



## TOWN OF MINTO

DATE: December 20<sup>th</sup>, 2016

REPORT TO: Mayor and Council

FROM: Matthew Lubbers, Recreation Services Manager

SUBJECT: Accessibility Annual Update

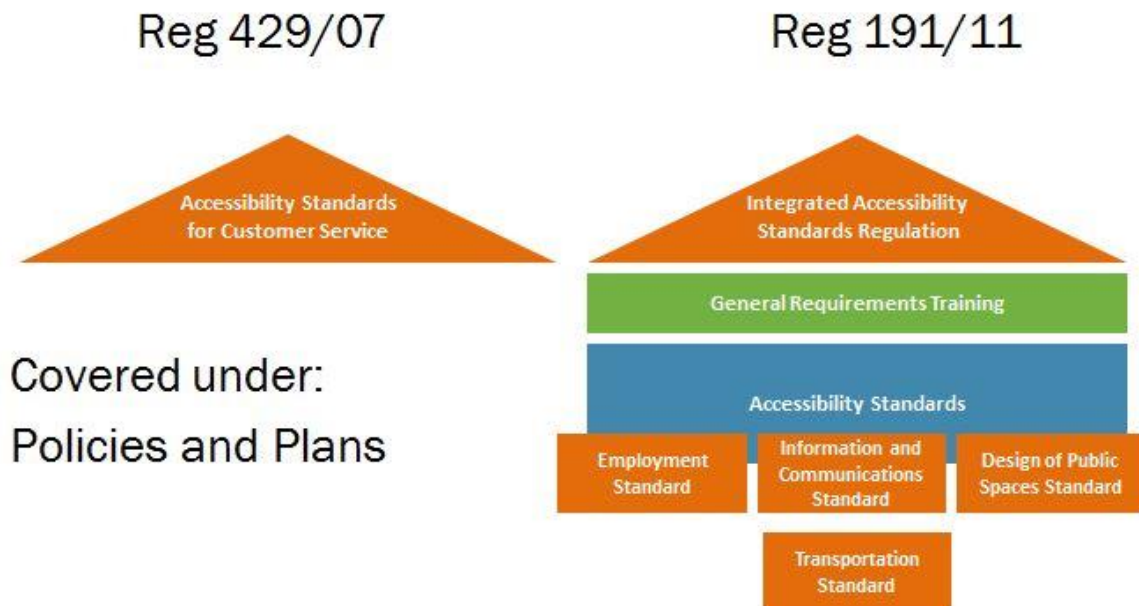
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### STRATEGIC PLAN:

12.14 Ensure the Town provides services and facilities accessible to persons of all abilities in compliance with Provincial regulations keeping in mind the needs of the community, ability to pay and best practices of similar municipalities.

### BACKGROUND:

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) is comprised of two standards. They are the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service and the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR). Between them, they establish the principles that the Town, its staff and volunteers, must follow with respect to accessible customer service, information and communications, employment, design of public spaces in the built environment and for the overall training, planning and reporting of accessibility initiatives. Town staff continues to work closely with the County of Wellington Accessibility Coordinator to ensure Minto remains in compliance with the Act.



## **COMMENTS:**

### **General Requirements**

The Town's Multi-Year Accessibility Plan was reviewed and updated in 2016. The new plan will be in effect for the next 5 years and covers how the Town plans for comply with the aforementioned regulations.

### **Accessible Standards for Customer Service**

All new and seasonal staff receive training upon hire or return, while existing staff receive refresher training annually in the fall. Changes in 2016 to Regulation 429/07 require all staff, volunteers and other members of the Town to receive customer service training, whether or not they interact with the general public on behalf of the Town. A goal for 2017 will be to complete this customer service training with all of the Committees of Council.

Town staff worked with the Norgan Theatre Board through an accessibility inquiry with regard to the accessible viewing platforms towards the back of the theatre seating area. A portable theatre chair was obtained to help enhance and better integrate the experience of support persons and/or guests of a patron with a disability.

### **Information and Communications**

The Town website is screen reader friendly, easy to navigate and full of descriptive text for links and pictures. The Town continues to be the only municipality in the County of Wellington that records its Council meetings for broadcast. Some other local municipalities have been in contact regarding the video recording of Council meetings. Upgrading to escribe has also allowed staff to upload a complete, proper and indexed portable document format (PDF) Agenda to our website for download by anyone. These are two great examples of providing alternative methods for the public to receive information and communication from the Town. A goal of the new plan will be to ensure reports have descriptive images and proper heading to make the document navigable.



The website is monitored on an ongoing basis to ensure its functionality and content remain accessible. Department Heads as well as staff who update the website receive online

refresher training annually in the fall regarding the information and communication standards found in the IASR.

The Town remains committed to providing accessible formats and communication supports upon request. Alternative forms of feedback from employees and members of the public are made available upon request. The Town is a member of the County-established Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC) and also attends County-facilitated working group meetings.

### **Employment**

All employment advertisements inform applicants of our ability to make accommodations throughout the recruitment process, if required. Department Heads received a tip sheet on incorporating accessibility when setting up interviews, evaluating staff and creating workplace Emergency Response Plans as well as Individual Accommodation Plans when required.

### **Design of Public Spaces**

This standard encompasses outdoor spaces, including but not limited to, trails, play spaces and exterior paths of travel. As the Town upgrades its outdoor infrastructure, this portion of the IASR will be taken into consideration. Senior public works and recreation staff will receive online refresher training regarding this standard annually. The County-established AAC sent correspondence in November to all working group members to promote contrasted nosings of steps in downtown cores.

### **The Ontario Building Code**

Indoor spaces and accessibility are covered under the Ontario Building Code. In addition, the Town adopted the County of Wellington's Facility Accessibility Design Manual as a guideline and has successfully applied for funding from the County's Accessibility Fund since 2014. This funding was applied to the Palmerston Arena lobby renovation project in 2016. An accessible exterior door was installed and the inside double doors were removed to ensure greater ease of access for those with disabilities.



Considerations to direct the funding towards in 2017 include the exterior entrances at the Harriston-Minto Community Complex.

#### **FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS:**

Financial costs for training should be minimal with the use of free online resources and by working with the County Accessibility Coordinator. Costs to accommodate an employee with a disability would be unique in each instance. Rules and regulations found in the Design of Public Space Standard the Ontario Building Code and the County's Facility Accessibility Design Manual that guide new Town infrastructure moving forward will also be unique in each instance. Town staff will need to ensure they budget for any additional costs for these projects.

#### **RECOMMENDATION:**

That Council of the Town of Minto receives the December 20<sup>th</sup>, 2016 report from the Recreation Services Manager entitled Accessibility Annual Update.

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Matthew Lubbers  
Recreation Services Manager