



Status Report – December, 2014

2013-2017 Multi-Year

Accessibility Plan

In Accordance with the
*Accessibility For Ontarians
With Disabilities Act*

This document is available in alternative formats upon request.

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Introduction

This update to the Clarington Multi-Year Accessibility Plan outlines the commitment that the Municipality of Clarington has made to create an accessible organization by identifying, removing, and preventing barriers for people with disabilities.

This document provides an update on accomplishments achieved and also adds information on upcoming plans.

This plan will be posted on the Municipality of Clarington's website, www.clarington.net, and shall be made available in alternative formats upon request.

Obligations

Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001 (ODA)

The ODA was passed into law "to improve opportunities for persons with disabilities and to provide for their full involvement in the identification, prevention and removal of barriers to their full participation in the life of the Province."

The ODA requires municipalities to prepare annual accessibility plans and to consult with an Accessibility Advisory Committee on the contents of the plan. The purpose of the plan is to identify, remove, and prevent barriers to accessibility in each municipality's by-laws, policies, practices, and services. The accessibility plan must be made available to the public, and in alternative formats, upon request.

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA)

The AODA includes accessibility standards addressing customer service, transportation, accessible information and communications, accessible built environment and employment accessibility.

Accomplishments in 2014

Summary

General Deliverables	Legislated Date
Training - All employees & volunteers, policy developers, those providing goods or services on behalf of organization regarding IRS and Human Rights Code	2014
Decide on training delivery	
Create schedule for current staff and new staff	
Training completed	
Information & Communications	Legislated Date
Feedback - is feedback system accessible upon request	2014
Website New Internet WCAG 2.0 Level AA (other than closed caption Live pre-recorded audio). (Currently under reconstruction, to be completed in 2015.)	2014
Employment	Legislated Date
Recruitment - notify employees and public regarding availability of accommodation	2014
Notify successful applicant - availability of accommodation upon request for assessments or selection process	2014
Inform employees of policies regarding job accommodations	2014
Accessible formats and communication supports available to perform job	2014
Have a Documented Individual Accessibility Plan	2014
Have a Return to Work Process (E-31)	2014
Performance Management takes into account accessibility needs	2014
Career Development and Advancement Process takes into account accessibility needs	2014
Redeployment process takes into account accessibility needs	2014

Details

General Requirements

Accessibility Advisory Committee:

The Clarington Accessibility Advisory Committee (CAAC) has provided input and advice to Council on a broad range of matters in 2014, including but not limited to:

- Workplace Scent-Free Policy
- GO Bus Access
- Multi-Year Accessibility Plan
- Reviewed proposals from various organizations which have a view to improving accessibility in several aspects of life, with a particular focus on sports
- Reviewed the Accessible Election Policies and Procedures
- Reviewed the proposed expansion of the Courtice Library

On an ongoing basis, CAAC participates in the Regional Accessibility Advisory Committee Chairs Group; provides an information card regarding CAAC to all recreational facilities; and advocates for increased awareness of accessibility.

A sub-committee of the CAAC reviewed and provided comments on ten site plan applications during 2014. As well, in 2014 the role of this sub-committee was expanded to include a review and comment process for any municipal park or open space design or re-design work.

Policies and Procedures:

The Clerk's Department's Staff Training and Orientation Policy (H12-001) was updated to ensure that training of the all new employees, volunteers, etc., will be undertaken as part of their orientation. Training will include:

- Accessible Customer Service Training
- Human Rights Code as it pertains to accessibility
- Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation Policy Training

The Municipality of Clarington is committed to ensuring that persons with disabilities have an opportunity to fully participate in the Municipal Elections with dignity and in a manner consistent with all Clarington electors. The Clerk's Department's Accessible Election Policies and Procedures (C07-011) was updated to reflect this commitment. A variety of voting assistive devices were available for electors to use at the Advance

Voting opportunities and on Voting Day, including Magnifying sheets, Variety of marking tools, Audio/tactile voting assistive tool, large ballot images, etc. Special Mail-in Ballot opportunities were provided to those with a physical incapacity. Proxy voting was available to all eligible electors. Voting assistance, either by an election official or another qualified elector, was available.

