency response controls ○ lighting features ○ signage ○ lifting devices, ramps, or portable bridge plates ○ steps ○ indicators and alarms. 	Buses ordered in 2017
Specialized Transportation Service Providers		
Categories of Eligibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish, implement and maintain policies regarding the three categories of eligibility to qualify for specialized transportation services: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Unconditional eligibility (a person with a disability that prevents them from using conventional transportation services) ○ Temporary eligibility (a person with a temporary disability that prevents them from using conventional transportation services) ○ Conditional eligibility (a person with a disability where environmental or physical barriers limit their ability to consistently use conventional transportation services) 	2018
Eligibility Application Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish, implement and maintain policies regarding the application process for eligibility for specialized transportation services. • Establish and implement an independent appeal process to review decisions respecting eligibility. 	2018 2018

Emergency or Compassionate Grounds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop procedures regarding the provision of temporary specialized transportation services earlier than the required 14 calendar days, where the services are required because of an emergency or on compassionate grounds and where no other accessible transportation services meet the person's needs. 	2018
Fare Parity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure there is fare parity between conventional and specialized transportation services. 	2018
Visitors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure specialized transportation services are available to visitors who: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide confirmation that they are eligible for specialized transportation services in the jurisdiction in which they reside, or Meet the established specialized transportation services eligibility requirements 	2018
Origin to Destination Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure origin to destination services is provided within the service area that takes into account the abilities of its passengers and accommodates their abilities. 	2018
Co-ordinated Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure connections between adjacent municipalities where specialized transportation services are provided, is facilitated which includes determining where accessible stops and drop off locations are within contiguous urban areas. 	2018
Hours of Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure at a minimum, the days and hours of service are the same as the conventional transportation services. 	2018
Booking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If reservations are required, ensure same day service to the extent that it is available is provided and where same day service is not available, accept booking requests up to three hours before published end of service period on the day before the intended day of travel. 	2018
Trip Restrictions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish, implement and maintain policies to ensure no limits are placed on the availability of specialized transportation services to persons with disabilities by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Restricting the number of trips a person with a disability is able to request; Implement any policy or operational practice that unreasonably limits the availability of specialized transportation services 	2018

Service Delays	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If reservations are required, ensure information regarding the duration of service delays (30 minutes or more after scheduled pick-up time) is provided to affected passengers by an agreed upon method <p>Note: Does not apply to delays in service that arise during the trip</p>	2018
Companions and Children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish, implement and maintain policies to ensure companions are allowed to travel with persons with disabilities if space is available and will not result in the denial of service to other persons with disabilities. 	2018
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish, implement and maintain policies to ensure dependants are allowed to travel with a person with a disability who is the parent or guardian of the dependant. 	2018
Duties of Municipalities, General		
Consultation with Accessibility Advisory Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee is consulted on the development of accessible design criteria to be considered in the construction, renovation or replacement of bus stops and shelters. 	2018-2019



STAFF REPORT

Department/Function: Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee

Meeting Date: April 19, 2018

Report Title: Draft Election Accessibility Plan

RECOMMENDATION:

**That the report from the Clerk regarding the Draft Election Accessibility Plan be received;
And that the Election Accessibility Plan be approved.**

INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND:

As part of the planning process for municipal elections, per Section 12.1 of the Municipal Elections Act the following applies:

12.1(1) Electors and candidates with disabilities

A clerk who is responsible for conducting an election shall have regard to the needs of electors and candidates with disabilities.

12.1(2) Plan – barriers

The clerk shall prepare a plan regarding the identification, removal and prevention of barrier that affect electors and candidates with disabilities and shall make the plan available to the public before voting day in a regular election.

ANALYSIS:

As a result of these new requirements, the attached Election Accessibility Plan has been developed for 2018 Election.

All election procedures, policies and plans are at the discretion of the clerk who has the ability to amend these documents as needed. Staff is seeking the input of the Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee on the draft Election Accessibility Plan, which once finalized will be posted on the Township's election webpage.

FINANCIAL/BUDGET IMPACT:

While there is no financial impact as a result of this report, the inclusion of the new accessible ballot marking device has resulted in an impact of \$4,060 plus HST to the 2018 Election Budget (not including required supplies for the operation of the device).

