



External Briefing Note

GEORGINA

Subject: Update on Multi-Year Accessibility Plan and AODA Compliance

To: Georgina Accessibility Advisory Committee

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Background

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 ([AODA](#)), requires government to adopt practices that eliminate barriers to participation of individuals with disabilities, including the initial development and regular updating of a Multi-Year Accessibility Plan by Jan. 1, 2025.

The Town of Georgina is committed to providing all members of the public and its employees an environment of inclusive design and integration through ongoing policy development in its services, products and facilities. To that end, in collaboration with the Georgina Accessibility Advisory Committee (GAAC), the Town developed the 2012-2017 [Town's Multi-Year Accessibility Plan](#) that was updated for the period of 2018-2022.

In support of the above commitment and continuing to enhance accessibility throughout the organization and community, the Town of Georgina's 2023-27 Corporate Strategic Plan includes the following:

Pillar: Creating a Vibrant, Health and Safe Community for All

Goal: Support a safe, healthy and inclusive community

Initiative: Update the 2018-2022 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan, including AODA compliance

Project overview

The objective of our work to achieve the Strategic Plan goal is to build upon ongoing initiatives to not only meet the requirements of the 2005 AODA, including an update to the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan, but also recommend actions/strategies that enhance accessibility and quality of life for everyone in Georgina.

As a key deliverable, the previous plan, 2018-2022 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan, outlined strategies and actions to identify, prevent and remove barriers for people with disabilities and detailed a strategy for meeting the requirements of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA).

Actions and strategies include, but not limited to the following:

- AODA requirements, compliance and reporting
- Review/refresh of Town Policy and Statement of Commitment
- Enhance accessibility of Town facilities, spaces, services and programs
- Accessibility upgrades to equipment and technology
- Enhance accessibility to emergency services
- Buy goods, services and facilities that are accessible
- Provide ongoing/updated training to Town staff
- Enhance opportunities for input from persons with disabilities
- Enhance communication tools and website
- Enhance employment practices

Status update

2023 AODA compliance reporting has been completed

To ensure ongoing compliance, the Town completed the 2023 Accessibility Compliance Report for the Ministry of Seniors and Accessibility. Through a detailed review of the work of all departments in 2024, an action plan will be developed to support ongoing continuous improvement.

Accessibility/AODA compliance transition to the Strategic Initiatives Department and actions completed to date

The Strategic Initiatives Department assumed responsibility for the Accessibility/AODA Compliance through the development and approval of the new Strategic Plan in June 2023. As part of the transition process, Town staff met with representatives and leads from York Region and other municipalities responsible for Accessibility/AODA compliance to gain further knowledge and understanding of the work being done in this area.

In addition, staff have developed formal linkages with various associations and networks (e.g. Ontario Network of Accessibility Professionals) having attended meetings and conferences, and continuing to share information in an effort to establish valuable connections with sector partners and experts.

As part of the 2024 budget process, staff received approval for an initiative that will help identify and address any opportunities for improvement related to the Town of Georgina's AODA compliance requirements in-line with the provincial regulations, including an update to the 2018-2022 Multi-year Accessibility Plan. The approval included \$175,000 to secure a temporary part-time staff and external resources as needed, to support the initiative.

In December 2023, staff consulted with the York Region Accessibility lead to develop and post a temporary part-time Accessibility Advisor position (12-months contract) for the Town of Georgina. The position closed on Jan. 31, 2024 with the recruitment process well underway. The successful person is expected to start in March 2024.

Next steps

Accessibility Advisor to complete the following activities:

1. Conduct an internal review to fully assess the Town's work related to AODA compliance and the actions in the 2018-2022 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan
2. Develop a summary of the current state (where we are) and a future state (where we need to be)
3. Provide recommendations and a detailed roadmap that will support our work moving forward

An update report will be brought forward to this committee for consultation and consideration once the work mentioned above is complete.