



## **Multi-Year Accessibility Plan – 2020-2021 Annual Progress Report**

### **Commitment**

The Town of Erin is committed to recognizing the diverse needs of its residents, being responsive to those needs, and striving to provide services and facilities that are accessible.

This Multi-Year Accessibility Plan outlines our approach to ensuring an inclusive workplace and that our services are provided in an accessible manner for the public.

Our goal is to ensure accessibility for our employees and the public we serve in our services and facilities.

The Town will review this plan once every 5 years at a minimum and conduct an annual progress report to this living document.

### **Obligations**

The Multi-Year Plan is based upon requirements under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA). The AODA sets out the roadmap for an accessible Ontario by 2025. It contains standards in the following five areas:

- Customer Service
- Information and Communications
- Employment
- Transportation and;
- Built Environment

The Accessible Customer Service Standard came into effect in 2008. In 2011, under the Integrated Accessibility Regulation, the Province combined Information and Communications, Employment and Transportation.

This document outlines accomplishments and documents short and long-term requirements, including how the Town will:

- Meet accessibility requirements within required timelines in the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation
- Address any current accessibility barriers
- Prevent and remove future barriers

## Timeline and Goals

Areas	Objectives	Timeline & Goals		
		2017	2018-2019	2020-2021
Accessible Customer Service	<p>Develop policies and procedures.</p> <p>Incorporate accessibility into planning processes.</p> <p>Engage the public in feedback.</p>	<p>-Review accessibility policies</p> <p>- Ongoing staff training</p> <p>-By-law #17-39 passed related to government procurement that ensures accessible standards</p> <p>-Inclusion in the County-wide Accessibility Council Committee</p>	<p>- Ongoing staff training</p> <p>-Offering assistance, various formatting.</p> <p>-Customer Service tablet at Town Hall is an additional way that customers can communicate with town Staff.</p> <p>-Launch Community Improvement plan which includes accessible community initiatives for local business</p> <p>- Report to Council on February 5, 2019 regarding 2018 Municipal Election Accessibility</p>	<p>-Review accessibility policies</p> <p>-Update complaint process to ensure accessibility supersedes process</p> <p>-Research on-site training for customer engagement</p> <p>-Continue to ask for customer feedback in order to develop better tools of accommodation</p> <p>-Community Improvement Plan offering Accessibility Improvement Grant to local businesses</p> <p>-Create a new 5 year plan</p>
Information and Communications	<p>Ensure there is access to information and communications</p>	<p>-Initiate electronic retention to allow for easier accessible formatting;</p> <p>-Continue to</p>	<p>-Introduce new website with upgraded accessibility that adheres to WCAG 2.0 Level AA</p>	<p>-Research closed captioning options for Town Council meeting videos</p> <p>-Develop a fully</p>

Areas	Objectives	Timeline & Goals		
		2017	2018-2019	2020-2021
		adhere to Workplace Emergency Response Information policy	-Council Meetings are live streamed and video readily available online	engaged coded website that will assist with ease of communication for residents  -Continue web based compliance  -Create a new 5 year plan
Employment/ Training	Work to remove barriers to employment	-All job advertisements include a disclaimer that accessible formatting is available and that if any accommodation is required for the interview process to contact HR	-Continue employee training about  - Compliance with all job advertisements include a disclaimer that accessible formatting is available and that if any accommodation is required for the interview process to contact HR  -Job advertisements are available in various formats  -Purchase ergonomic adjustable desks for employees by request	- Continue all job advertisements include a disclaimer that accessible formatting is available and that if any accommodation is required for the interview process to contact HR  -research new employee-wide training on accommodations that are available  -Create a new 5 year plan

Areas	Objectives	Timeline & Goals		
		2017	2018-2019	2020-2021
Transportation	To make it easier for everyone to travel in the Province.	-Continued participation in Taxi By-law #12-12	-Passed the Taxicab, Limousine and Vehicle for Hire By-Law #19-20	-Continued participation in county-wide Taxi By-law #19-20  -Create a new 5 year plan
Built Environment (Design of Public Spaces)	Continue to make facilities accessible	-Incorporate accessible counter in main floor renovation; and accessible door access  -Installed accessible door handles  -All accessible features will be inspected yearly and if the accessible feature is unavailable there will be a posted notice of disruption at the relevant location	-Yearly inspections of outdoor play areas will ensure that accessible features are maintained and notices of any disruptions will be posted  -Install an elevator for accessibility to access staff on the lower floor.  -Updated the Erin Rotary Trail with more accessible surfacing  -Winter maintenance for sidewalks are above the minimum standards set out in the <i>Municipal Act</i> Reg. 239/02	-Maintain accessible equipment  -Continue high standard of sidewalk winter maintenance  -All new or redevelopments, if any, will meet accessibility standards  - Yearly inspections of outdoor play areas will ensure that accessible features are maintained and notices of any disruptions will be posted including contact information in order to get a status update  -Create a new 5 year plan