CONCLUSION:

Staff is seeking the Committee's input on the draft Election Accessibility Plan.

Recommended By:

Date: March 16, 2018

Alison Gray, BAH, CMO, AOMC
Clerk

Attachment: Draft Election Accessibility Plan



**Elections Accessibility Plan
2018**

This Plan is for use in the 2018 Municipal Election in conjunction with the Township's current Accessibility Standards Policy, guidelines, training and customer service feedback standards.

Elections Accessibility Plan

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Mandate

It is the goal of the Township of Tay (the 'Township') to ensure that electors in the municipality who have a disability or require accommodation are provided with the best opportunity to vote as independently as possible in the 2018 Municipal Election.

Introduction

The Township is committed to eliminating barriers and improving accessibility for persons with disabilities. The Township strives at all times to provide goods and services in a way that respects the dignity and independence of people with disabilities. We are also committed to giving people with disabilities the same opportunities to benefit from the same services, in the same places and in a similar way as other residents.

In accordance with the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*, and the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*, the Clerk is authorized to establish procedures and provide appropriate measures to ensure that persons with disabilities have the opportunity to participate fully in the 2018 Municipal Election. Accordingly, the 2018 Municipal Election will be conducted in such a manner to ensure that:

1. Candidates and electors with disabilities have full and equal access to all election information and services.
2. Persons with disabilities have full access to voting; and
3. Persons with disabilities are able to independently and privately mark their ballot and have access to alternative methods of voting assistance.

Following the election, the Clerk will submit a report to Council concerning the identification, removal and prevention of barriers that affect electors and candidates with disabilities.

Developing the Election Accessibility Plan

This plan is a 'living' document and will be improved and updated as best practices are identified and new opportunities of improvement arise.

The Township is in consultation with the Accessibility Advisory Committee to review the initial Elections Accessibility Plan to ensure needs are being met.

Voting Location (Municipal Office)

In order to ensure that the voting location, at the municipal office, is accessible to electors with disabilities, the location will be evaluated. The evaluation form will include the assessment of the following areas:

- Parking Areas
- Exteriors
- Entrances
- Fire and Life Safety
- General Layout and Services
- Interiors
- Public Washrooms
- Facility Signage and Information Systems

The evaluation will be completed by the Returning Officer or designate. Upon completion of the evaluation, a list of any barriers which have been identified will be reviewed to determine if they can be rectified to accommodate electors with disabilities.

Directional signage will also be used to assist with navigating through voting locations. Staff will also be available to aid those who request assistance.

Parking

Designated or reserved parking for people with disabilities is to be provided close to the entrance of the voting location where possible. Accessible parking spaces will be clearly posted and easy to see from the road and marked with the international symbol of accessibility. Curb cuts will be identified so users of mobility aids can access the road and sidewalk.

Service Animals

Anyone requiring the use of service animals is permitted to be accompanied by a service animal at the voting location.

Service animals may be any animal assisting a person with a disability. Service animals include, but are not limited to guide dogs, hearing alert dogs, seizure alert animals, special skills animals and animals that provide emotional support to persons with disabilities. Persons with disabilities are permitted to be accompanied by their service animal at all voting locations. A service animal should never be touched without the expressed permission of its owner.

In most cases, it is readily apparent that an animal is providing assistance to a person with a disability as the animal may be observed assisting the person or the animal is wearing an identifiable vest or harness.

In situations where it may not be apparent that the animal is a service animal for a person with a disability, election staff may ask the customer for one of the following:

- A letter from a physician or nurse stating that the customer needs the animal for reasons relating to a disability; or
- A valid identification card or training certificate from a recognized service animal training school.

Provision of Election Information and Communications

The Township will, in accordance with the *Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation*, provide candidates and electors with disabilities with information in a format that takes into account their disability. Information and forms will notify candidates and electors that the information is available in an alternative format upon request. Once a request has been made, the requester and the Clerk and/or their designate will agree upon a format that meets the needs of the individual.

Promotional initiatives will aim at creating awareness of accessible features and ensuring voters have the necessary information to participate in the election.

Information provided through the Township's website will comply with the *Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation*. Please visit our website for more information on the 2018 Municipal Election www.tay.ca/vote.

Feedback Process

Feedback about the manner in which election services are provided to persons with disabilities may be submitted to the Clerks Department.

