

3. **2017 CITY OF OTTAWA MUNICIPAL ACCESSIBILITY PLAN UPDATE  
REPORT**

**RAPPORT DE MISE À JOUR SUR LE PLAN D'ACCESSIBILITÉ MUNICIPAL  
DE LA VILLE D'OTTAWA DE 2017**

**COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION**

**That Council receive the 2017 City of Ottawa Municipal Accessibility Plan Update Report.**

**RECOMMANDATION COMITÉ**

**Que le Conseil reçoit le rapport de mise à jour sur le Plan d'accessibilité municipal de la Ville d'Ottawa de 2017.**

**DOCUMENTATION/DOCUMENTATION**

Manager's report, Legislative Services, Office of the City Clerk and Solicitor dated 28 March 2017 (ACS2017-CCS-GEN-0005)

Rapport du Gestionnaire, Services législatifs, Bureau du greffier municipal et de l'avocat général, daté le 28 mars 2017 (ACS2017-CCS-GEN-0005)

**Report to  
Rapport au:**

**Finance and Economic Development Committee  
Comité des finances et du développement économique  
4 April 2017 / 4 avril 2017**

**and Council  
et au Conseil  
12 April 2017 / 12 avril 2017**

**Submitted on March 28, 2017  
Soumis le 28 mars 2017**

**Submitted by  
Soumis par:  
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**Ward: CITY WIDE / À L'ÉCHELLE DE LA VILLE      File Number: ACS2017-CCS-GEN-0005**

**SUBJECT: 2017 CITY OF OTTAWA MUNICIPAL ACCESSIBILITY PLAN UPDATE  
REPORT**

**OBJET: RAPPORT DE MISE À JOUR SUR LE PLAN D'ACCESSIBILITÉ  
MUNICIPAL DE LA VILLE D'OTTAWA DE 2017**

## **REPORT RECOMMENDATION**

**That the Finance and Economic Development Committee recommend Council receive the 2017 City of Ottawa Municipal Accessibility Plan Update Report.**

## **RECOMMANDATION DU RAPPORT**

**Que le Comité des finances et du développement économique recommande au Conseil de recevoir le rapport de mise à jour sur le Plan d'accessibilité municipal de la Ville d'Ottawa de 2017.**

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

### **Annual Legislated Update**

In accordance with the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (AODA), this report outlines progress on the multi-year City of Ottawa Municipal Accessibility Plan (COMAP). It also demonstrates the City's compliance with meeting the requirements of the AODA and the City's progress in preventing and removing barriers for people with disabilities in its services, programs, policies, procurement, communications, transportation and facilities.

COMAP demonstrates the City's commitment to making accessibility a part of everyday business. Every year, departments review their services, programs, goods, and facilities to identify gaps and barriers to accessibility. These gaps and barriers are discussed and initiatives are identified to eliminate or mitigate barriers. The Accessibility Office, established in 2005, monitors progress and supports departments in the achievement of their accessibility objectives in addition to planning and collaborating on the implementation and maintenance of corporate-wide legislated requirements.

### **Public Consultation**

#### **Public Feedback**

Public feedback is an important element of the AODA and the City's Accessibility Policy. These authorities require that feedback on how goods, services and programs are provided to people with disabilities be invited, forwarded to the appropriate personnel, responded to, documented and tracked. As described in this report, from January 1, 2016 to December 31, 2016, the City's Accessibility Office responded to 146

accessibility inquiries, complaints, and service requests. Other City departments, excluding Transit Services which is governed by federal legislation, responded directly to an additional 569 disability-related service requests in 2016.

### **Accessibility Advisory Committee**

On an ongoing basis, the Accessibility Advisory Committee serves as an important resource to Council and staff, providing input on the City's accessibility initiatives. In developing this particular report, staff met with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Accessibility Advisory Committee. Their comments are included in "Advisory Committee(s) Comments" section of this report.

### **Financial Implications**

There are no financial implications associated with this information report.

### **Résumé**

#### **Rapport annuel prescrit par la loi**

Conformément et à *la Loi de 2005 sur l'accessibilité pour les personnes handicapées de l'Ontario* (LAPHO), le présent rapport fait état des progrès réalisés à l'égard du Plan d'accessibilité municipal pluriannuel de la Ville d'Ottawa (PAMVO). Le rapport illustre également la conformité de la Ville aux exigences de la LAPHO, ainsi que ce qu'elle fait pour prévenir et éliminer les obstacles pour les personnes handicapées dans ses services, programmes, politiques, acquisitions, communications, services de transport et installations.

Le PAMVO est le moyen dont la Ville dispose pour montrer son engagement à favoriser l'accessibilité dans ses activités quotidiennes. Chaque année, les directions générales examinent leurs services, leurs programmes, leurs biens et leurs installations pour voir s'il y aurait des lacunes ou des obstacles à l'accessibilité. Les lacunes et obstacles font ensuite l'objet de discussions et des initiatives sont prises pour les éliminer ou en atténuer les conséquences. Le Bureau de l'accessibilité, fondé en 2005, surveille les progrès accomplis et appuie les directions générales dans l'atteinte de leurs objectifs d'accessibilité, en plus de travailler à la planification et de collaborer à la mise en œuvre et au maintien des exigences législatives à l'échelle de la Ville.

## **Consultations publiques**

### **Rétroaction**

La rétroaction du public est un élément important de la LAPHO et de la Politique sur l'accessibilité de la Ville. Conformément à ces deux textes, la Ville doit encourager les principaux intéressés à soumettre leurs observations sur la façon dont elle fournit ses biens et ses services aux personnes handicapées et veiller à ce que ces observations soient transmises au personnel responsable, qui y répondra, les classera et en fera le suivi. Comme l'indique le présent rapport, entre le 1er janvier et le 31 décembre 2016, le Bureau de l'accessibilité de la Ville a répondu à 146 demandes d'information, plaintes et demandes de service portant sur l'accessibilité. Les autres directions générales de la Ville, à l'exception de Transport en commun qui relève des lois fédérales, ont directement répondu à 569 autres demandes de service concernant des personnes handicapées pendant cette période.

### **Comité consultatif sur l'accessibilité**

Le Comité consultatif sur l'accessibilité constitue une ressource importante pour le Conseil municipal et le personnel, puisqu'il commente les initiatives de la Ville en matière d'accessibilité. Pour rédiger le présent rapport, le personnel a consulté le président et le vice-président du Comité. Leurs commentaires figurent dans la section « Commentaires des comités consultatifs » du présent rapport.