## **Accessible Customer Service**

The Town of Erin is committed to ensuring that all customers receive accessible services in a timely manner. Members of the public will receive an equitable customer service experience that meets their needs. The Town will achieve this by:

- Reviewing and updating policies to ensure high quality, accessible service.
- Embedding accessibility requirements into staff training and orientation materials.
- Reviewing customer feedback and taking appropriate action.

### **Yearly Progress**

- Accessible Customer Service Policy (2009) – meets and exceeds the regulation.
- Set up internal processes for staff to request a communication support or alternate format.
- Alternate formats are available through the Clerk
- Customer Service Training to all staff.
- Customer Service Training to volunteers
- Diversity and Inclusion training for staff.
- Continually reviewing and updating policies to ensure consideration of people with disabilities.
- Accessible Customer Service Training to new employees.
- Process in place to receive feedback from the public.
- Process in place for the public to request an alternate format.
- Amended purchasing procedure to ensure that third party contractors are familiar with the AODA and the Town's Accessible Customer Service Policy.
- Update Accessible Customer Service Policy to include requirements under the Integrated Accessibility Regulation. (2012) (Accessibility Policy)
- Provided refresher training to all staff on Accessible Customer Service and Policy (November 2015)
- Revised policies and procedures as required
- Front lobby has been overhauled to include accessible power doors, accessible counter and newly installed accessible elevator;
- Launched Community Improvement Plan (2018)
- Updated Accessibility Policy (2019);
- Ensured that the Community Improvement Plan initiatives including for accessibility is on the 2020 Budget (2019)
- Updated and created forms that were Arial 12, contrast and included language stating that accessible formats are available upon request (2020)
- Enacted a retention policy and procedure that created efficiencies for accessibility (2020)
- Provided alternative formats for COVID-19 screenings i.e. electronic, paper and oral formats (2020-2021)

## Information and Communications

Information and communications is a large priority for Town of Erin. We are dedicated to ensuring that information and communications are created in a way that considers accessibility.

The Town will follow universal design principles and best practices when developing, implementing and maintaining information and communications strategies and products. This includes website, intranet, print communications materials as well as face-to-face interactions.

The Town is committed to ensuring that information and communications are available and accessible to people with disabilities. We will do this by:

- Achieving compliance with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines to ensure that the website is accessible to people with disabilities. Website upgrades will ensure that the website will conform to the WCAG 2.0, Level AA.
- Developing resource materials for creating accessible documents for common software programmes such as MS Word, Excel and PowerPoint.
- Ensuring that emergency information, procedures, plans and public safety information is available in alternate formats, when requested.
- Developing a training strategy to ensure that staff has the knowledge, tools and technical advice to create accessible materials.

### Yearly Progress

- Plain Language Training for Managers (2013)
- Developed emergency evacuation procedures for municipal facilities. Procedures designate an area of refuge for people with disabilities in the event that the building cannot be evacuated – will purchase floor plan “plans” to provide a visual orientation for patrons (2013).
- Communications Policy (2012)
- Accessible Communications Information (2010)
- Corporate templates (2012)
- Creating Accessible Documents Training (Word and PDF)
  - Provide resource material to staff
  - Ensure resource material is located on Intranet
  - Training specific staff on how to verify and repair PDF's
- Website redesign in accordance with WCAG 2.0 (2012-2013)
- New website launched in February 2015 – modern with a focus on mobile access and accessibility.
- Documents are available in an alternate format, upon request.
- Emergency evacuation procedures completed ;
- Signage installed in lower level of municipal office;
- Personnel policy redeveloped fall 2015;

- Council approved videotaping of meetings with the assistance of eSCRIBE software, to be launched early 2018
- Videotaping of Council meetings and public meetings for ease of access; (2018);
- All public websites and web content posted after January 1, 2012 must meet WCAG 2.0 Level AA other than criteria 1.2.4 (live captions) and 1.2.5 (pre-recorded audio descriptions) (2019-2021).

