



To: Council
From: Loriann Harbers, Director of Corporate Services/Clerk
Date of Meeting: March 24, 2021
Subject: Multi-Year Accessibility Plan - 2020 Status Report

Background:

The Township of South Stormont's 2019-2024 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan was approved by Council in 2019.

In accordance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), the Township must prepare an annual status report outlining the progress of the measures taken to improve accessibility and the Township's progress with regards to implementation of its Multi-Year Accessibility Plan.

Despite the current health situation with COVID-19, in 2020 the Township had many achievements in relation to the Integrated Accessibility Standards under the AODA including accessible communications, designing accessible outdoor spaces, and providing more options for the public to access municipal goods and services.

A copy of this report will be posted on the municipal website under Town Hall, Accessibility.

To request an alternative format of this report, please contact the municipal office.

Discussion:

The following outlines the Township of South Stormont's commitments and progress in 2020 in meeting the accessibility standards in four key areas:

- Customer Service
- Information and Communications
- Employment
- Design of Public Spaces

Although there are provisions related to Transportation under the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulations of the AODA, the Township excludes Transportation from its Multi-Year Accessibility Plan due to the relatively small size of the Township of South Stormont and the lack of transportation services provided in South Stormont.

Customer Service Standard

The standard outlines requirements for removing barriers for people with disabilities so they can access goods, services, and/or facilities.

2020 Achievements:

- Newly hired Township employees received training on the AODA and the Ontario Human Rights Code, as well as training on the Integrated Accessible Standards Regulations. This has been included in the orientation package for new hires.
- The Township of South Stormont has completed its Recreational Master Plan. This plan incorporates objectives for improving access, availability and accessibility of parks, recreation facilities and delivery of services.

Information & Communications Standard

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

2020 Achievements:

- The Township of South Stormont launched a completely new website in July 2020. This website is compliant with Level AA of the WCAG 2.0 Web Content Accessibility Guidelines, which meets the requirements in the AODA.
- With the launch of the website, staff have created many accessible fillable forms through the website that can be submitted online to access services. In addition, residents can submit complaints, inquiries, requests for service, and compliments through the Township's website, and receive email confirmation of their ticket submission, with a ticket number.
- Staff continue to review documents posted on the website and update for accessibility, where required.
- The Township provides documents in accessible formats upon request and has notifications to this effect on the website.
- The Township solicits feedback and undertakes to facilitate feedback from people with disabilities in an accessible format, upon request.
- Due to COVID-19 restrictions on in-person meetings, the Township moved all its Council and Committee meetings virtually through Zoom and are live streamed through our website. This change has made it easier for public participation for those who were unable to attend meetings in person. Staff communicated and worked with the public in making accommodations to facilitate participation during the changing restrictions.
- For COVID-19 signage that has been posted at all facilities and outdoor recreation areas, staff ensured that contrasting colours and large print were used.
- The Township adopted a new Communications Policy in fall of 2020. The new policy specifically addresses the Township's commitment to providing accessible formats, communication supports, web content, feedback and public safety information.

Employment Standard

The standard requires that employers must make their workplace and employment

practices accessible to potential or current employees with disabilities.

2020 Achievements:

- Accessibility accommodations were available throughout the recruitment process and employment life cycle, including:
 - Notification to the public that accommodations will be provided upon request.
 - Notification welcoming accommodations throughout the recruitment process and employment life cycle.
- Due to COVID-19 and restrictions on in-person meetings, staff moved to virtual interviews, when required. Staff worked with candidates to accommodate their needs during this process.

Design of Public Spaces

The design of public spaces standard outlines the need for newly constructed or redeveloped public spaces to be accessible for people with disabilities.

2020 Achievements:

- Public Works continues to review all accessible parking line painting to meet accessibility standards.
- Upgrades have been made to the Long Sault Plaza parking lot and surrounding area, including:
 - addition of a concrete island at the intersection of Long Sault Drive and Plaza Street to help direct traffic safely through the intersection and separate parked vehicles from traffic travelling along Long Sault Drive;
 - new sidewalk along Plaza Street, connecting north to Simcoe Street. This improvement provides safe pedestrian passage along all of Plaza Street to allow safe access to the core of Long Sault; and
 - additional accessible parking spaces/line painting.
- Updates to the Long Sault Arena have been completed, including:
 - new rubberized flooring installed throughout the arena;
 - accessible washroom renovated (grab bars and hanger installed); and
 - line painting and accessible parking signage added to parking lot.
- Parking lot of Arnold Bethune Park had granular added and was graded to ensure ground is firm and level.
- Small repair completed at the Ingleside Community Park to correct the slight drop-off from the landing near the washroom.
- Small repairs completed at Lloyd Hawn Park (Fairground Drive) including:
 - Vegetation removed from ramp area to improve ramp access; and
 - Deck Boards have been repaired to remove potential hazards and to improve maneuverability.

- Vegetation removed from ramp area of the Forbes Building at the Lost Villages Museum (Ault Park) to improve ramp access.
- New doors and automatic openers for accessibility installed in for both washrooms at the Lost Villages Museum (Ault Park).
- Staff continue to investigate possible grant opportunities to improve accessibility throughout the Township including upgrading pathways, play structures and facilities.

*Prepared by:
Ashley Sloan, Deputy Clerk*