The Municipality of Clarington established the Corporate Policy, “Accessibility/Accommodation” (A15) which sets out the requirements of Ontario Regulation 191/11 – Integrated Accessibility Standards, Part 3 (Employment).

The Municipality of Clarington expanded its existing “Fragrance Free Policy for Recreational Facilities” to apply to all municipal facilities.

Accessibility Plan – Multi-Year:

Clarington’s Multi-year accessibility plan was developed in consultation with the Clarington Accessibility Advisory Committee and passed by Clarington’s Council on April 7, 2014. The accessibility plan is available on Clarington’s website.

Procuring or Acquiring Goods or Services:

Clarington’s Request for Proposal documents now include weighted evaluation criteria taking accessibility into consideration. Changes were made to the purchasing procedure manual giving consideration to accessibility design, criteria or features when procuring. Tender documents are now being issued in a more accessible font and now include a contractor AODA Compliance Sign-off sheet.

Training:

In-person training, specific to procurement, was undertaken by all employees in the Purchasing Department.

In accordance with the requirements under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* and Regulation 191/11, all Clarington staff, volunteers, people who participate in developing Clarington’s policies, and all other people who provide goods, services or facilities on behalf of our organization, were trained on the requirements of the accessibility standards referred to in the Regulation and on the *Human Rights Code* as it pertains to persons with disabilities. The training was offered electronically, and for those who did not have access to the internet, they completed their training through the use of a workbook.

Department Heads and managers were provided with in-person training.

As of December 20, 2014, 819 persons have completed training, including employees, Members of Council, crossing guards, Animal Services volunteers, and Clarington Older Adult Association vendors.

The intent of the training was to provide an understanding of the requirements of the regulation as they relate to their duties and of the Ontario Human Rights Code as it relates to people with disabilities. Specific items covered in the training include:

- Background on the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (AODA)
- Disability types
- Barriers to accessibility
- The five standards under the AODA
- Specific requirements of the *Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation* (IASR):
 - Policy and plan
 - Procurement and self service kiosks
 - Training requirements
 - Information and Communication standard
 - Employment Standard
 - Transportation Standard (as applicable)
 - Design of Public Spaces Standard
- Human Rights Code as it pertains to people with disabilities
- Discussion on how this applies to individual employees
- Where to get more information on organizational commitment and on the legislation

Accessible Customer Service Standard

Since adopting the Customer Service Standards Policy in 2009 (Policy F6), the Municipality of Clarington has continued its commitment to providing exceptional and accessible service for its customers. Goods and services are provided in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of all customers. The provision of services to persons with disabilities are integrated wherever possible. Persons with disabilities are given an opportunity equal to that given to others, to obtain, use or benefit from the goods and services provided by and on behalf of the Municipality of Clarington.

Information & Communications Standard

General:

We made strides into ensuring that all information has a note indicating that alternative formats are available. This includes each webpage on our website.

Training:

All Administrative Assistants were provided in-person training regarding accessible documents. This was provided with the view that the Administrative Assistants would be able to provide support to all those in their respective departments.

The following support documents, for making accessible documents, were created and provided to those during training:

- Clarington Accessible Documents Tip Sheet
- Accessible Websites
- Alternative Formats
- Checking for Accessibility
- Defining Accessibility
- Presentations
- Shortcuts
- Spreadsheets

Employment Standard

Updated the Corporate Policy “Early and Safe Return to Work” (H31) to ensure that it complied with the Employment Standard.

Advertisements and website advertising vacancies now include a notification regarding the availability of accommodation. All employment letters advise of accommodation opportunities. All employees are informed of policies regarding job accommodations.