## Employment

The Town of Erin is committed to ensuring that the process the employment process is as inclusive as possible in order to build an effective workforce. Staff will receive training in order to meet compliance under the Integrated Accessibility Regulation. It is expected that training will cover a variety of topics, including:

- Understanding employer obligations to provide employment accommodations.
- How to identify and remove barriers in the workplace.
- Enhancing workplace emergency responses through individualized emergency response information and assistance as required.
- Revising individual work plans and developing a manager's guide, tools and templates to remove barriers from the recruitment process.

## Yearly Progress

- Developed an Accommodations Policy and notified staff.
- Developed a barrier-free recruitment process to remove barriers from the hiring process:
  - Review job advertisements and descriptions on a go-forward basis.
  - Removing barriers from the selection process. All applicants invited to interviews are asked if they require accommodations in order to participate.
- Job advertisements are posted on a variety of platforms. Job advertisements and descriptions are available in an alternate format upon request.
- Purchased new ergonomic adjustable desks for employees by request who indicated the physical need for one (2018-2019);
- Review and Update employee policies and procedures including orientation to better inform employees about accessibility

## Training – Integrated Accessible Standards

Education and training are core elements of any organization's human rights strategy. The Town of Erin is committed to ensuring that training is provided on the requirements under the Integrated Regulation as well as the requirements of the *Ontario Human Rights Code* that are relevant to persons with disabilities. The Town will:

1. Ensure that training is provided on the requirements of the accessibility standards in the Integrated Regulation and the *Human Rights Code*. Training must be provided

to all employees, volunteers, policy-makers, and all other people who provide goods and services on behalf of the Town.

2. Ensure that the type and intensity of training on the requirements of accessibility standards and the *Human Rights Code* vary according to the duties of the employee, volunteers, or others.
3. Ensure that every person is trained as soon as practicable. Department Heads are responsible for ensuring every employee, volunteer or person who may develop policies in their department are appropriately trained as soon as practicable.
4. Ensure that training re-occurs when there are changes to the accessibility policies.
5. Ensure that, under the employment standards section for new hires, when an offer of employment is made, the new hire is notified of the Town's policies for accommodating people with disabilities.
6. Ensure that training records are maintained.

### **Yearly Progress**

- Relevant training provided to all staff, contractors and volunteers. Certificates of Training were completed by 85%, as new committees are currently being established. New Committees will be trained as soon as possible following appointment.
- All new employees receive all relevant training.
- All job ads include accommodation statement, and new hires have been made aware of policies.
- All RFP's include requirements and sign off regarding relevant training (2010 and further)
- Training matrix has been developed to track compliance (2015)
- Changes in policies have been communicated to staff (Dec 2014 and March 2016, and January 2018)
- Workplace Emergency Response Information directed to the Joint Health and Safety Committee and CAO for comment (Feb 2016)
- Update health and safety policies and accessibility policies, procedures including customer service orientation. (2019)

### **Transportation**

To make it easier for everyone to travel in the Province the Town has committed that any transportation development will include accessibility. Currently, the majority of the Transportation standard does not apply to the Town of Erin, with the exception of taxi services.



The Town of Erin passed the Taxicab, Limousine and Vehicle for Hire By-Law #19-20 to participate in the County Wide Initiative which reflects the requirements in the Integrated Accessibility Regulation.

## **Accessible Built Environment**

In 2005, the County of Wellington partnered with the City of Guelph, Homewood Health and the Upper Grand District School Board to develop a regional approach to accessibility design known as the Facility Accessibility Design Manual (FADM). The FADM exceeds the Barrier-Free section of the Ontario Building Code.

The Town of Erin Council adopted the Facility Accessibility Design Manual in 2005.

The Town of Erin will strive to ensure that facilities are designed and built in accordance with the FADM. Once the Accessible Built Environment Standard has been enacted by the Province of Ontario, the Town will review the standard to ensure that compliance is met or exceeded.

All renovation and construction projects will comply with the FADM.

## **Yearly Progress**

- Upgrades to the Hillsburgh Community Center to accommodate sledge hockey, including dressing rooms
- Accessible counter installed at the Municipal Office
- Victoria Park – Accessible playground installed
- Council approved installation of an elevator in the Municipal Office for 2018

## **Contact Information**

The Town of Erin is committed to ensuring accessibility is a priority throughout all facilities and business operations. We value your feedback as we strive to make a more accessible community.

Please contact us with your questions and ideas.

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