### **Répercussions financières**

Aucune répercussion financière n'est associée au présent rapport.

## **BACKGROUND**

This report is the 15<sup>th</sup> annual City of Ottawa Municipal Accessibility Plan update and outlines the City's ongoing work to meet the requirements of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (AODA).

This annual report demonstrates the City's continuing commitment to meet its legislative obligations to Council, the public and the Province. It presents the results of the 2016 accessibility initiatives in all areas of City services, programs and facilities. In addition, it

highlights the upcoming 2017 initiatives to enhance services and improve accessibility at the City of Ottawa for residents, employees and visitors with disabilities.

The AODA obligates municipalities to submit a biennial compliance report to the Province to ensure adherence to the legislation. The last provincial AODA compliance report was submitted on December 10, 2015, and a new report will be completed in 2017.

Conventional transit (OC Transpo), specialized transit (Para Transpo) and light rail services are federally and/or independently regulated with respect to accessibility. As a result, the AODA, a provincial statute, does not apply. However, Transportation Services is committed to meeting the “spirit and intent” of the legislation and its related regulations, including participation in the City’s multi-year accessibility plan. A number of transit-related accessibility initiatives have been undertaken; and their outcomes are discussed within this report.

Ottawa Public Health and the Ottawa Public Library, although governed by separate boards, continue to report on their respective AODA compliance status with the City. Ottawa Police Services is considered a “large organization” and, as such, abides by a different reporting schedule independent of the City.

## **DISCUSSION**

The City of Ottawa is committed to providing equal treatment to people with disabilities with respect to the use and benefit of City services, programs, goods and facilities in a manner that respects their dignity and that is equitable in relation to those provided to the broader public. This commitment extends to residents, visitors and employees with visible or non-visible, and permanent or temporary disabilities.

This report outlines progress on the 2016-2020 City of Ottawa Municipal Accessibility Plan (COMAP). It also demonstrates the City’s compliance with the requirements of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (AODA) and the related *Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation – O. Reg. 191/11* (IASR). In effect, this report describes the City’s progress in preventing and removing barriers for people with disabilities in its services, programs, policies, communications, transportation and facilities. COMAP demonstrates the City’s commitment to making accessibility a part of everyday business.

Every year, departments review their compliance with the requirements of the AODA and the IASR. They also review services, programs and facilities to identify gaps and barriers to accessibility. These gaps and challenges are discussed and initiatives are identified to eliminate or mitigate barriers. The Accessibility Office, established in 2005, monitors progress and supports departments in the achievement of their accessibility objectives in addition to planning and collaborating on the implementation of corporate-wide legislated requirements.

In 2016, an organizational alignment resulted in the streamlining of 21 departments into nine and impacted approximately 1,400 employees through new roles, changes to their role and/or new reporting relationships. In this transition, the Accessibility Office was re-pointed and now reports to the City Clerk and Solicitor. As a result, some accessibility-related initiatives intended for 2016 have been deferred to 2017 while some other initiatives previously led by some departments have been assigned to others.

Following a review by the newly formed City departments of their accessibility initiatives in December 2016, 22 additional accessibility initiatives were added to COMAP as a demonstration of the City's continued commitment to accessibility. Of these:

- Four (4) initiatives relate to Customer Service, including additional accessible features to services provided by the Ottawa Public Library
- Two (2) initiatives relate to the Built Environment, including one on identifying "hot spots" for snow removal
- One (1) initiative relates to Employment, where managers will receive additional training on accessibility
- Four (4) initiatives relate to Information and Communications, including one on a video on the City's budget process
- Ten initiatives relate to Transportation, including enhancements to pedestrian walkways

To ensure and improve compliance among departments, the former inter-departmental Accessibility Working Group was replaced with members from each department's Business Services Support Unit. This change is expected to increase cooperation and

knowledge-sharing by standardizing accessibility among the City priorities resulting in better service to the public.

### **Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation Update**

As of July 1, 2016, the Province merged the *Accessibility Standards for Customer Service* (ASCS) into the IASR, and proclaimed additional requirements with regards to training, feedback, support persons and service animals. Corporate practices on training and feedback that existed prior to this date already aligned to these requirements; accordingly, no changes to operations in these needed to be put into place.

For service animals, professionals from additional registered health bodies may provide letters confirming that the person requires the animal for reasons relating to the disability.

For support persons, the Regulation may require a person with a disability to be accompanied by a support person when on the premises, but only if, after consulting with the person with a disability and considering the available evidence, the provider determines that:

“(a) a support person is necessary to protect the health or safety of the person with a disability or the health or safety of others on the premises, and

“(b) there is no other reasonable way to protect the health or safety of the person with a disability and the health or safety of others on the premises.”

As well, if the provider requires a person with a disability to be accompanied by a support person when on the premises, the provider shall waive payment of the amount, if any, payable in respect of the support person’s admission to the premises or in connection with the support person’s presence on the premises.

The regulatory changes were incorporated into a revised corporate Accessibility Policy approved by Council on December 14, 2016. There were no costs associated with updating the City’s Accessibility Policy and notifying staff of the changes. As the changes were regulatory in nature, no public consultation on the proposed, revised Accessibility Policy was sought. However, the Accessibility Office presented the



changes to the City of Ottawa Accessibility Advisory Committee at their meeting on November 15, 2016; this update was accepted by the Committee.

Staff with access to the City's computer network received an email notifying them of the changes to the IASR and the revised Accessibility Policy, as outlined above. Managers and supervisors were instructed to notify any and all staff and volunteers without network access of these changes as well.

Departments were also notified to enable them to align affected policies and procedures with the corporate standard.

### **Compliance with the AODA**

In January 2017, all City departments completed their annual compliance attestations confirming compliance with applicable IASR requirements. The City remains compliant with all but one of the regulatory requirements, namely Section 14, being "Accessible websites and web content".

The City's departments have procured 20 new websites and web applications subject to the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 level A standard since January 1, 2014. The City's contractual Terms and Conditions governing the procurement of new websites and applications requires that all new websites and applications meet WCAG 2.0 level AA standards, and upon delivery of the newly purchased web asset, vendors are asked by City staff to attest that their websites meet the required standards. Only upon the vendor's attestation, is the product accepted by the City. However, in order to ensure compliance and the effectiveness of this practice, the City has been conducting internal quality assurance reviews of new web assets and find these conditions were not consistently met in spite of the assurances provided by vendors.

