

Date: 2021-06-01

Subject: **Comprehensive Accessibility Policy**

Contact: **Janice Adshead, Deputy Clerk**

Report Number: Legislative Services-2021-685

Recommendations:

1. That report titled: Comprehensive Accessibility Policy, to the Committee of Council meeting of June 23, 2021, be received; and,
2. That the Inclusive Customer Service Policy 14.12.1 be repealed and replaced with the new, comprehensive Accessibility Policy outlined in Appendix 1 of this report.

Overview:

- In December 2020, the Ministry for Seniors and Accessibility selected the City of Brampton for an *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA)* Desk Audit to confirm the City's compliance with AODA and its associated accessibility standards.
- The audit report identified some key areas that need to be addressed to help improve and enhance accessibility, specifically with regard to updating policy and processes.
- The City of Brampton's Accessibility Office has worked collaboratively with City departments in developing a comprehensive Accessibility Policy, and associated standard operating procedures (SOPs).

Background:

The *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act S.O. 2005, c. 11 (AODA)*, was established in 2005 to develop, implement and enforce accessibility standards. In 2011, the *Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR)* Ontario Regulation 191/11, was introduced to set out requirements to ensure compliance with specific obligations, standards, timelines and targets.

The Standards focus on the following:

- Information and communication
- Employment
- Transportation
- Design of public spaces
- Customer service

Current Situation:

Overall, the City fared well in the Accessibility Desk Audit, and many of the requirements were deemed to be in or near compliance. This is as a result of a great collaborative effort over the past few years, creating procedures and guidelines, such as the Accessibility Technical Standards.

The audit report identified some key areas that need to be addressed to help improve and enhance accessibility. It determined that the City of Brampton is not in compliance with the following requirements under AODA and the accessibility standards:

Description	City's Response
Accessibility Policy	The Accessibility Team, in collaboration with several other departments, has created a new comprehensive Accessibility Policy and six (6) SOPs which comply with the AODA and the IASR requirement to develop, implement and maintain accessibility policies.
Multi-Year Accessibility Plan	The City of Brampton's 2019 - 2025 Multi-Year Municipal Accessibility Plan (MAP) outlines how the City will continue to remove barriers and improve accessibility for persons with disabilities. It builds upon the accomplishments of the previous accessibility plans and continues to implement Provincial requirements to create an accessible Ontario by 2025.
Procurement and Self-Service Kiosks	The Accessibility Policy; the Accessibility – Customer Service SOP; and the Accessibility – General Matters SOP require that the City, when procuring or acquiring self-service kiosks, that accessibility be incorporated in the features and design as required.
Training	In March 2021, the Accessibility Team rolled-out the Accessibility for Life training program to all Members of Council and their staff; employees; volunteers and contractors. The training program is to be completed on or before June 30, 2021.
Employment Policy	As part of the policy modernization work that the Human Resources Department is working on, the City opted to acknowledge the existing relevant HR policies in the new comprehensive Accessibility Policy, and document new high-level processes in the Accessibility – Employment SOP. More comprehensive work will continue on HR Accommodations Policy and programs.

Corporate Implications:

Financial Implications:

The accessibility program is included within the City Clerk’s Office current budget and sufficient resources exist for current program delivery. Currently the Accessibility Team maintains a nominal base budget for general training, awards and event expenditures with special projects budgeted when they are required. Financial resources captured within each department’s capital and operating budgets are utilized to address their respective areas of responsibility for accessible program and service delivery.

Other Implications:

Term of Council Priorities:

This report fulfills the Council Priority of the City of Brampton as a Mosaic and Well-run City, recognizing the City’s continued commitment towards accessibility for all residents of Brampton. The City Clerk’s Office strives to promote accessibility for all as a key priority in its day-to-day business and future planning.

Conclusion:

The Accessibility Policy and related SOPs form the framework for the Accessibility program, and will enable the City to continue to take, a very progressive approach to addressing barriers to accessibility. Not only has this commitment improved the quality of life for residents of Brampton, it has provided a foundation upon which the City will continue to build an inclusive community that meets the needs of individuals of all ages and abilities.

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Attachments:

Appendix 1 sets out the comprehensive Accessibility Policy

Appendix 2 sets out the Customer Service SOP
Appendix 3 sets out the Employment SOP
Appendix 4 sets out the General Matters SOP
Appendix 5 sets out the Information and Communication SOP
Appendix 6 sets out the Transportation SOP
Appendix 7 sets out the Design of Public Spaces SOP