Feedback may be provided in the following manner:

- 1) Completing the appropriate form
- 2) In person at: 450 Park Street, Victoria Harbour, Ontario
- 3) By telephone: (705) 534-7248
- 4) By email: agray@tay.ca
- 5) By fax: (705) 534-4493

The feedback process provides election staff with an opportunity to take corrective measures to prevent similar recurrences, address training needs, enhance service delivery and provide alternative methods of providing election services.

Entrance to the Voting Location

All entrances and accessible paths of travel will be clearly sign-posted, using the international symbol of accessibility. Every effort shall be made to ensure that the door into the voting location is wide enough for a wheelchair or scooter to pass through easily. The door hardware is to be accessible and operated by a person using a closed fist. Routine inspections of the entrances will be conducted to ensure the area is free from barriers and safe.

Interior Voting Area

Access to the interior voting area shall be level and easily traversed. Any doormats or carpeting shall be level with the floor to prevent potential tripping hazards. All voting areas are to be well lit and seating made available at various stages of the voting process.

Accessible Voting Booths

Accessible voting booths will be available. Voting stations will be low in height and have a wide area to allow for individuals who use mobility or assistive devices to vote independently and secretively. A large print "Notice of Ballot" poster shall be displayed in close proximity to the voting booth. Magnifying sheets will be made available to assist any individual with low vision.

Vote By Mail System

The voting system, being Vote By Mail, allows individuals to vote at home providing those with disabilities with the same privacy provisions as all other voters. If anyone requires assistance, staff will be available to respond to any inquiries over the phone or at the office. In addition, a voting station will be set-up at the office starting the day the voting kits are mailed up to and including Election Day until close of voting.

Staff will deliver Vote By Mail voting kits directly to those who call indicating that they have not received their kits and are unable to attend the office, as they did not have a vehicle, means to attend the office or are home-bound. In 2014 this worked well as the affected electors advised that they have someone who can drop off their completed kit to the mail.

Accessible Voting Technologies

Various accessible voting technologies will be provided on voting days for voters with disabilities.

Accessible Voting Ballot Marker Device

This technology allows integrated accessible voting to allow all voters to cast a ballot. The machine generates a marked paper ballot from a blank piece of paper using an audio and handheld vote selector device. This technology also allows for voter privacy, since accessible ballots cannot be differentiated from ballots marked by hand.

The voice guidance feature enable persons who are blind or visually impaired to vote unassisted in complete privacy by sequencing through the entire ballot using verbal prompts. Voters can also control the speed of the audio ballot. There will also be the option to use paddles or a sip-and-puff assistive device to mark a ballot.

Voting Assistance & Support Persons

Prior to entering the voting booth, the Deputy Returning Officer shall, in conjunction with the person with the disability, determine the extent to which they need assistance and the best way in which this assistance can be provided.

Wherever possible the DRO will explain the accessible technologies available and confirm their preferred method to vote (with technology or a support person). This may include actually marking the ballot as directed by the person with the disability.

Support Persons

A support person may accompany a person with a disability in order to help with communications, mobility, personal care or medical needs. The support person, upon the completion of a prescribed oath, may accompany the elector behind the privacy screen to assist the elector in the voting process.

A support person is permitted to accompany the voter throughout the voting location, including the privacy screen/voting station. The Township will not prevent the person with a disability from having access to their support person while at the voting location.

The support person is able to mark the voter's ballot for the person with a disability if required; however the support person must complete an oral oath to maintain the secrecy of the vote. The DRO may also assist the voter

in marking the ballot if requested. The DRO would mark the ballot as directed by the voter and place the ballot into the secrecy envelope at the voting station.

Campaign Expenses

Expenses that are incurred by a candidate with a disability that are directly related to the disability, and would not have been incurred but for the election to which the expenses relate are excluded from the permitted spending limit for the candidate.

Staff Training

All staff carrying out election duties will be trained to recognize and ensure that persons with disabilities are served in a way that accommodates their needs.

In addition to AODA Customer Service Training and Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation Training, staff will also learn:

1. how to interact and communicate with persons with various types of disabilities;
2. how to interact with persons with disabilities who use assistive devices or require the assistance of a service animal or support person;
3. how to use voting equipment and assistive devices to deliver election services; and
4. what to do if a person is having difficulty accessing election information or services.