To remedy the situation and ensure the web products become compliant as soon as possible, Supply Services is addressing this matter in accordance with the City's Contract Administration and Supplier Performance procedures. Additionally, the affected City departments have been notified that their websites and applications are non-compliant and have been provided with evidence as to areas of non-compliance. Staff is working with vendors to resolve identified issues. This work has been supported by the City's Accessibility Office, the Service Innovation and Performance Department, Corporate Services and Legal Services. To date, three of the new websites have since

been made compliant, one website has been removed and departments continue to work with vendors to remediate outstanding issues on the remaining 16 websites.

Furthermore, the City's Supply Services is also working with its contractors and undertaking performance management activities to ensure that future websites and applications purchased by the City are compliant at the outset.

The City's main website, ottawa.ca, was also significantly refreshed in 2016 so that the framework is WCAG 2.0 level AA compliant. Through the process, content was migrated and some improvements were made. The next step in 2017 is to work with departments make all of the content WCAG 2.0 level AA compliant.

The City continues its efforts towards reaching compliance with this requirement as soon as possible; it has shared its status and plan to rectify the situation with the Province.

## **2016 Accessibility Highlights and Accomplishments**

### **AODA Training**

Under Section 7 of the IASR, obligated organizations such as the City are required to provide "training on the requirements of the accessibility standards and on the *Human Rights Code* [...] appropriate to the duties of the employees, volunteers and other persons." The City requires that all employees and volunteers receive training on the standards and the *Code*; third party vendors and contractors are required to ensure their staff are correspondingly trained as part of the General Terms and Conditions of doing business with the City.

The City provides several options for staff to receive their legislated training in the IASR and the *Human Rights Code*. The first is the in-class corporate orientation called "AODA: Accessibility for All", which is directed to full-time staff and some summer students. Other departments offer this course in-class through their own trainers. Part-time, temporary, casual and other staff may take two courses online: Accessible Customer Service (ACS) and IASR. Online offerings are available to both networked and non-networked staff.

As of January 2017, 96 and 94 percent of all staff have been trained in ACS and IASR respectively. The headcount of active employees on which the compliance rate is based

is a snapshot in time; thus, some staff may have been trained in the interim between when they were hired, and when the report was completed. New staff are trained as soon as practicable. Other staff who have not been trained include those on Long-Term Disability, maternity, leave of absence and the like; as such, it is not practicable to train them until they are actively in the workplace.

In 2016, 301 more volunteers were trained in ACS and IASR respectively, the majority of them online.

The City offers the link to the Province's IASR trainings to third parties and external contractors on [ottawa.ca](http://ottawa.ca) to assist them with their compliance obligations.

The City provides other AODA related, job specific, training to staff to supplement and reinforce the complex legislation. These include, but are not limited to: accessible procurement, manager and supervisor AODA responsibilities, accessible documents, and the built environment.

The Accessible Procurement Workshop is offered by the Accessibility Office to staff with purchasing authority to provide them with the tools to integrate and track accessible features in procurement. Participants explore what accessible features are, considerations when purchasing items and administering contracts, and how to enhance the accessibility of goods, services and facilities in general. They apply what they learn in a small group, interactive format. In 2016, 63 additional staff took this Workshop.

New managers and supervisors also receive training in their responsibilities, as managers and supervisors, to implement the compliance obligations of the AODA. In 2016, 78 new managers and supervisors took this course offered by the Accessibility Office.

Training in how to develop accessible documents for Committee and Council reports is divided into two streams: 1) Accessible Word documents; and 2) Accessible PDFs (CommonLook). By providing staff the tools to meet this requirement under s. 14 of the IASR, staff are able to post WCAG compliant content on the eAgenda website in a timely manner thus providing equitable access to City information.

In 2016:

- 139 staff took training in how to make accessible Word documents (a combination of in-class and online)
- 156 staff took in-class training in how to make accessible PDFs

To support staff who work with the built environment, 91 staff from appropriate departments participated in Accessibility During Construction, a best-practice information session. This is in addition to information sessions on the changes to the City's Accessibility Design Standards in the second edition released in November 2015.

To augment existing learning in Accessible Customer Service, procurement, and the rights and responsibilities regarding Individualized Workplace Emergency Response Information (IWERI), flash cards on these topics were developed and made available for download from the City's intranet. These learning tools allow staff to regularly reinforce the IWERI requirements in team meetings.

## **Feedback**

Feedback on the accessibility of City services continues to be received and responded to through a number of departmental channels. From January 1, 2016 to December 31, 2016, the City's Accessibility Office has responded to 146 accessibility inquiries, complaints and service requests.

The service requests received directly by the Accessibility Office can be broken down into the following standards:

- six per cent transportation
- two per cent employment
- 15 per cent information and communication
- 30 per cent customer service
- 47 per cent built environment

Other City departments, excluding Transit Services, responded directly to an additional 528 disability-related service requests, and provided nine water bills in an accessible format and 32 tax bills in an accessible format.

## **Procurement**

The City ensures that accessibility design, features and criteria are included where possible in procurement regardless of dollar value. In 2016, Supply Services awarded 2,946 new contracts valued above \$15,000 under Delegated Authority totalling \$1.037 billion. In terms of dollar value, accessibility requirements were included in 96.6 per cent of all new procurement after adjusting for those where it is not applicable. This represents a 2.8 per cent increase over 2015 in the areas of construction, fleet and equipment, goods, information technology, maintenance services and professional services.

Since 2013, accessible design, criteria and features are tracked and incorporated into City purchases under \$15,000 by respective City departments. In 2016, a comprehensive review of current City's procurement process under \$15,000 was undertaken. The review included:

- Feedback received from departments
- The tools and resources that are available, number of staff trained, demand for procurement training and feedback received
- Review and discussion of process with the Finance Services as subject matter experts
- Review by Legal Services to ensure the process meets both the requirement and intent of the AODA procurement legislative clause

Recommendations from the review include:

- Ensuring that the procurement filing process is aligned to the new Business Support Service Units
- The creation of a new monthly electronic form

- A streamlined filing process to file reports to provide a uniform corporate-wide process

The changes made to the procurement process will be reviewed in a year's time to gauge both efficiency and results.

For purchases under \$15,000, departments follow "exception lists" of items that they regularly purchase which do not have accessible features and include accessibility in all other purchases. If a manager or staff member procures an item that is not on their exceptions list and does not include available accessibility features, they must include a written rationale of why the purchase was made.

