

Annual Multi Year Accessibility Plan Report

City of Guelph

Date 2021

Introduction

The City of Guelph's commitment to Accessibility compliance is aligned with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), which mandates organizations to follow standards that make services more accessible to people with disabilities. The City of Guelph adheres to the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR) under AODA, focusing on areas such as customer service, information access, public transportation, employment, and public spaces. To ensure compliance, the City of Guelph develops a multi-year accessibility plan (MYAP). In this annual report of the MYAP, we will cover our efforts to improve the accessibility of the City's website, how we built City facilities, and public transportation.

Achievements

Website Accessibility

For the past few years, the City has been making sure its main website can be accessed by everyone. This work follows international rules called WCAG 2.0, which help make websites easy to use and understand. The City's teams have been improving the website, which included special software in 2019 to keep checking the website's accessibility. This software costs about \$18,000 a year. Thanks to these efforts, website accessibility has improved and is more user-friendly. The City will continue to update the website to make sure it stays easy to use, even as technology changes.

Ensuring accessible content is published on the website, staff will continue to be trained in how to produce accessible document.

Built Environment

Back in 2015, the Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC) gave their input on the City's guide for making facilities accessible. Since then, whenever the City builds new properties or updates old ones, they follow this guide. In 2021, the City showed it's a leader in making spaces accessible in Ontario by adhering to these standards. This includes all the recent updates and the designs for the new Guelph Public Library Main Branch and the South End Community Centre.

Compliance Report

This year, the City will report to the Province that it is in compliance with the AODA. The compliance report includes all aspects of the AODA with a focus on the website's level of accessibility and the initiatives within Transit that help ensure compliance.

The report will confirm overall compliance to the AODA requirements, including but not limited to:

- Policies, processes, plans and consultations in the development process in the areas of general AODA policy, accessible transit, training, and employment accommodations
- Training on the AODA and specific training requirements such as Transit employees regarding the operation of the accessible features on the transit vehicles
- Feedback processes
- Website compliance with the WCAG 2.0 Level AA

- Accessible parking, and
- Trails and outdoor play spaces.

The report will be submitted before the end of 2021.

Guelph Transit

Guelph Transit has modified many of its processes and designs to increase accessibility and provide services that in many cases exceed AODA compliance. Approximately 82% of bus stops in the Guelph Transit network are accessible, where all bus stop blade signs and info posts meet the AODA requirements for customers. While riding a conventional bus, there is accessibility seating for priority customers along with route, bus stop request and stop information provided both visually and through voice delivery. Communication with passengers through the website or social media is provided by employees who have been trained in AODA compliant standards. Before and since the Covid-19 Pandemic, Guelph Transit has provided signage and stickers that comply with the AODA requirements for customers utilizing its services.

As Guelph Transit moves to a modified layout in their new buses, customers who use a mobility device will find that there are more seating choices and additional accessible seating depending on if the passenger requires their wheelchair to be secured or not. This advancement in customer service is just one way that Transit is offering equitable service.

Financial Implications

The Web Accessibility Project software Site Improve, that tests City websites for accessibility, has an annual fee of just under \$18,000. This software was purchased for 2020 and 2021 and is being funded through the accessibility capital budget.

Consultations

While all service areas within the City were involved in the Web Accessibility Project, the following departments were collaborative leaders that contributed to this report: Web Services and Guelph Transit Services.

Departments engaged the Accessibility Advisory Committee throughout the year on several topics, including topics not required by the AODA.

Challenges and Improvements

Accessible document training can be challenging for staff. To have the skills to prepare accessible documents, the training can take up to 10 hours in class. Currently the supports to offer the training in an on-demand style is not available. Staff will continue to look for solutions to improve the availability of the training content.

Conclusion

As we look towards the coming year, it is evident that the commitment to accessibility compliance will not only adhere to the standards set by the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) but will also embrace the evolving trends in digital inclusivity.

For an accessible version of this document, questions or feedback, please contact accessibility@guelph.ca or 519-822-1260 or TTY 519-826-9771.