

Report

Report No. CS2020-01	To: Council	Prepared By: Donna Hewitt, Director Corporate Services
Meeting Date: January 29, 2020	Subject: 2019 Annual Accessibility Report	Motion # _____
Roll #:		R.M.S. File #:

Recommendation(s):	Requires Action <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	For Information Only <input type="checkbox"/>
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It is recommended:

1. That Report No. CS2020-01 be received and adopted;
2. And that the Annual Accessibility Report be added to the Township's website in accordance with provincial legislation.

Background:

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), section 4(1) requires that municipalities establish, implement, maintain and document a Multi-Year Accessibility Plan that is reviewed at least once every five (5) years. This plan is reviewed by the Township's Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee (JAAC), approved by Council and made available to the public.

The Township of Oro-Medonte's Multi-Year Accessibility Plan was updated, reviewed by the JAAC and subsequently approved by Council in 2019. As part of the plan and consistent with legislation, there is a requirement to prepare an annual status report to be reviewed by the JAAC, received by Council and posted to the Township's website.

Analysis:

The intent of the municipality's Multi-Year Accessibility Plan is to prevent, identify and remove barriers and obstacles that could impact individuals with disabilities from accessing services, facilities and information.

The Township's Plan aligns with the standards identified within the Act; specifically:

- Customer Service,
- Information and Communications,
- Employment Accessibility and,

- Built Environment.

In addition, the plan also references the role of the Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee (JAAC). Traditionally, the municipality had supported its own Accessibility Advisory Committee. Over the years, the efforts of our community volunteers were highly beneficial to staff and Council in moving forward a number of critical initiatives that benefited those with disabilities (Bayview Memorial Park redevelopment; parking improvements etc.). However, Council has recognized that there was unique benefit in participation in a joint committee with a number of our neighbouring municipalities. The Township is represented on the JAAC through participation by a Ward Councillor and a resident. During 2019, the Committee completed the following:

- Development of a process, plan and checklist for the completion of accessibility facility reviews of County and Township owned and operated facilities.
- Completed reviews and/or tours and provided feedback regarding a number of facilities across the County: Oakwood Community Centre, Township of Tay; new Simcoe County Housing Corporation project , Township of Tay; Simcoe County Paramedic Adult Day Program Facility, Elmvale; affordable housing complex, Collingwood; Shanty Bay Fire Hall, Oro-Medonte Township; MacKenzie Park, Township of Tay; Elmvale & District Food Bank.

The following is a summary of the achievements the Township has had with respect to the standards outlined in the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan:

Customer Service

This standard defines requirements for removing barriers for individuals with disabilities regarding their ability to access goods, services and/or facilities.

- In addition to an in-person application process, Fire & Emergency Services launched an on-line open air burning permit process to enable residents to apply for and obtain their permits remotely.
- Launch by Development Services of an electronic Zoning Certificate application and issuance process which improves access to service and time response
- Full implementation of an electronic permit application process for building and septic permits, again improving remote access.
- As part of our on-boarding process all new staff members including summer students, volunteer firefighters and Township volunteers were trained on the Integrated Accessibility Standards and the Township's Accessibility Policy. The Township maintains training records in accordance with legislation.

Information and Communications

This standard outlines requirements for organizations to create, provide and receive information and communications that are accessible for individuals with disabilities.

- The Township continued, in accordance with our Accessibility Policy, to provide documentation in an accessible manner. Factors such as font size and style, colour contrast, spacing, use of white space, and use of formatting techniques such as bold, italics, underlining and capital letters are all components for consideration. We do provide our documents in alternative format and/or with communication support as requested.
- Regular Council Meetings continue to be livestreamed with videos posted to our YouTube Channel to ensure those who wish closed captioning have that capability. Livestreaming and video archives enables those who are unable to attend meetings in person to view the business of the corporation. In addition, in the 2019 budget Council approved a service level adjustment to our electronic Council Agenda materials that will enable our regular Council meeting video be linked to the relevant agenda item. This will be implemented in 2020 and will improve access to viewers.

Employment Accessibility

This standard outlines requirements for organizations to remove barriers for individuals with disabilities regarding employment (recruitment, retention, performance etc).

- As part of our on-boarding process all new staff members including summer students, volunteer firefighters and Township volunteers were trained on the Ontario Human Rights Code and the Township’s Accessibility Policy with respect to the availability of accommodation. The Township maintains training records in accordance with legislation.

Built Environment

This standard outlines the need for newly constructed or redeveloped public spaces to be accessible for individuals with disabilities.

- As recommended by the Township’s former Accessibility Advisory Committee, reconfiguration of the Administration Centre public washrooms providing improved physical access for those facing mobility (size, turning radius, hardware location, counter heights etc.). Ontario Building Code requirements were followed with consideration to barrier-free design features.

Financial / Legal Implications / Risk Management:
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Policies/Legislation:

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)

Corporate Strategic Goals:

Enhanced Communications & Customer Service
Inclusive, Healthy Community

Consultations:

- CAO
- Chief Financial Officer/Treasurer
- Director, Development Services
- Director, Fire & Emergency Services
- Director, Operations & Community Services
- Deputy Clerk

Attachments:

None.


Conclusion:

As noted in our Multi-Year Accessibility Plan, Council is in a position of leadership to implement approaches to ensure the Township is an accessible community. The Township remains committed to removing barriers for those with disabilities.

Respectfully submitted:



Donna Hewitt
Director, Corporate Services

SMT Approval / Comments:	C.A.O. Approval / Comments: 
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