### **Customer Service**

In 2016, the City of Ottawa celebrated its 13th annual AccessAbility Day. Mayor Watson proclaimed June 1, 2016, AccessAbility Day in the City of Ottawa, and presented this proclamation to Accessibility Advisory Committee Chair, Mr. Brian Wade. Participants had the opportunity to hear from two keynote speakers: The Honourable Carla Qualtrough, Minister of Sport and Persons with Disabilities, and Parliamentary Assistant Marie France Lalonde, MPP Ottawa-Orléans. Both spoke to Federal and Provincial commitments to enhance accessibility for all. Minister Qualtrough specifically referenced the federal government's plan to create accessibility legislation and the launch of the consultation on what should be included in the legislation. Event goers enjoyed an outdoor barbeque lunch and engaged with City staff to learn more about accessibility initiatives from the new multi-year accessibility plan. There was also an opportunity for people to enjoy an installation of works by local artists with disabilities. During the afternoon, participants had the opportunity to take part in a number of activities including:

- PaintAbility, where participants expressed themselves creatively, using a wide range of modified tools, facilitated by City staff
- A sensory-based storytelling, facilitated by Ottawa Public Library staff
- Musical entertainment and full participation with movement, singing and dancing with Ottawa Blues Lady, Maria Hawkins

At the invitation of the Government of Canada, the Accessibility Office provided a submission on the planned federal accessibility legislation. In the submission, the Accessibility Office provided an overview of the City's experience at implementing the requirements of the provincial AODA.

The Recreation, Cultural and Facilities Services (RCFS) Department continues to assess and revise recreational programming options to offer a wider range of accessible recreational programming opportunities for people with disabilities. The following programs aim to increase participation in recreational programs to include people with special needs. These include, but are not limited to:

- New camp and day options added to roster of programs including those with medical needs and developmental disabilities
- Expanded camp options for pre-school children with disabilities and campers with behavioral challenges
- Additional Non-Violent Crisis Intervention (NVCI) training delivered to all camp staff

As a result, 245 of the 286 spots were filled in the integrated summer camps program, an 86 per cent use of available spaces. In the specialized camps, 404 of the 421 spots were utilized, which indicates a 29 per cent increase in therapeutic camp participation from 2015.

RCFS also worked throughout 2016 to improve customer service delivery for recreation clients who require alternative services to register for programs. A single point of contact is available to complete transactions and apply for recreational course subsidies by telephone or in person at the front service counter at Ben Franklin Place with the Clerk of the Special Needs Unit.

To continue the enhancement of accessible recreational opportunities for City residents, all accessible features in recreational facilities, including details of accessible fitness equipment, are available to the public on [ottawa.ca](http://ottawa.ca). The database of accessibility features in recreation and cultural centres is updated as changes are made in the facilities.

By-law and Regulatory Services continued the training of By-law Enforcement Officers on the enforcement of accessible parking provisions and continued its investigations into the fraudulent use of accessible parking permits.

In 2016, a total of 1,327 tickets were issued for illegally parking in a space reserved for people with disabilities. In addition, investigations into individuals that misuse accessible parking permits resulted in 26 Provincial Offence Notices were issued under Part 1 of the *Provincial Offences Act*. The volume of tickets for this offence tends to be moderate compared to regular Parking Infraction Notices, which are issued to a vehicle under Part II of the *Provincial Offences Act*. As outlined in previous years, this is largely due to the more labour-intensive investigation requirements for Provincial Offence Notices under Part 1, which are issued to a person rather than a vehicle licence plate. By-law and Regulatory Services will continue to investigate and address abuse of accessible parking permits as resources permit.

For the 2015/16 snow year, the City continued funding for two programs called Snow Go and Snow Go Assist. The Snow Go Program provides a matching service for seniors and people with disabilities looking to hire an individual or contractor to clear snow from private driveways and walkways. The Snow Go program responded to over 600 calls referring over 178 clients to snow contractors. Snow Go Assist provides financial assistance to eligible low-income seniors and persons with disabilities looking to hire an individual or contractor to clear snow from private driveways and walkways. Residents are responsible for paying the individual, or contractor, for removing the snow. In 2015/16, Snow Go Assist responded to over 1,100 calls and assisted 378 clients with \$58,000 in subsidies.

Throughout 2016, the Ottawa Public Library continued work in improving accessibility for customers by:

- Expanding library card services to customers with disabilities who live in assisted living/care homes
- Holding bi-annual meetings with CNIB to review services and programs in order to improve services to residents who are blind or have low vision
- Ensuring that all library branches have at least one self-service kiosk that is height adjustable to assist customers who are using mobility devices



## **Information and Communication**

In order to ensure that the City's 9-1-1 system is ready to respond to Text to 9-1-1 calls, the base 9-1-1 infrastructure was upgraded both at the Ottawa Police Service and Fire Services dispatch centres. The requirement for infrastructure upgrades applied to all Primary Public Safety Access Point (PSAPs) across Canada. The Text to 9-1-1 system was implemented across Ottawa in 2016. As a result, the Deaf, Hard of Hearing and Speech Impaired community has increased access to emergency services.

Accessibility was supported on ottawa.ca through five key activities in 2016:

1. The launch of the Web Quality Assurance Program was completed. The baseline audit was conducted in 2015 and was utilized to gauge the outcome of the web rebuild efforts throughout 2016 of ottawa.ca,
2. Ottawa.ca was redeployed on December 17, 2016, with a framework and new functionality made AA compliant (certified). Some content was checked and corrected in terms of accessibility by departments; however, the overall content review for accessibility will be completed in 2017,
3. The quality of content on ottawa.ca was ensured through the incorporation of accessibility guidelines into its training and documentation for all web publishers on ottawa.ca. Accessibility requirements have been incorporated into the web publishing guide and will continue to be updated as required,
4. The provision of open data information for accessibility-related mobile applications continued in 2016. The open data program releases City data in a format that allows it to be easily reused by others to develop applications in various capacities such as supporting or enhancing existing applications with features that will benefit people with disabilities. New data continues to be published on the open data site, and will continue to be throughout the period of the COMAP multi-year plan.
5. ServiceOttawa accessibility web compliance staff provided corporate-wide training on accessibility validation tools as well as the provision of the Creating Accessible Word Documents course.

