



TOWN OF MINTO

DATE: December 1st, 2017

REPORT TO: Mayor and Council

FROM: Matthew Lubbers, Recreation Services Manager

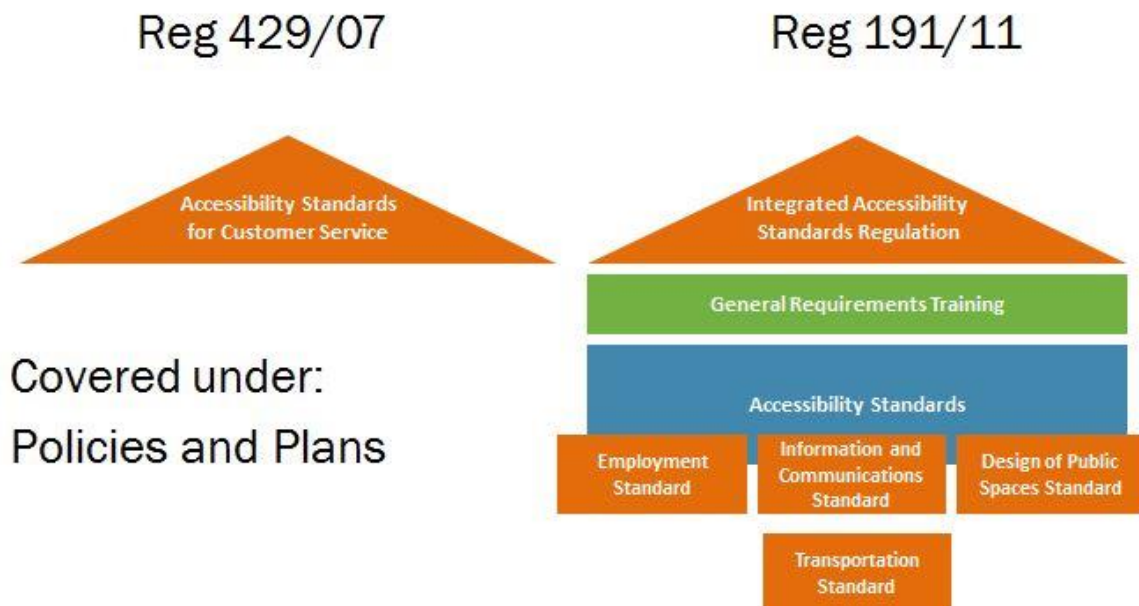
SUBJECT: Accessibility Annual Update

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.

On July 20th, staff submitted the Town's bi-annual Accessibility Compliance Report to the Accessibility Directorate of Ontario. Requirements under the Design of Public Spaces Standard and the Transportation Standard were front and centre, some of which does not apply the Town. Minto has some public spaces such as off-street parking, outdoor play spaces and trails to name a few. New or redeveloped public spaces need to meet requirements of section 80 of Regulation 191/11.

Online training sessions are currently being offered by the Directorate and the three sessions focus on accessible Word documents, accessible PDF documents and accessible websites. These sessions conclude in mid-December and all Town staff will be updated in the next Accessibility Update email in January.

There have been calls for the International Symbol of Access (ISA) to be updated to the image on the right, as the current symbol on the left has been criticized for being too static.



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. A goal for 2018 will be to complete this customer service training with new members of any Committee of Council.

Town staff worked with a resident of Harriston to encourage local businesses to contrast “nosings” and make changes in elevation easier to see. This was a follow-up from correspondence received from the County of Wellington’s Accessibility Advisory Committee. Public Works staff was able to improve certain areas in response to the request.



Town staff was made aware that an Anaphylaxis Policy was introduced in March in Owen Sound that prohibits nuts in their facilities.

Information and Communications

The Town website is screen reader friendly and full of descriptive text for links and pictures. Improvements are planned for the website to make it more streamlined and accessible.

The Town continues to be the only municipality in the County of Wellington that records its Council meetings for broadcast. Watching the meetings online or on the Wightman Telecom community channel are effective ways we are reaching our residents who are not able to attend our meetings in person. Some other local municipalities may begin in 2018, using their meeting management software. Town staff will monitor this to see how it compares to our current operation.

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. Emails updates are also sent periodically throughout the year.

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.

In 2013 the Town also adopted the County Facility Accessibility Design Standard

<https://www.wellington.ca/en/government/resources/facilityaccessibilitydesignmanual.pdf> as a guideline for design of Minto public spaces. One example of this standard is the sidewalk installation at intersections as shown in the sketch. This design is applied in Harriston Downtown reconstructed and will be used for the 2018 Clifford Elora Street project.

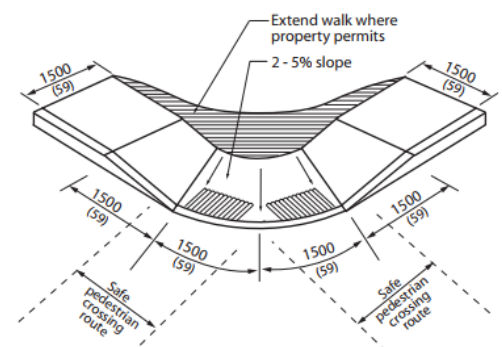


Figure 4.1.10.2
Curb Ramp where Sidewalks are adjacent to Curb

The Ontario Building Code

Indoor spaces and accessibility are covered under the Ontario Building Code as well as the County Facility Design Standard. The Town has successfully applied for funding from the County's Accessibility Fund since 2014. This funding was applied to the Harriston Arena entrances project in 2017. The Town also installed an accessible exterior door was also installed at the Administrative Office as seen in the adjacent image. The Building Code applies equally to both public and private spaces when major renovation occurs.



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 1st, 2017 report from the Recreation Services Manager entitled Accessibility Annual Update.

Matthew Lubbers
Recreation Services Manager