



Staff Report

Human Resources

Report To: Committee of the Whole
Meeting Date: October 23, 2017
Report Number: FAF.17.125
Subject: Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation Policy Revision
Prepared by: Jennifer Moreau, Manager Human Resources

A. Recommendations

THAT Council receive the Staff Report FAF.17.125 “Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation Policy Revision” for information;

AND THAT Council approve the staff recommended revisions to the revised policy.

B. Overview

This is a report that details revisions following a regular review of the policy titled, Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation.

C. Background

The Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation, Ont. Reg. 191/11 (“Regulation”), became law on June 3, 2011. It was amended to include the Design of Public Spaces under Ontario Regulation 413/12 in October 2012. It covers accessibility standards in information and communication, employment, transportation and built environment.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the Town meets the needs of persons with disabilities in accordance with the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation 191/11. This policy is updated as required to ensure compliance with provincial legislation.

The Regulation requires that all but small organizations:

- establish, implement and maintain accessibility policies
- establish, implement and maintain a multi-year accessibility plan outlining the organization’s strategy to meet the requirements set under the Regulation
- formally document their policies and then make these documents publicly available (in an accessible format upon request)
- post their accessibility plan on their website, provide the plan in an accessible format upon request, and review and update the accessibility plan at least once every five years

D. Analysis

The Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation Policy was first approved in March of 2013 by Council. It has since been revised to include language regarding accessibility and content included on our website. Changes to the document are highlighted in red in the attached policy.

E. The Blue Mountains Strategic Plan

Goal #4: Promote a Culture of Organizational & Operational Excellence

F. Environmental Impacts

None

G. Financial Impact

None

H. In consultation with

- Ruth Prince, Director Finance & IT Services
- Michael Benner, Director Planning & Development Services
- Reg Russwurm, Director Infrastructure & Public Works
- Shawn Everitt, Acting CAO
- Rob Collins, Director Enforcement and Fire Services
- AODA Committee

I. Attached

1. Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation Policy

Respectfully Submitted,

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Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation Policy

POL.COR.13.16

Policy Type: Corporate Policy (Approved by Council)

Date Approved: March 4, 2013

Department:

Staff Report: FAF.17.125

Revision Date: October 23, 2017

Policy Statement

The Corporation of the Town of The Blue Mountains (herein referred to as “the Town”) is committed to meeting the accessibility needs of persons with a disability in a timely manner.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the Town meets the needs of persons with disabilities in accordance with the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation 191/11. This policy will be updated as needed to ensure compliance with provincial legislation.

Application

This policy applies to management, staff, service providers and the public.

Definitions

None

Procedures

A copy of this policy is available on the Town’s website and in hard copy in the Clerk’s office. A copy of this policy is available upon request in an accessible format in accordance with the terms of this policy.

Accessible Information and Communications

Providing Accessible Formats and Communication Supports

The Town is committed to providing materials in an accessible format and providing communication supports to persons with disabilities in a timely manner, upon request. Accessible formats and communication supports will be available in accordance with this policy by January 1, 2015.

Accessible formats may include, but are not limited to large print, recorded audio and electronic formats and Braille and other formats used by persons with disabilities.

Communication supports may include but are not limited to captioning, alternative and augmentative communication supports, plain language and sign language and other supports that facilitate effective communications.

A request for information to be provided in an accessible format or with communication supports may be submitted to the Clerk's Office. Once such a request is received, The Town will consult with the person making the request to determine a suitable format that takes the person's accessibility needs into account. The Town will determine which accessible format or communication support to be provided or arranged. The information shall be made available in an accessible format, or communication support shall be provided in a timely fashion.

If there is a fee normally charged for the information, the person making the request for information in an accessible format or provision of communication supports, will be charged only the applicable fee. There will be no additional charge for provision of the accessible format or communication support.

If information or communications cannot be converted to an accessible format The Town will provide an explanation about why the materials are not convertible along with a summary of the requested information or communications.

Notice to the public of the availability of accessible formats and communication supports shall be made available on the Town's website.