In 2016, Information Technology Services (ITS) continued to take the lead role in the coordination and renewal of software to support WCAG 2.0 AA verification of electronic

based documents. Similarly, the Corporate Service Desk continued to support staff in accessibility-based technological inquiries.

In order to provide explanatory budget information and increase transparency and resident knowledge, in 2016, the Corporate Services Department created a video on how the City budget is developed. A closed captioned video was made using simple and clear language to assist people who have difficulty reading print due to a visual, physical or learning disability.

From 2016 through 2018, the Corporate Services Department will be implementing a new property tax and water and sewer bill service on MyService Ottawa to replace the AQACIS System. This change will provide customers, including those with disabilities new service options for billing in addition to the existing option of requesting alternate formats for bills.

Throughout 2016, Environmental Services reviewed and updated the children's educational outreach materials on the environment to ensure that children with disabilities can use the materials and participate equally in the City's environmental outreach activities.

The Ottawa Public Library (OPL) continued their ongoing work to increase accessibility for customers. In this regard, the OPL has extended their pictogram pilot project which uses visual representations to denote their non-fiction collection. The pictograms benefit customers who are more visual and may have difficulty reading print or small print. The OPL continues to add pictogram images, locations and collections and will be reviewing the pilot and asking for customer feedback in 2017. In addition, the OPL has committed to purchase more new large print books to provide an increased complement of library books available for people with low vision as well as older adults.

## **Employment**

Throughout 2016, Human Resources Services (HRS) continued to deliver department-specific and corporate training to 1,430 new and existing employees. The Respectful Workplace, Leading a Diverse Workforce and Learning My Way trainings provide employees with:

- Tools and the understanding to foster a respectful workplace

- The principles of equity and diversity
- How to support a courteous and diverse workforce

To support a physiologically healthy workforce; HRS delivered new workshops in May of 2016 on Mental Health, Families and the Workplace. There were 74 staff in attendance at these sessions.

The corporate Diversity and Inclusion Management Working Group held two meetings in 2016.

The February 19, 2016, meeting included a Community of Practice forum with a presentation on the Psychologically Healthy Workplace Roadmap, and a discussion/review of the 2016 calendar of events which is a summary of the various diversity related activities that the City engages in at the corporate or departmental levels. A roundtable discussion from the members of the working group on successes and challenges in implementing diversity initiatives was also held.

The June 10, 2016, meeting focused on a working session on the challenges and solutions in implementing departmental diversity and inclusion plans. Members of the working group concluded with a roundtable discussion on diversity and inclusion updates. Following the consolidation of 21 departments to nine, the creation of a Business Support Services (BSS) Unit in each department to serve as the strategic and administrative hub of the organization and the realignment within Human Resources Services to create a centre of expertise providing a one-stop shop for the City's human resources needs, the working group was disbanded. All departments will have enhanced support through dedicated HR Strategists to support the departments HR needs, including the advancement of corporate and departmental diversity initiatives. HR Strategists will also collaborate and liaise with the BSS Units on these initiatives.

To assist in meeting potential candidates, to support people with disabilities in their search for employment and ultimately to help the City to ensure a diverse workforce, the City partners with the Employment Accessibility Resource Network (EARN). City employees, local employers and members of the community attended the fourth annual EARN conference, held on April 8, 2016, to listen to a variety of speakers discussing the value of hiring people with disabilities. There were approximately 200 people in attendance. The City also supported the EARN Expo on December 6, where

approximately 175 people were in attendance to learn about the strong business case as to why organizations should include people with disabilities as part of their workforce. The event showcased the benefits, dispelled myths and misconceptions, and provided information about the resources available to ensure that businesses are inclusive.

As part of a Health Equity lens examination across Ottawa Public Health programs and services to address under-represented groups to remove barriers; accommodate different needs; promote the hiring of people with disabilities and also foster a respectful and supportive workplace; a number of initiatives were undertaken which included:

- Providing an opportunity for five Personal Support Program students from Sir Guy Carleton High School to gain experience in Volunteer Services. Consideration was given to accommodating their attendants, work space was modified to permit accessibility and work was organized to meet their particular needs
- Hosting a Health Equity learning session for the OPH management team, as well as, a Grand Rounds learning session for all employees on Health Equity, Diversity and Inclusion.

Furthermore, the Transportation Services Department continued its work experience program for about 18 persons with disabilities in partnership with a number of agencies and organizations, including Ottawa-Carleton Lifeskills and the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board.

### **Built Environment**

To address the challenge of a growing number of complaints related to signs placed on city sidewalks and their impact on accessibility and mobility, By-Law and Regulatory Services proactively engaged the business community through the Clear Path initiative to raise awareness of this issue and encourage business owners to consider safety and accessibility when placing temporary signs on City sidewalks. This initiative has led to a reduction in impediments to travel along more than 35 km of sidewalks in the City's busiest pedestrian/shopping districts (ByWard Market, Wellington West, Bank Street, Elgin Street). Approximately 2,000 businesses were engaged in the outreach effort, including more than 100 on-site accessibility audits. Subsequent visits to each area have shown that the positive impacts have lasted and that AODA required standards are being maintained, with only a few exceptions that are remedied as required.

The RCFS Outdoor Spaces project is an on-going audit of recently built City parks to identify and advertise their accessibility features. As City parks are built or redeveloped the accessible park features are captured. The information is made available to the public via an interactive map on ottawa.ca. By actively promoting the locations and details of accessible park elements to residents and visitors, people are better able to plan outdoor park visits to meet specific needs.

Infrastructure Services developed a new accessibility rating tool for use in auditing and rating City facilities. This tool was designed to assist the City in informing the general public of the barrier-free accessibility of the City's buildings. The tool established the baseline criteria that are necessary for determining the level of accessibility in various types of City buildings. Thirty pilot sites have been assessed using the new accessibility rating tool in 2016. Staff continue to collect feedback on this initiative, with the intention of maintaining and improving future iterations of the tool.

In addition, accessibility audits of 77 City facilities were completed in 2016 as part of the ten-year cycle to refresh accessibility audits to be compliant with current City of Ottawa Accessibility Design Standards.

