

## Staff Report to Council

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**To:** Mayor Schermerhorn and Members of Council

**Date:** February 13, 2018

**Prepared By:** Vicki Hallam, Manager of Safety Compliance & Accessibility

**Presented By:** Vicki Hallam, Manager of Safety Compliance & Accessibility

**Re:** Emergency Services – 2017 Accessibility Status Report

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**Staff Recommendation:**

That Council receive for information the Emergency Services – 2017 Accessibility Status Report. And that the Annual Accessibility Status Report be approved as presented and posted on the Town of Greater Napanee’s website.

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**Financial Implications:**

Upon review, there are no financial implications at this time.

**Accessibility Implications:**

This report may be available in alternate format upon request.

**Information Technology Implications:**

Upon review, there are no information technology implications.

**Energy Management Implications:**

Upon review, there are no energy management implications.

**Background Information:**

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) was passed in 2005 with the vision of creating a fully accessible Ontario by 2025. The AODA gave the Province the mandate to create sets of standards in accessibility which apply to both public and private sector organizations.

**Discussion:**

The Accessibility Status Report is an annual update that the Town of Greater Napanee provides on the measures taken to improve accessibility and implementation of the Province's accessibility requirements.

The attached highlights our initiatives that were undertaken in 2017.

The standards and compliance deadlines for the Town of Greater Napanee have been submitted to the Accessibility Directorate of Ontario.

Sincerely;

Vicki Hallam  
Manager of Safety Compliance & Accessibility

## **2017 Accessibility Status Report**

The 2017 Accessibility Status Report is an annual update that the Town of Greater Napanee provides on the measures taken to improve accessibility and implementation of the Province's accessibility requirements.

### **Awareness**

In conjunction with the Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee (JAAC) the Town participated in spreading Accessibility Awareness. To help broaden the profile, emphasis on acknowledging the International Day of Disability in the local newspaper, promoting Accessibility compliance at the Community Health Fair, and presenting Napanee's design of public spaces at the Ontario Network of Accessibility Professionals conference in Ottawa.

### **Customer Service**

Staff continue to provide accessible customer service to people with disabilities.

All new employees, volunteers, committees of Council, and placement students are given training and guidelines for serving the public.

Persons with disabilities that have service animals can access goods, services and facilities by law. Employees can ask the person with a disability to provide documentation confirming that it is in fact a service animal.

Support persons are allowed to accompany a person with a disability in order to help with communication, mobility, personal care or medical needs or with access to goods, services or facilities. Any associated admission fees are waived as per the Act.

The Public's feedback is encouraged should they have any concerns or requests for improving accessibility by using our latest form on the Town's website.

The Town did receive concerns regarding lack of accessibility in local restaurants/businesses. Businesses and organizations are not required to retrofit buildings under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA). A barrier-free design requirement must be included when a new building is constructed or undergoes renovation.

## **Information and Communications**

Staff put forth their best efforts to create and provide information/documents in ways that are accessible to people with disabilities using the formatting guidelines and best practices.

Our website has been redesigned to meet the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 level as required in the provincial standard. Accessible consideration is made when preparing signage, print media and social media to the public.

The Town of Greater Napanee provides accessible formats and communication supports on request, as per the policy.

## **Employment**

Accessibility practices are incorporated in all stages of employment including recruitment, selection and support for employees with disabilities.

## **Design of Public Spaces**

The Town took on an immense project with the development of the Rotary Playground. Prior to the design and build of the new public outdoor play space, there was consultation with the public and the accessibility advisory committee.

The Design of Public Spaces standard emphasizes on the whole environment when addressing play spaces. So not only were the play components considered but the entrance, pathways, signage, surfacing, shade structures, lighting, safety and sight lines for caregivers had to be carefully executed.

The design featured components for balance and co-ordination, body control, sliding, spinning, swinging, bouncing, tactile, sensory, cognitive and interactive, and imaginative play.

The “Digging Downtown” project took on more new accessible features in our community. The upgraded accessible pedestrian signals communicate information in visual, and audible formats. The tactile walking surface indicators alert people with low vision and the curb cuts allow for greater accessibility for wheelchairs, carts, and strollers. Extra wide sidewalks, accessible rest areas, and accessible parking spaces were all part of the transformation.

## Compliance

Accessible compliance reports have been submitted as required to the Accessibility Directorate of Ontario.

In 2017 many initiatives were completed with more to come as we continue to identify and remove barriers. The Town of Greater Napanee is committed to moving forward on this pathway to accessibility, creating spaces and services that everyone can use.

**Accessibility not only helps people with disabilities, it benefits everyone.**