Assisting Candidates and Electors with Disabilities

Candidates or Electors with disabilities may require assistance to help them access election information and services. The Township of Tay strives at all times to provide its goods and services in a way that respects the dignity and independence of people with disabilities. We are also committed to giving people with disabilities the same opportunity to access our goods and services and allowing them to benefit from the same services, in the same place and in a similar way as other customers.

Accommodation may involve various forms of assistance, such as the use of the individual's own mobility aids and assistive devices (i.e. wheelchair, cane, scooter, crutches etc.) or assistive devices that the Township may make available to them (i.e. magnifying sheet).

Notice of Temporary Service Disruption

If there is a temporary disruption in the delivery of election information or services, the Clerk shall provide public notice on the Township's website, at the site of the disruption and when possible in the local media and/or using social media channels.

The notice shall include:

- the reason for the disruption,
- anticipated duration, and
- description of alternative methods of delivering the information or service.

Every effort shall be made to provide alternative methods of providing the information or service to persons with disabilities.

Appendix A – Notice of Temporary Service Disruption**Notice of Temporary Service Disruption**

Type of Disruption:

Reason for Disruption:

The disruption is anticipated to be from _____ to _____.

The following alternative service/facility is located at:

Posted On:

For additional information please contact:

Alison Gray, Clerk
450 Park Street, P.O. Box 100
Victoria Harbour, ON L0K 2A0
Telephone: (705) 534-7248
Fax: (705) 534-4493
Email: agray@tay.ca

**We apologize for any inconvenience this may have caused.
Thank you for your patience and cooperation in this matter!**

Appendix B – Accessible Elections Feedback Form**Accessibility Feedback Form**

Name:
Address:
Phone No.:
Email:

Were you able to receive the information needed and cast your vote

Was your voting experience made more accessible by staff or equipment?

What would make voting more accessible to you in the future?

Any additional comments, concerns or questions?

For additional information please contact:

Alison Gray, Clerk
450 Park Street, P.O. Box 100
Victoria Harbour, ON L0K 2A0
Telephone: (705) 534-7248
Fax: (705) 534-4493
Email: agray@tay.ca

Thank you for your patience and feedback!



STAFF REPORT

Department/Function: Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee

Meeting Date: April 19, 2018

Subject: Tay 2018 to 2022 Accessibility Plan

RECOMMENDATION:

That the report regarding the 2018 to 2022 Accessibility Plan be received;
And the Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee review and provide feedback on the Plan.

INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND:

In 2005, the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA)*, was passed by the Provincial Government with the intent of achieving accessibility with respect to goods, services, facilities, employment, buildings, structures and premises by January 1, 2025.

The AODA is supported by the Integrated Accessibility Standard Regulation O. Reg. 191/11 (IASR) which consists of standards addressing Customer Service, Information and Communication, Employment, Design of Public Spaces, Built Environment, and Transportation. All standards, with the exception of Transportation as we currently do not have a public transportation system, apply to the Township of Tay.

Per Section 4 of the IASR, the municipality is required to:

- 4.(1) (a) establish, implement, maintain and document a multi-year accessibility plan, which outlines the organization's strategy to prevent and remove barriers and meet its requirements under this Regulation;
- (b) post the accessibility plan on their website, if any, and provide the plan in an accessible format upon request; and
- (c) review and update the accessibility plan at least once every five years.

ANALYSIS:

The draft 2018 to 2022 Accessibility Plan was submitted for comments to the October 11th, 2017 Tay Council Committee meeting with comments being received until October 31st from the public and organizations who are aware of the needs of those with disabilities.

The Township did receive comments from Independent Living Services Simcoe respecting:

- extra detail on the amount of public consultation done as part of the development of this Plan
- noting the Township's existing rules respecting accessibility considerations during procurement processes, and self-service kiosks
- extra detail respecting staff training on provincial accessibility laws and the Ontario Human Rights code
- adding dates to the items listed as Identified Improvements to ensure they are accomplished.

All of the input received has been considered and inserted into the Plan (see attached Plan). The Township already had the majority of items identified in effect but they were missing in the detail from the draft Plan. As the Long Term Plan has already been approved, staff will review the outstanding items and place them into the budget cycle starting next year. Once the items have been placed into the Long Term Plan anticipated dates will be added to Schedule 'B'.