The City's Retrofit program utilizes a Council approved \$2.5M budget to remove disability barriers identified through accessibility audits of existing City facilities, play structures and pathway systems. The following projects were completed in 2016:

- Installation of power door operators at various facilities, including: Richmond Arena, Goulbourn Recreation Complex, Arts Court, Osgoode Library, Nepean Sportsplex, Constance Bay Community Centre, Olde Forge Community Building, Carlsbad Springs Community Centre, St Luke's Community Centre' Bethell Field House and Dovercourt Recreation Complex
- Accessible change rooms were installed at the Routhier Community Centre
- Various barriers were removed at Pinecrest Recreation Centre Phase II Arena and Hawthorne Park Field House
- Installation of handrails in arena stands at Bell Arena, Howard Darwin Centennial Arena & Jack Charron Arena
- Elevator installation at Beaverbrook Community Centre

- Entrances and washroom barrier removal at Aberdeen Pavilion,
- Entrance doors and exterior paths of travel barrier removal at Esther-By Day Care Centre and Centennial Library
- Ground floor barrier removal at Maki House Community Building

Through the Transportation Services Department, accessible pedestrian signals are installed at all new and reconstructed signal locations. The City also retrofits existing signals as funding is made available to enhance accessible signalized intersections. Currently, there are 874 intersections equipped with Audible Pedestrian Signals out of 1,160 which represent about 75 per cent of the City of Ottawa's signalized network.

In 2016, a total of 50 audible signals were installed, 28 of which were installed with vibro-tactile indicator technology. Vibro-tactile indicators are push buttons that vibrate while audible tones are played; these are AODA compliant and enhance audible signalized intersections to assist pedestrians with vision loss crossing at City intersections.

Pedestrian crossovers are designated areas identified by specific signage and pavement markings that allow pedestrians to safely cross roads where vehicles must yield to pedestrians when crossing. In some cases, but not always, the crossovers may also have pedestrian activated flashing beacons. At pedestrian crossovers equipped with flashing beacons, pedestrians may push a button to make the beacon flash to enhance driver's awareness that they will be crossing. There were 59 pedestrian crossovers installed throughout the city, making it easier and safer for many Ottawa residents, particularly children, older adults and persons with disabilities, to walk around their own neighbourhoods. These crossovers give pedestrians the right of way over motor vehicles and on-road cyclists, and in many cases, safely reduce walking distances for residents.

The City continued efforts across multiple departments towards the creation of barrier-free new construction and redevelopment. From Housing Services of the Community and Social Services Department, six (6) new affordable housing projects were either approved for development, under construction or opened in 2016. All six projects met the City's Accessibility Design Standards for visit-ability in housing. Where supports are indicated, they are intended to enable community integration for residents. The term

“visitability” refers to a design strategy that aims to provide basic access to a home through three key design elements: entry and clear space at entrance area; wider doors and accessible routes throughout the entrance level; and a washroom on the same level as the accessible entrance. The goal of “visitable” housing is to make housing more livable for people with physical disabilities, those who use mobility aids and seniors by providing options to age in place.

Construction started on the Ottawa Community Housing Corporation’s four-storey, 42-unit apartment building (including 12 accessible units) connected to the Carlington Community Health Centre called the Carlington Community Health Hub located on Merivale Road; and the John Howard Society development on Carruthers Avenue providing 36-units, including nine accessible and/or easily adaptable units.

The following housing projects have been completed:

- The Ottawa Salus on Clementine Street is a 42-unit project of which six units are accessible,
- Ottawa Community Housing on Michèle Drive is a six-unit new affordable townhouse development of which, two five-bedroom units are accessible; completed and occupied in June 2016,
- Multi-faith Housing Initiative on Longfields Drive, Phases One & Two is a 98-unit affordable housing project that is completely visit-able and includes eight (8) barrier free units. The anticipated completion and occupancy date is in the spring of 2017, and
- Montfort Renaissance on St. Joseph Boulevard is a new affordable housing development with supports. All 48 units will be accessible and it is scheduled for completion in the spring of 2017.

## **Transportation**

In Q1 of 2016, By-law and Regulatory Services conducted the Taxi and Limousine Regulation and Service Review to examine the City’s taxicab and limousine industries. The review examined service delivery to residents and visitors, together with the current regulatory framework and new transportation-for-a-fee service models. Three principles

that guided the Taxi and Limousine Regulation and Service Review were accessibility, public safety, and consumer protection.

Resulting from this Review was a new Vehicle-for-Hire By-law and a number of initiatives supporting accessibility approved by Council, including:

#### Taxicabs

- A zero license fee for accessible taxicab drivers, a change in the population to taxi plate ratio so as to allow the issuance of 4 additional accessible taxi plate licenses in the Fall of 2016, retention of the requirement for completion of the Accessible Taxi Training Course by taxicab drivers;

#### Private Transportation Companies

- A request to the Province for authority to impose an accessibility levy on Private Transportation Companies (PTCs)
- The delegation of authority to the GM of EPS to negotiate a voluntary accessibility levy with licensed PTCs and to work with the Accessibility Advisory Committee, ParaTranspo and other stakeholders to determine the strategic disposition of the funds derived from a negotiated levy
- A request to the Province to amend the AODA to include PTCs

In 2016, the Transportation Services Department continued its work to improve pedestrian connections with public transit and within neighbourhoods. Approximately 3.5 km of new stand-alone sidewalk projects through the Pedestrian Facilities Program were added on Campeau Drive, Cyrville Road, Iris Street, Katimavik Road, and Teron Road.

The Pedestrian Accessibility – Intersection and Ramping Program improves intersection accessibility through the addition of curb ramps, tactile warning surface indicators and through the removal of path of travel obstructions across City streets. These changes will bring existing intersections into compliance with the AODA and City of Ottawa Accessibility Design Standards. In 2016, accessible pedestrian curb ramps were added at Springfield Drive and Flannery Drive, and Sunview Drive and Des Perdrix Crescent.



With funding provided through the Public Transit Infrastructure Fund (PTIF), existing projects identified in the Ottawa Cycling Plan and Council's Strategic Initiative for Community Connectivity were reviewed for candidate intersections for 2017 implementation of intersection accessibility improvements to be co-ordinated with planned Cycling and Community Connectivity projects.

In 2016, the City's Patio Guidelines were updated to include information on Streetside Spots. Accessibility awareness was promoted in the launch of Streetside Spots; and guidelines were issued to 90 permit holders and to 11 Streetside Spot permit holders. In March 2016, accessibility fact sheets were included in the mail out of the permits to Streetside Spots permit holders. The Streetside Spots page on [ottawa.ca](http://ottawa.ca) includes universal design as a feature of these places used in our public spaces.