Training

The Town will provide training on the requirements of the information and communications standards of the Integrated Accessibility Regulation of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act and the Human Rights Code. The training shall be completed by January 1, 2014 for affected employees.

Training will be provided to all employees and volunteers, all persons who participate in developing Town policies and all other persons who provide goods and services on behalf of the organization. Training will be ongoing and shall occur after a person is hired or when changes are made to Town accessibility policies.

Feedback Process

We welcome feedback from the public and from our employees. No later than January 1, 2014, the Town will provide feedback processes accessible to persons with disabilities by providing for or arranging accessibility formats and communication supports on request.

Notice to the public of the availability of accessible formats and communication supports shall be made available on the Town's website.

Accessible Emergency procedure, plans or public safety information

Emergency procedures, plans and public safety information are currently available, upon request, in an accessible format or via appropriate communication supports. Requests for such information may be made pursuant to the terms of this policy. Such information shall be made available as soon as is practicable following receipt of a request.

Accessible Websites and Web Content

The Town's internet sites and web content will conform with the World Wide Consortium Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG 2.0) initially at Level A and increasing to Level AA as practicable according to the following schedule:

- January 1, 2014 – New internet sites and web content must conform with Level A.
- January 1, 2021 – All internet websites and web content must conform with Level AA [not Captions (live) and Audio Description (Pre-recorded) 1.2.4 and 1.25]

For more information about the World Wide Consortium Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG 2.0), visit <http://www.w3.org/TR/WCAG20/>.

Throughout our website, the Town will strive to ensure that the elements of WCAG 2.0 are integrated throughout. This covers things like writing content in plain language, providing alternate text for images, ensuring someone can navigate the website with the use of just a keyboard, and that documents on a website can be read by a screen reader. Please note that it may not be possible to meet all WCAG 2.0 requirements for all web content. In these cases,

upon request, the Town will work with individuals to make the Town's internet website content accessible to them in an appropriate manner.

Accessible Employment

The Town is committed to meeting the accessibility and accommodation needs of persons with a disability in a timely manner. This policy shall be in effect no later than January 1, 2014.

Accessible Formats and Communication Supports for Job Applicants and Employees with Disabilities

An employee or a job applicant with a disability may request that information generally available to employees in the workplace and information needed in order to perform the employee's job be made available in an accessible format or with communication supports. Once such a request is received, The Town of Blue Mountains will consult with the person making the request to determine a suitable format that takes the person's accessibility needs into account. The Town of Blue Mountains will determine which accessible format or communication support to be provided or arranged. The information shall be made available in an accessible format, or communication support shall be provided in a timely fashion.

Accessible Workplace Emergency Response Information

The Town will provide individualized emergency response information to employees who have a disability, if the disability is such that the individualized information is necessary and the Town is aware of the need for accommodation, due to the employee's disability.

If an employee who receives individualized workplace emergency response information requires assistance, and if the employee grants permission, The Town will provide the workplace emergency response information to the person that the employer designates to provide assistance to the employee. Individualized emergency response information is provided as soon as is possible.

Individualized workplace emergency response information will be reviewed when the

- employee moves to a different location in the organization;
- employee's overall accommodations needs or plans are reviewed; and
- employer reviews its general emergency response policies.

Recruitment, Assessment, Selection and Hiring

We provide accommodations for applicants with disabilities. We notify our employees and the public about the provision of accommodations on our website and in our job postings.

During the recruitment process, The Town will advise applicants that accommodation for purposes of accessibility in relation to the recruitment process or materials is available upon request. Upon receipt of such a request, the Town will consult with the person making the request and will determine an accommodation that takes the person's accessibility needs into account.

Notice to Successful Job Applicants and Employees about Accommodations

Successful job applicants and new employees will be advised of the Town's accommodation policies. Such information is available to current employees through the Town's Human Resources Department.