The Council of the Township of Tay approved the new Plan in November 2017; however, as the Township has now joined the Joint AAC the Plan is submitted for any further review and comments.

FINANCIAL/BUDGET IMPACT:

The 2018 to 2022 Accessibility Plan does have minor and major renovations planned for various municipal facilities. These items will be brought forward as part of the regular budget cycle for Council's consideration.

CONCLUSION:

At this time, we are requesting comments and feedback on the five year plan.

Recommended By:

Date: March 20, 2017

Alison Gray, BAH, CMO, AOMC
Clerk

Reviewed By:

Date:

Robert J. Lamb, CEcD, Ec.D.
Chief Administrative Officer

Attachment: Draft Accessibility Plan



**MULTI-YEAR
ACCESSIBILITY PLAN
2018-2022**

This document is available in alternate formats upon request.

Township of Tay
450 Park Street
P.O. Box 100
Victoria Harbour, ON L0K2A0
Tel: 705-534-7248
Fax: 705-534-4493
Email: agray@tay.ca
Website: www.tay.ca

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1.0 Introduction

In 2001 the *Ontarians with Disabilities Act* (ODA) was enacted to ensure that public organizations incorporate accessibility planning into their operations and facilities and document such actions within an accessibility plan.

In 2005, the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* (AODA) was enacted to further qualify the ODA and serve as a framework for the establishment of accessibility standards that will lead Ontario to be fully accessible by 2025. This Act allows persons with disabilities the ability to access goods, services, facilities, accommodation, employment, buildings, structures and premises without impediment and to involve persons with disabilities in the development of those standards. Compliance with the AODA is required by both public and private sector organizations.

Ontario Regulation 191/11 - Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR) was established under the AODA and requires all municipalities to prepare a Multi-Year Accessibility Plan (MYAP) to outline the organization's strategy to prevent and remove barriers and to meet the Plan's requirements in the IASR. The regulation specifies that municipalities shall consult with people with disabilities and the local Accessibility Advisory Committee in preparing, reviewing and updating the Plan.

2.0 Municipal Profile

The Township of Tay is located on the shores of Georgian Bay and encompasses the Communities of Port McNicoll, Victoria Harbour, Waubaushene and Waverley. The Township contains acres of prime farm land as well as miles of breathtaking waterfront. Tay Township is surrounded by the Town of Midland, the Township of Oro Medonte, the Township of Springwater and the Township of Georgian Bay.

The population of the Township of Tay is 10,036 based on the results of the 2016 Census. The Township offers many cultural, educational and historical opportunities including St. Marie Among the Hurons, Martyrs' Shrine and The Wye Marsh. The Township provides three local libraries, two community centers, two community rooms and numerous recreational parks, outdoor ice rinks and ball diamonds.

3.0 Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC)

The AODA states that every municipality having a population of not less than 10,000 shall establish an Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC) and that a majority of the members of the committee shall be persons with disabilities. Tay established an AAC in 2017 and is currently working to appoint members or create a joint AAC with another municipality.

Pursuant to the AODA, the AAC's terms of reference includes the following:

- Advise the Township on the accessibility for persons with disabilities to a building, structure or premises, or part of a building, structure or premises that Council intends to purchase.
- Advise the Township on the accessibility of new developments for which site plans are being reviewed by the municipality pursuant to Section 41 of the *Planning Act*.
- Research and make recommendations to Township Council concerning the identification, removal and prevention of barriers to persons with disabilities within the Township of Tay.

4.0 Accessible Planning

4.1 Council's Commitment to Accessibility Planning

The Township of Tay is committed to increasing and enhancing accessibility to its programs, services, and facilities. The Township has moved steadily towards providing a higher level of accessibility to its services, programs and infrastructures. The goal is to incorporate accessibility as a part of everyday life and maintain it as a core element to Township services.

Informed and committed leadership means:

- Township departments provide input to the Plan.
- Council endorses the Plan.
- The Plan and related accessibility documentation are publicly available and in alternative formats upon request.
- Accessible customer service training is provided to all staff.
- Staff has access to accessibility-related resources and information.

The Township of Tay will continue to review existing and develop new corporate policies, practices and procedures in relation to the AODA requirements (as amended). The AAC will be consulted on any new policies and procedures that are created related to the AODA.