Throughout 2016, the Transportation Services Department continued its facility improvements to enhance universal access for people with disabilities to transit stations, on-street bus stops and facilities including:

- Enhanced accessibility on the Trillium Line by modifying all six trains to allow accessible boarding from either of the two vehicle doors. Customers may now access designated accessible areas from either end of the Trillium Line platforms. The new configuration includes a new seating arrangement with a barrier-free space and an additional passenger emergency intercom,
- Improved accessibility at 18 bus stops throughout the city; changes included the installation of new bus pads, connections to adjacent sidewalks, and curb ramps in locations where no adjacent pedestrian connections existed,
- Reinstated bus stops to meet current accessibility design standards along several City streets undergoing renewal and rehabilitation. Streets with improved bus stops include Main Street, Iris Street, Jeanne d'Arc Boulevard, Katimavik Road and Trim Road,
- Installed an accessible pedestrian crosswalk between the northbound and southbound platforms at Baseline Station, reducing the walking distance between platforms, and

- Installed 10 new accessible exterior benches at Baseline Station, providing additional seating for customers.

In 2016, Para Transpo, which provides specialized public transit for customers unable to take conventional accessible buses, completed significant work in a number of areas that included:

- The replacement of the current Para Transpo mini-bus fleet, thereby improving customer accessibility and convenience. All 82 of the new Para Transpo mini-buses were put into service by mid-2016, and the old fleet was retired
- A review of Para Transpo operations - including eligibility criteria, trip cancellation, trip prioritization and booking
- Simplification and streamlining of Para Transpo fares, as set by City Council in the 2017 Budget
- Enhanced customer convenience by providing real-time arrival information through the rollout of a GPS technology for contracted Para Transpo service providers

Para Transpo's newly procured mini-buses feature:

- A low-floor kneeling function that makes boarding easier for ambulatory customers
- An enhanced electric air-ride suspension that provides customers with a smoother commute
- Two ramps, one on the right side and one at the rear of the vehicle, to enable customers to board the vehicle with a greater degree of independence

The addition of both a wider rear ramp and wider rear entrance doors have also provided easier access for customers who use self-propelled assistive devices that are larger and heavier than average, making our service more accessible to an even greater number of customers. The mini-buses also provide more capacity than the former buses, enabling Para Transpo to provide more trips.

In 2016, the Transit Commission and City Council approved changes to Para Transpo's eligibility policy and booking processes, which included:

- Expanding Para Transpo eligibility to include all people who are unable to take conventional transit (buses and O-Train) some or all of the time due to a disability
- Adopting three categories of eligibility – full, temporary and conditional
- Continuing Para Transpo’s current door-to-door service delivery model
- Implementing an eligibility application and assessment process where qualified professionals review and assess all eligibility applications, and where in-person functional assessments are conducted by qualified healthcare professionals in cases where an application does not demonstrate a clear need for Para Transpo service
- Establishing a formal eligibility appeals process, including an independent eligibility appeals panel, for applicants who have been denied eligibility and wish to have the decision reviewed
- Establishing a late cancellation policy that will be applied to all Para Transpo trips, based on a points system for late cancellations and no-shows
- Changing the definition of a late cancellation to those cancellations that are less than three hours before the customer’s pick-up time.

In 2016, for the 2017 Budget, City Council approved the following fare changes for Para Transpo customers effective January 1, 2017:

- Top up fares will no longer be required on Para Transpo for Community Pass holders or during the morning peak period,
- A new Access Pass is available to Para Transpo registrants who are not Ontario Disability Support Program recipients (Community Pass holders). The Access Pass will be the same price as the Community Pass and will provide unlimited travel on conventional service and a one-third discount from the single-ride fare for trips on Para Transpo. Additional fare is required when paying by cash.

The rollout of Global Positioning System (GPS) technology began in Q4 2016. This technology makes real-time location information available to Para Transpo, enabling staff to see the location of contracted Para Transpo taxis and to provide better estimated arrival times to customers with disabilities. This technology will improve the

scheduling of same-day trip requests, since staff will have access to real-time arrival information, rather than relying on estimated vehicle arrival information.

A new Integrated Voice Response (IVR) system for OC Transpo customers was deployed in a phased approach. Presently, Para Transpo customers can use the IVR system to confirm trip information or to cancel trips they have booked. By handling confirmations and cancellations with the IVR system, those transactions can be made quickly and the capacity of customer service representatives is increased to assist customers who are seeking to book a trip.

An innovative, inclusive and well received three-phase customer and stakeholder engagement approach helped ensure that the new minibus fleet is reflective of the diverse and unique needs of Para Transpo customers and OC Transpo staff. This approach garnered the result of OC Transpo being honoured as the recipient of the Accessibility Award at the 2016 Celebration of People Awards. The Accessibility Award recognizes innovative projects that enhance accessibility, independence and inclusion for people with disabilities. OC Transpo was honoured for their inclusive public consultation on the purchase of the new Para Transpo mini-bus fleet.

The OC Transpo Travel Training program is a comprehensive instructional program delivered by local schools, community groups, organizations and agencies in partnership with OC Transpo and is designed to teach people with disabilities, seniors and new immigrants to travel safely and independently on conventional transit. This program expanded in 2016, increasing the number of training passes distributed to agency trainers and trainees to 1,832, up from 1,750 in 2015. This year's program was done in partnership with 65 community agencies, and achieved a high level of success. Of the more than 2,800 individuals provided travel training, about 40 per cent are now using transit independently, and about 51 per cent are now able to use transit with the assistance of a support person or are still in training. The Travel Training program will continue in 2017.

Transit Services continued to foster partnerships and open communication through direct and ongoing engagement with community groups and stakeholders throughout 2016 including:

- Continued funding partnership with three rural community support service (CSS) agencies aimed at providing transportation services to seniors and persons with

disabilities in the rural area. In 2016, the CSS agencies again experienced significant increase in demand as residents became more aware of the service. The number of one-way trips provided by the CSS agencies reached 14,774 in 2016, which represented about a 31 per cent increase over 2015. Despite the increased demand, 98 per cent of all trip requests were met,

- Conducted or participated in 10 community outreach sessions on the public transportation options available to seniors and persons with disabilities, and
- Attended an information session hosted by the Ottawa chapter of the Alliance for the Equality of Blind Canadians to discuss the accessible features that will be available to customers using the Confederation Line.

In 2016, OC Transpo prepared for the deployment of exterior bus announcements in 2017. These announcements will provide audible exterior pre-boarding announcements of the route and destination to customers waiting on the platform or at the stop. OC Transpo completed the recording of exterior route and destination announcements. In addition, the exterior speakers on all of its buses have been tested to ensure they are in good working order. Speakers that were defective have now all been repaired or replaced.