Individual Accommodation Plans

The process for developing and documenting individual accommodation plans for employees with disabilities includes the following steps:

1. Meet with the employee who requests accommodation for an initial discussion and to determine an optimal method of individualized assessment, if needed. Consult with the employee throughout the process.
2. If required, the Town will arrange and pay for an expert evaluation, such as a functional abilities evaluation, to determine if and how accommodation can be achieved.
3. The employee is welcome to have a representative from the workplace participate in the development of the accommodation plan.
4. Individual accommodation plans will be provided to the employee in an accessible format or with communication supports that take into account the employee's particular accessibility needs, due to his/her disability, upon request. All individual accommodation plans inform the employee that the Town provide information in an accessible format or with communication supports, if requested. The plans also identify all accommodations that will be provided. If needed, we include individualized workplace emergency response information, in the accommodation plan.
5. Personal information with respect to the accommodation plan will remain with the respective department and the Human Resources Department. It will not be released to any other Town employees without the employee's consent, except in the case of an emergency.

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6. The Town reviews and updates individual accommodation plans annually or if or when there is a change with respect to the employee's functional status (e.g. the employee's functional status improves or regresses). The employee is encouraged to provide regular feedback about the efficiency of the accommodation. The review includes a meeting with the employee and consideration of feedback provided by the employee. Any changes that need to be made to the accommodation plan will be discussed with the employee and if necessary, an expert assessment will be arranged for at the Town's expense.

7. If a plan is denied, we will meet with the employee and provide the reasons and upon request, the Town will provide the reasons in an accessible format or with communication supports.

Return to Work Process

The Town has a process for developing and documenting a return to work plan for an employee with a disability who has been away from work because of a disability and requires disability-related accommodations in order to return to work. The return to work process outlines the steps the Town will take to facilitate the employee's return to work. The process may eventually lead to an individual accommodation plan (see above).

Performance Management, Career Development and Advancement and Redeployment

The Town will take the accessibility needs and individual accommodation plans into consideration for employees with disabilities during a performance management process, or during career development and advancement or when the employee is redeployed.

Accessible Procurement

The Town is committed to including accessibility criteria and features, when procuring or acquiring goods, services or facilities. When it is not practicable to do so, an explanation will be provided, upon request.

The Town includes accessibility criteria and features when designing, procuring or acquiring self serve kiosks.

Transportation

The Transportation Standard will make it easier for people to travel in Ontario, including persons with disabilities, older Ontarians, and families traveling with children in strollers.

If a licensing standard for taxicabs is established, The Town will:

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- Ensure taxicabs do not charge a higher fee or an additional fee to persons with disabilities
- Ensure taxicabs do not charge a higher fee for storage of assistive devices
- Ensure taxicabs have appropriate information displayed both on the rear bumper and available in accessible format to passengers
- Consult with the public, and persons with disabilities to determine the proportion of accessible taxis required in the community, including steps to meet the need in its accessibility plan.

Where conventional transportation is provided by The Town, The Town will:

- Consult with the public and persons with disabilities in the development of accessible design criteria to be considered in the construction, renovation or replacement of bus stops and shelters.
- Identify planning for accessible bus stops and shelters, including any measures that will be taken to meet the goal of accessible bus stops and shelters, in its accessibility plan
- Ensure that the third party transportation providers that have entered into arrangements with Town with respect to the construction of bus stops and shelters in its jurisdiction participate in the consultation and planning, where applicable.

Design of Public Spaces

The Town shall incorporate and meet the standards set out under the Design of Public Spaces Standard and the accessible design standards in the Ontario Building Code, as applicable, when undergoing a significant redevelopment or new construction on physical spaces covered under the Standard.

Public Spaces include:

- Recreational trails;
- Beach access routes;
- Outdoor public eating areas;
- Outdoor play spaces, like playgrounds;
- Outdoor paths of travel, like sidewalks, ramps, stairs, curb ramps, rest areas and accessible pedestrian signals;
- Accessible off street parking; and
- Service-related elements like service counters, fixed queuing lines and waiting areas.

Exclusions

None

References and Related Policies

POL.AODA.10.01 Accessibility Standards for Customer Service

Consequences of Non-Compliance

Non-compliant Town employees or members of Council will be referred to this Policy (POL.COR.13.16).

Review Cycle

This policy will be reviewed by Council once per term or as required for legislative updates.