



TOWN OF MINTO

DATE: December 1st, 2018
REPORT TO: Mayor and Council
FROM: Matthew Lubbers, Recreation Services Manager
SUBJECT: Accessibility Annual Update

STRATEGIC PLAN:

12.14 Ensure the Town provides services and facilities accessible to persons of all abilities in compliance with Provincial regulations keeping in mind the needs of the community, ability to pay and best practices of similar municipalities.

BACKGROUND:

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) is comprised of two standards. They are the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service and the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR). Between them, they establish the principles that the Town, its staff and volunteers, must follow with respect to accessible customer service, information and communications, employment, design of public spaces in the built environment and for the overall training, planning and reporting of accessibility initiatives. Town staff continues to work closely with the County of Wellington Accessibility Coordinator to ensure Minto remains in compliance with the Act.



COMMENTS:

General Requirements

The Town's Multi-Year Accessibility Plan was reviewed and updated in 2016. The new plan will be in effect for the next 5 years and covers how the Town plans for comply with the aforementioned provincial regulations.

Federal accessibility legislation may be on the horizon.

Accessible Standards for Customer Service

All new and seasonal staff receive training upon hire or return, while existing staff receive refresher training annually in the fall. A goal for 2019 will be to complete this customer service training with all Committees of Council.

Information and Communications

The Town continues to be the only municipality in the County of Wellington that records its Council meetings for broadcast. Watching the meetings online or on the Wightman Telecom community channel are effective ways we are reaching our residents who are not able to attend our meetings in person.

The all candidates meetings held in September for the municipal election were streamed online using Facebook, with the first being live so viewers could watch the proceedings in real time.

The website is monitored on an ongoing basis to ensure its functionality and content remain accessible. We have purchased a subscription to software that can monitor websites in real time for 2019 to improve the accessibility of our site on an ongoing basis.

Department Heads as well as staff who update the website receive online refresher training annually in the fall regarding the information and communication standards found in the IASR.

The Town remains committed to providing accessible formats and communication supports upon request. Alternative forms of feedback from employees and members of the public are made available upon request. The Town is a member of the County-established Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC) and also attends County-facilitated working group meetings.

Employment

All employment advertisements inform applicants of our ability to make accommodations throughout the recruitment process, if required. Department Heads received a tip sheet on incorporating accessibility when setting up interviews, evaluating staff and creating workplace Emergency Response Plans as well as Individual Accommodation Plans when required. Emails updates are also sent periodically throughout the year.

Design of Public Spaces

This standard encompasses outdoor spaces, including but not limited to, trails, play spaces and exterior paths of travel. As the Town upgrades its outdoor infrastructure, this portion of the IASR will be taken into consideration. Senior public works and recreation staff will receive online refresher training regarding this standard annually.

The Ontario Building Code

Indoor spaces and accessibility are covered under the Ontario Building Code. In addition, the Town adopted the County of Wellington's Facility Accessibility Design Manual as a guideline and has successfully applied for funding from the County's Accessibility Fund since 2014. This funding was applied to the Clifford Arena and Clifford Hall entrances in 2018. Their main doors were outfitted with automatic opening hardware using local contractors.



New lines were painted at the Harriston Arena with the accessible parking space being widened in the process as seen in the image below. The buffer between spots is an enhancement and will allow for better transitions in and out of vehicles.



FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS:

Staff will be budgeting for software in 2019 to ensure the Town website remains accessible as content is added and removed. The software can also be used for other Town-operated websites such as Treasures of Minto and the Norgan Theatre.

Plans to upgrade the community centre entrance doors at the Palmerston Arena in 2019, with the help of the County Accessibility Fund, will be in the 2019 Operating Budget.

Financial costs for training should be minimal with the use of free online resources and by working with the County Accessibility Coordinator. Costs to accommodate an employee with a disability would be unique in each instance. Rules and regulations found in the Design of Public Space Standard the Ontario Building Code and the County's Facility Accessibility Design Manual that guide new Town infrastructure moving forward will also be unique in each instance. Town staff will need to ensure they budget for any additional costs for these projects.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council of the Town of Minto receives the December 1st, 2018 report from the Recreation Services Manager entitled Accessibility Annual Update.

Matthew Lubbers
Recreation Services Manager