The Township of Tay, both as an employer and service provider, is committed to barrier free access and will:

1. Take a leadership role in setting an example to the business, institutional and volunteer sectors in terms of access and integration, employment equity, communications, and recreation.
2. Identify barriers and gaps in existing facilities and services.
3. Continually improve the level of accessibility of municipal facilities, programs and services.
4. Actively encourage input from all segments of the community in the design, development and operation of new and renovated municipal facilities and services.
5. Ensure the provision of quality services to all members of the community with disabilities.
6. Provide resources and support to give effect to the Plan.
7. Promote accessibility within the community.

4.2 Barriers

The intent of the Plan is to prevent, identify and remove barriers. Barriers are obstacles that stand in the way of people with disabilities from being able to do many of the day-to-day activities that people take for granted. A barrier is anything that prevents a person with a disability from fully participating in all aspects of society because of a disability. The traditional definition of a barrier used in the context of accessibility has been expanded to include obstacles beyond physical boundaries. There are several other categories of barriers to consider, such as:

Environmental Barriers: Features, buildings or spaces that restrict or impede physical access. For example, a doorway that is too narrow to accommodate entry by person in a motorized scooter.

Communication Barriers: Obstacles with processing, transmitting or interpreting information. For example, print on a brochure that is too small to read or documents not available in alternative formats.

Attitudinal Barriers: Prejudgments or assumptions that directly or indirectly discriminate. For example, assuming that all visually impaired persons can read Braille.

Technological Barriers: Occurs when technology cannot or is not modified to support various assistive devices and/or software. For example, a website that does not provide for increased text size or contrast options.

Systemic Barriers: Barriers within an organization's policies, practices and procedures that do not consider accessibility. For example, listing a driver's license as an employment qualification for an office position may prohibit persons with visual impairments from applying.

4.3 Consultation

Township staff has provided input on the Plan.

While the AAC has been created, with no appointed members at the time of the new Plan's development, the Plan will be reviewed by the AAC once appointed and updated as necessary.

When developing, reviewing and updating the Plan, Tay Township consulted with Independent Living Services Simcoe, an organization that maintains an awareness of the needs of people with disabilities, and solicited feedback directly from those with disabilities through public notice and correspondence.

4.4 Review and Monitoring Process

Status reports on the measures taken to implement the Township's strategy and Plan barriers will be prepared and presented to Council annually, following a review by the AAC.

4.5 Communication of the Plan

Copies of the Plan and the annual status reports will be made available in an accessible format upon request and on the Township's website at www.Tay.ca

4.6 Feedback

Listening to feedback is an integral part of the evaluation process. The Township's Accessibility Standards Policy sets out the feedback process. Township staff will work to ensure that the feedback process is accessible to persons with disabilities by providing, or arranging for the provision of, accessible formats and communication supports, on request.

Members of the public are notified of the availability of accessible formats and communication supports with respect to the feedback process through the Township's website. Feedback on the accessibility of its facilities, programs, and goods and services is always welcome.

5.0 Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR)

The Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR) - Ontario Regulation 191/11 covers accessibility standards including Information and Communication, Employment, Transportation, Design for Public Spaces (including the built environment), and Customer Service. There is a phased-in approach to compliance with deadline dates for each standard being based upon organization type and size, with the goal of a fully accessible province by 2025.

5.1 Information and Communication

The Information and Communication standard was designed to achieve equitable access to communication and information, to cover the broadest range of how people send and receive information, and facilitate communication.

This standard requires the municipality to provide information in an accessible format upon request that takes into consideration the needs of the individual. Municipalities are also required to ensure that all new materials are produced in an accessible format including disseminated information and website content and that old documents can be made accessible based on the needs of the individual.

5.2 Employment

The Employment standard focuses on policy, procedures and training requirements to identify and remove barriers in the workplace. This standard requires employers to have processes in place to determine an employee's accommodation needs. This component also addresses key processes in the life cycle of a job such as recruitment, assessment, selection and retention.

The Township ensures that all policies and practices reflect the requirements under the AODA and will continue to develop or update policies as necessary to continue compliance with this and other legislation.

5.3 Transportation

The Transportation standard was developed to provide accessibility to public transportation including taxis and transit buses, and emergency procedures. The goal of this standard is to enable residents and visitors the opportunity to live, work and participate in the community. Specific requirements regarding all aspects of the experience of using transportation are addressed.

