

Date: 2020-01-17

Subject: **2022 Accessibility Annual Report**

Contact: Janice Adshead, Deputy Clerk, City Clerk's Office

Report Number: Legislative Services-2023-103

Recommendations:

1. That the report from Janice Adshead, Deputy Clerk, City Clerk's Office to the Accessibility Advisory Committee Meeting of March 7, 2023, re: **2022 Accessibility Annual Report**, be received;

Overview:

- The City of Brampton's Accessibility Office works collaboratively with the Accessibility Advisory Committee as well as City departments in facilitating and supporting the City's goal of creating a Brampton that is accessible to individuals of all abilities.
- This report provides the Committee and Council with an annual update on the City's responsibilities and progress related to accessibility, and future direction in both meeting legislative requirements and enhancing accessibility at and within the City.

Background:

This report provides an update on the City's progress meeting and/or exceeding accessibility requirements, as identified by the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (AODA) and the Integrated Accessibility Standards (IASR) (*Ontario Regulation 191/11*).

This status report identifies the initiatives that were completed in 2022, as outlined in the 2019-2025 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan (MAP), as well as projects and initiatives that were designed to identify, prevent and remove barriers.

This 2022 annual status report will be made available on the City's website under www.brampton.ca/accessibility. It will also be provided to anyone who requests a copy, in an alternative format.

Current Situation:

The City of Brampton has taken, and continues to take, a 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.

The Accessibility Office is generally staffed with a compliment of one (1) dedicated Accessibility Coordinator, and one (1) Accessibility Clerk. 2022 was an unusual year for the Accessibility Office, as the Accessibility Clerk was seconded to the Elections Team for nine (9) months, and the Accessibility Coordinator was on leave for several months. The Accessibility Team seconded an individual to act as Accessibility Coordinator for an 18 month period to cover absences.

In spite of experiencing staffing-related challenges, the Accessibility Office:

- 1) Met all its legislated obligations in a timely manner;
- 2) Accomplished several projects and initiatives which were designed to improve accessibility at and within the City;
- 3) Developed plans and measures to close the three (3) gaps identified in the 2021 year-end report, namely:
 - a. Meet legislative requirements to have a minimum of seven (7) members self-identify a disability sit on the Accessibility Advisory Committee;
 - b. Achieved point-in-time compliance with the WCAG 2.0 Standards; and
 - c. Updated the MAP to include maintenance plans within the Asset Management Plan.

2022 Accessibility Achievements

1. Capital Project Reviews

The Accessibility Office reviewed and provided comments on approximately 25 capital projects in 2022. These projects can involve up to three (3) comprehensive reviews, and are quite complex in nature as there are many elements to review, such as accessible entrances, paths of travel, washrooms, etc. While the volume of drawings is not as high as they are with site plans, the complexity is much greater. The Accessibility Office created a standardized review template, which has sections for each of the elements the City reviews. This process ensures that comments are

consistent regardless of whom the reviewer may be, and ensures all areas subject to review are captured.

2. Site Plan Reviews

The Accessibility Office reviewed and provided comments on more than 320 site plans in 2022. The Office recognized a need to create a standardized review, and as such developed a template to use for site plan reviews, which has sections for each of the site plan elements the City reviews (i.e. parking, access aisles, ramps, cross walks, etc.). This standardized process ensures that comments are consistent regardless of whom the reviewer may be, and ensures all areas subject to review are captured.

3. MAP Updated

A new multi-year accessibility plan was developed to include maintenance plans within the Asset Management Plan. This was identified as an area of non-compliance with the AODA in 2021. The new MAP identifies projects and initiatives that the Accessibility Team, in collaboration with the Accessibility Advisory Committee and various City departments, will work on from 2022 – 2026. The MAP features a refreshed Statement of Commitment and logo.

4. Service Disruptions

The Accessibility Office created, published and communicated a new Administrative Directive and supporting procedural documentation to ensure public notification is available on brampton.ca should there be a service disruption at any City facility.

5. StopGap

The City has partnered with the StopGap Foundation to design and deliver up to 20 ramps to local businesses that are currently not accessible due to a step at the main entrance. The contract between StopGap and the City was signed in 2022, and in February 2023, the City will invite businesses to apply for a ramp at no cost to the business.

6. AccessNow

AccessNow is a website which identifies places, such as recreation centres, libraries, transit stations etc. and identifies what accessible features are present. This is a valuable resource for individuals with disabilities as it is known in advance if the facility can meet their needs. All City facilities were identified on the www.accessnow.com website and mobile app.

7. Guidance and Advice

The Accessibility Office acts in an advisory capacity, providing guidance, advice, and feedback to staff in various departments regarding questions, projects, initiatives and

events they are working on to ensure accessibility considerations and elements are included.

8. Communications

Website Updates

In order to achieve point-in-time compliance with the WCAG 2.0 Standards, a review of www.brampton.ca was conducted. Issues related to fonts and colour contrast were corrected, and a check for simple language was used. The Accessibility Office also reviewed reports from Site improve and took corrective action as required.

In addition, the accessibility webpage on www.brampton.ca was updated with new content.

Various Tip Sheets

The Accessibility Office developed and published a number of Tip Sheets for use as reference by employees when they are interacting with both City staff and members of the public. These resources include: Individual Emergency Response Plans; making Documents Accessible; Making PDF's Accessible; Accessible Meetings; Accessible Online Forms; Accessible Web Style Guide; Speaking or Writing about People with Disabilities; and Making businesses Accessible.

Digital Accessibility Administrative Directive

The Digital Accessibility Administrative Directive was developed to ensure compliance with the *Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (191/11, s. 14)* under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (2005)* which requires all web content, internet and intranet websites owned by the City of Brampton to be accessible and compliant with current World Wide Web Consortium's (W3) Web Content Accessibility Guidelines.

9. Accessibility Advisory Committee – Terms of Reference

As 2022 was the start of a new Term of Council, a new Terms of Reference was developed for members of the Accessibility Advisory Committee which outlines:

- the purpose and mandate of the Committee;
- membership, composition, and qualification;
- term of office;
- meetings and workshops;
- conflict of interest; and
- reporting relationship.

The proposed changes provide more clarity on the purpose and mandate of the AAC, and includes new sections on membership, composition, and qualifications as well as conflict of interest.

Corporate Implications:

Financial Implications:

Currently, the Accessibility Office 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; however, the resources are not explicitly designated for accessibility.

The accessibility program is included in the City Clerk's Office current budget process and staff will continue to budget accordingly for future years.

Term of Council Priorities:

This report fulfills the Council Priority of the City of Brampton as a Mosaic, 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:

This year was a challenging year in the City Clerk's Office resulting from staffing shortages on the Accessibility Team as well as competing priorities with it being an election year. Nevertheless, the team met its day-to-day requirement of reviewing and commenting on site plans and capital projects, while making great strides to improve the accessibility program. The gaps identified in the 2021 AODA Audit have been closed. Foundational documents such as administrative directives, procedures, and guidance documents have been developed and communicated, and metrics are now being captured. Additionally, the City has identified creative solutions to improve accessibility within the community, with reach extending beyond its typical jurisdiction.

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