Durham Region Transit (DRT) Specialized Service Appeals

Beginning in the last quarter of 2014, as accessibility coordinator for the Municipality, along with the other coordinators within Durham Region, began serving on the Appeal Panel for the DRT Specialized Service Appeals. This appeal process serves for an appeal panel to hear and make recommendations on appeal applications from individuals requesting review of a decision made by DRT Specialized Services establishing them as ineligible to receive specialized transit services. The appeal process is intended to ensure that applications are dealt with in a fair and independent manner, and decisions are made in accordance with established criteria. The appeal

panel, appointed by DRT but operating independently, has the final authority on decisions regarding eligibility for specialized transit services provided by DRT.

The Eligibility Appeal Process complies with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), adhering to the process and timeframes established within the AODA and its regulations, specifically with respect to eligibility appeals. The primary responsibility of the Eligibility Appeal Process is to ensure the appropriate matching of transit service delivery options with the nature of the disability, for those individuals who have appealed the decision of DRT Specialized Services. The appeal panel in hearing appeals bases its decision upon either new information provided by the appellant and/or a claim of misinterpretation of previously submitted information. Appeals based solely on compassionate grounds shall not be considered.

Goals for 2015

General Requirements

Clarington Accessibility Advisory Committee:

The Committee plans to:

- Review their Goals and Objectives for the Term, early in 2015
- Create a Site Plan Review Guideline document, to be given to applicants prior to submission of a site plan application
- Create guidelines for members to follow when reviewing site plan applications, i.e. “Things to look for”
- Physical inspection/review of municipal facilities
- Ask Department Heads to make presentations to the Committee in order to gain a greater understanding of each department
- Have a greater involvement in the ongoing goal of making documents and information more accessible
- Consider hosting an accessible challenge

Training:

Training for new employees, volunteers, etc., will be undertaken as part of their orientation, in accordance with the Clerk’s Department’s Staff Training and Orientation Policy (H12-001).

Continue to ensure that all new contractors and companies are trained.

Provide members of Clarington’s advisory boards and committees with training on Accessible Customer Service Training; Human Rights Code as it pertains to accessibility; Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation Policy Training; and Making Documents Accessible.

Purchasing By-law:

By March 31, 2015, complete review of Purchasing By-law to include a section on Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act as well as incorporating accessibility criteria and features when acquiring goods, services or facilities.

Information & Communications Standard

General:

Continue to add information to our communications indicating that alternative formats are available.

The Clarington website is currently under “reconstruction” and we expect that it will be WCAG Level AA compliant by the third quarter of 2015.

Accessible Documents:

Continue to ensure that all documentation uploaded to the Municipality’s website and Intranet is in an accessible format, from 2012 and no later than January 1, 2021.

Council.

Create a Strategic Communication Plan which will describe the processes for the flow of documents, establish standards and templates, continuous training on accessible document creation, and analysis of website content. The development of the Plan will include an undertaking of an inventory of documents currently forming part of our public document repository and developing a go-forward approach for facilitating easy and readily available access.

Emergency Procedure Plans:

Conduct a review of the emergency procedures, plans and public safety information.

Feedback:

Appendix E of Clarington’s Corporate Policy, F6 (Accessibility), contains the policy and procedures for customer feedback as it relates to the municipality’s provision of all goods and services. The Municipality of Clarington plans to promote the availability of this feedback process in the coming year.

Employment Standard

Establish an Individual Accessibility Plan and ensure that:

- performance management process
- career development/advancement process
- Redeployment process

take accessibility needs into account.

Design of Public Spaces Standard

In preparation for the requirements of 2016, the Municipality of Clarington will consult with the public and people with disabilities to meet specific technical requirements when building any new or making any significant changes to:

- recreational trails/beach access routes
- outdoor public eating areas
- outdoor play spaces
- outdoor paths of travel (sidewalks, ramps, stairs, curbs, pedestrian signals)
- accessible parking
- or service-related elements (such as service counters, fixed queuing lines and waiting areas)