At the time this Plan was developed the Township of Tay did not provide transportation services to residents.

5.4 Design of Public Spaces (Built Environment)

The Design of Public Spaces standard focuses on removing barriers in public spaces and buildings that are newly constructed or redeveloped. Technical requirements have been developed for recreational trails, beach access, outdoor public use seating areas, outdoor play spaces, exterior paths of travel, service counters, maintenance, etc. Understanding a wide variety of barriers for persons with disabilities in the physical environment is essential to implementation of the standard.

The Township will ensure that persons with disabilities, the Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC) and the public shall be consulted when constructing new or redeveloping recreational trails, outdoor play spaces and the design and placement of rest areas along exterior paths of travel.

When constructing new or redeveloping public spaces regulated under the Design of Public Spaces standard, the Township will use the GAATES Illustrated Technical Guide to the Accessibility Standard for the Design of Public Spaces.

An annual public consultation meeting held in conjunction with a regular AAC meeting shall take place with respect to an update from staff regarding upcoming development or redevelopment of public spaces. Staff will review the design standards that must be met and how they are meeting them. The annual meeting will be advertised in the local newspaper and on the Township's website.

In addition to the Design of Public Spaces Standard, the Ontario Building Code was amended in 2016 to include accessible requirements. The amended Building Code is used when issuing building permits and conducting building inspections.

5.5 Customer Service

The Customer Service Standard ensures that people with disabilities receive goods and services in a manner that takes into account their disability. Accessible customer service means dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity for all people.

All Township staff is trained on the practices and procedures for accessible customer service including the following:

- The use of assistive devices by persons with disabilities;
- The use of service animals by persons with disabilities;
- The use of support persons by persons with disabilities;
- Notice of temporary disruptions in services and facilities.

All Township staff and volunteers are trained on Ontario's accessibility laws and aspects of the Ontario Human Rights Code that relate to persons with disabilities.

Further, the Township trains our employees and volunteers on accessibility as it relates to their specific roles.

5.6 Procurement of Goods and Services

Section 10 of the Township's Procurement Policy – General Purchasing Rules states the following:

10. Staff shall consider accessibility when drafting documents for purchasing including such things as:
 - Companies that provide services, train their staff on providing accessible services.
 - Buildings or locations that are to be used can accommodate people with disabilities.
 - Items to be purchased include accessible features.

Where it is not possible to procure accessible goods, services or facilities the department responsible for the purchase shall in an accessible format, explain why accessible goods, services or facilities could not be obtained.

5.7 Self-Serve Kiosks

The Township does not currently have any self-serve kiosks in place.

If that the Township does acquire them in the future we will incorporate accessibility features and consider accessibility for people with disabilities when designing, procuring or acquiring self-service kiosks.

6.0 Conclusion

The Township of Tay continues in its efforts to remove barriers from within municipal facilities and parks.

While the goals outlined in the Plan are primarily directed towards persons with disabilities, many of the achievements, associated with accessibility, will benefit all Township of Tay residents.

In accordance with the Provincial legislation, the Township will continue to meet its compliance obligations by developing and implementing programs, policies and initiatives that create and maintain a fully accessible and inclusive community.

The identification and removal of barriers will continue to be an ongoing activity for Township staff and Committee members.

For further information, please contact the Clerk's Office:

Alison Gray, Township Clerk
Township of Tay
450 Park Street, P.O. Box 100
Victoria Harbour, ON L0K 2A0
Tel: 705-534-7248 Fax: 705-534-4493
Email: agray@tay.ca web: www.tay.ca

For additional information visit the Ministry of Community and Social Services website at <https://www.ontario.ca/page/accessibility-laws>

Schedule "A" **Accessibility Achievements/Progress**

General

- Ongoing training provided as part of new employee orientation on the Accessibility Standards
- New Accessibility Standards Policy adopted in November 2016 merging the existing Accessible Customer Service Standard Policy & IASR Policy
- Amendments made to any existing personnel policies as required to accommodate Employment Standard requirements
- Successful completion of Accessibility Compliance Audit by the Province in 2016

