



Town of Erin Multi-Year Accessibility Plan – 2017 Updated

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.

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

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.

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

Information and Communications

Information and communications are a large part of Town of Erin daily business. It is because of this that it's so important to ensure 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.

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. Partnership with the County of Wellington to produce Braille documents, 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

Employment

The Town of Erin is committed to ensuring that the process of finding, getting and keeping a job is as inclusive as possible in order to build an effective workforce. The CAO (Human Resources staff person) 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.

Progress

- Developed 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 currently posted in a variety of newspapers and websites. Job advertisements and descriptions are available in an alternate format upon request.

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.

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)

Transportation

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 Taxi By-Law #12-12 to participate in the County Wide amending Taxi By-Law #5266-11 which reflects the requirements in the Integrated Accessibility Regulation.

In 2012, the County initiated a study outlining the number of on-demand accessible taxis required by the participating lower tier municipalities.

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 moving forward will comply with the FADM.

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 reality throughout all facilities and business operations. There is still so much to accomplish, and as we progress, we would like to hear from you. Do you have any thoughts or feedback on what has been accomplished so far or ideas on how to plan or how projects could be improved?

Please contact us with your questions and ideas.

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This document is available in alternate formats.