Facilities

- 2007/2008 – Victoria Harbour Library Branch fully renovated and expanded, expansion designed to meet accessibility standards. Included shared accessible entrance to the Harbour Shores Community Room
- 2008/2009 – Municipal Office renovated and expanded, expansion designed to meet accessibility standards.
- 2010 – Circulation desks retrofitted and lowered at the Port McNicoll and Waubauskene Library Branches
- 2010 – Microphone/audio system installed into Council Chambers
- 2010 – Municipal Election polling stations audited for accessibility with accessibility report submitted to Council for their information post-election. Door greeters employed for voting locations lacking power-assisted doors, magnifying sheets provided to assist with voting.
- 2011 – Audit of Township facilities conducted by Independent Living Services (formerly Simcoe County Association for the Physically Disabled). Recommended renovations incorporated into Township's Long Term Plan.
- 2012 – Victoria Harbour Canada Post, 145 Albert Street – Door renovation & replacement completed. New power-assisted doors with sloped entranceway installed

- 2012 - Port McNicoll Community Centre – Door renovation & replacement completed. New power-assisted doors installed and exterior interlocking pathway repaired to raise stones to door entrance providing seamless transition
- 2014 – New Township website created to World Wide Web Consortium Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0, AA Standard and launched providing accessible content and features.
- 2014 – Municipal Election – Vote By Mail voting system introduced allowing electors to vote at home, single voting location provided at municipal office that was fully accessible. Accessibility report submitted to Council for their information post-election, and all election staff received full training on the standards.
- 2014 – Procurement Policy updated to include accessibility requirements as set out in the standards
- 2015 – Tay Community Rink – paved pathway from parking lot to rink
- 2015 – Oakwood Community Centre – accessible water bottle refill station installed
- 2016 – Baby changing tables installed in all three library branches and Port McNicoll Community Centre
- 2016 – Port McNicoll Community Centre – accessible water bottle refill station installed
- 2016 – Accessible playground installed at Talbot Park
- 2017 – New Old Fort Fire Hall, 2201 Old Fort Road - meeting all current accessibility requirements as set out in the Building Code
- 2017 – Accessible playground installed at Oakwood Park & Pine Street Beach Park
- 2017 – Municipal Office – accessible water bottle refill station installed
- Accessible parking spaces repainted as required as they are reviewed annually by staff

Schedule "B" **Identified Improvements**

The following improvements have been identified and will be incorporated into building maintenance and capital improvements.

- General
 - Accessible parking spaces to be signed, not just painted
 - When replacing building alarms, Township to install alarms with combination of audio and visual alarms
 - Ensure accessible parking space requirements in updated zoning by-law for appropriate land uses (i.e. commercial, industrial)
 - New playground equipment to be purchased in accordance with Design of Public Spaces Standard
- Municipal Office
 - Power-assisted door opener to be installed on existing accessible washroom
 - Reception counter to be renovated to provide accessible workstation
- Victoria Harbour Outdoor Rink Change Room
 - public washroom not large enough to accommodate a wheelchair,
 - assistance bars required in washroom
 - power-assisted washroom door required
- MacKenzie Beach Park
 - public washroom not large enough to accommodate a wheelchair,
 - assistance bars required in washroom
 - power-assisted washroom door required
- Sunset Ball Diamond
 - Public washroom not barrier free – stall walls to be adjusted to widen one stall for a wheelchair
- Albert Street Gazebo Park
 - Accessible public washroom to be constructed
- Tay Community Rink
 - Power-assisted door opener to be installed on existing change room door

- Port McNicoll Library Branch
 - Ramp to branch main entrance too steep
 - Main floor washroom is not barrier free, requires renovation
 - Interior doorway too narrow, requires renovation/widening
 - Main entrance power-assisted doors required
 - Elevator between floors required as no accessible way to currently access both floors – only stairs
 - Path to rear entrance to be redone as surface uneven and there is a significant 'lip' at the door
 - Community Room interior ramp needs to be redesigned to standards, incline too steep
 - Community Room power-assisted door required
 - Community Room washroom needs renovation, not current accessible
- Waubauskene Library Branch
 - Entrance doors too narrow, require renovation
 - Entrance requires power-assisted door
- Port McNicoll Community Centre
 - Accessible lift, power-assisted chair or ramp to access stage
- Oakwood Community Centre
 - Accessible lift, power-assisted chair or ramp to access stage