Public Works and OC Transpo have continued an ongoing initiative to identify and mitigate 'hot spot' bus stops where accessibility is an issue during winter maintenance snow clearing. This coordination allows winter clearing operations to provide additional winter maintenance as required providing mobility for people with disabilities at bus stops.

## **2017 Accessibility Initiatives**

### **Customer Service**

In 2017, the OPL will develop a workshop for library staff interested in learning how to perform a sensory story time. This story time focuses on people's five senses rather than a traditional sit and listen story time with a book. Sensory story time may enhance recreational experiences for customers with a lower attention span or low vision and is particularly well received by people who are both Deaf and Blind.

## **Training**

In 2017, the City will continue to train staff on the legislated accessibility requirements. The existing online AODA training includes information on the revisions to the IASR. In 2017, the training will be refreshed both in-class and online to include additional best practices for customer service, and to provide greater detail on the Built Environment standard, among other changes.

In addition, training on making accessible Word and PDF documents will continue. Staff who work with the built environment will receive information and instruction on the Accessibility Design Standards. The Accessibility Office will continue to provide the Accessible Procurement Workshop and Management Compliance training.

The Accessibility Office will also centralize additional customer service training materials on the Accessibility Services and Training page of the City's intranet. Additionally, internal communications to staff on disability-specific customer service best practices will be disseminated. As well, course materials on developing Accessibility Impact assessments for committee and council reports will also be developed and delivered.

To support Canada 150 / Ottawa 2017 celebrations, the Accessibility Office will continue to share accessibility best practices upon request with departments and external partners, as outlined in the provincial *Guide to Accessible Festivals and Outdoor Events*, and other related disability resources.

In 2018, to support the municipal elections, additional training will be delivered to short-term elections staff in accessible customer service and other requirements.

## **Information and Communication**

The City of Ottawa has undertaken efforts to meet the Accessible Websites and Web Content Standard of the IASR. As noted earlier in this report, this technical standard, called Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG), requires all City-owned or operated websites to meet thirty-eight specific accessibility criteria to assist people using accommodations such as screen readers to fully access information and communications online.

The City approved and implemented Accessible Web Publishing, Testing and Auditing Procedures, to streamline remediation of non-WCAG 2.0 Level AA compliant web-sites,

applications and products; these will be revised further in 2017 to align with the new corporate organization. Compliance of content on ottawa.ca remains the responsibility of the department that owns the information; ServiceOttawa of the Service Innovation and Performance Department is responsible for the 2017 roll out of the Web Improvement Program to identify content that requires remediation. Information Technology Services of the Corporate Services Department is responsible for identifying web-based applications that require remediation; those applications developed by external vendors are to be remediated by the vendors. Furthermore, external websites purchased by departments are the responsibility of those respective departments and compliance is included in contracts with vendors.

The Emergency and Protective Services Department has completed work in 2016 to update the City's Emergency Public Notification System. The objective of this project is to provide a mechanism for Ottawa residents, businesses and visitors to self-register to receive emergency notifications from the City of Ottawa from a variety of methods that best suits their individual needs. Options for receiving emergency messages would include: traditional telephone land-lines; cellular phones; email; text messages; pagers; Rich Site Summary (RSS) feeds; and social media. This initiative allows the user to select their personal preferred communication method from one of the available options. The application software as a solution must be WCAG 2.0 AA compliant. Registration is completed at an online portal where recipients select their preferred methods for receiving notifications and can be geographically specific. EPS will propose a product solution for an updated Public Notification System (PNS) in 2017.

To increase knowledge and awareness of the benefits of public engagement among staff, a Public Engagement Strategy was developed in 2015 to enhance the ongoing inclusion of all residents including the participation of residents who have various disabilities and may experience barriers to full participation.

The Public Engagement Strategy was aligned to the Service Innovation and Performance Department through the corporate organizational alignment in October 2016 under the Public Information and Media Relations (PIMR) Services. Discussions are currently underway regarding the identification of the most appropriate tools to support this initiative which may include a number of new tools, equipment and corporate software to improve and facilitate public engagement. Various options are currently being examined and purchases will be completed in 2017.

Public Information and Media Relations Services will continue to research best practices and platforms to better outreach and share information with the broader disability community. In 2017, existing social media channels and tactics will be reviewed using an accessibility lens and research on current and new social media tools and tactics that enhance accessibility will be undertaken by PIMR. In collaboration with the Accessibility Office, residents' accessibility feedback will be invited through all channels throughout this initiative.

In 2017, all hosted Ottawa Public Health (OPH) web-sites will be amalgamated into one platform and made WCAG 2.0 AA compliant. These OPH websites bring information and interactive sessions to the public and in particular to groups that want privacy (Sex-it-Smart) or parents with disability and/or young infants who want information without leaving home (Parenting Portal).

### **Employment**

On an ongoing basis, the City implements measures to ensure compliance with the Employment Standards.

The Accessibility Office's communications plan includes a notification on the availability of and process for employees with permanent and temporary disabilities to request individualized workplace emergency response information to assist with evacuation in the event of emergencies.

The Human Resources Services of the Service Innovation and Performance Department will continue to participate in the Employment Accessibility Resource Network (EARN) co-ordinated by the United Way. This initiative raises awareness of employers on the benefits of hiring persons with disabilities, and assists persons with disabilities in Ottawa with obtaining paid employment.

In order to increase employees and the community's awareness, the City's Scent-Free Guidelines will be reviewed in 2017. The Guidelines were created to raise awareness about sensitivities to scents in the workplace and provide recommendations on approaches that can be used to mitigate this issue. Accommodations are provided on a case-by-case basis. In addition, Recreational, Culture and Facilities Services has committed to review the inventory of products used in public facing City facilities such as soaps and cleaning agents to ensure they are sourced without fragrance.



As part of the City of Ottawa's Psychologically Healthy Workplace Roadmap, the Employee Assistance Program in collaboration with the Wellness Committee and Employee Assistance Program Advisory Committee with support from Ottawa Public Health will launch in Q1 2017 a new series of videos to increase awareness of mental health in the workplace. The series includes a number of short videos on mental health awareness including:

- Role of Stress
- Understanding Mental Health
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder
- Substance Use Problems, Suicide and Reaching Out
- Mental Health in the Workplace
- Supporting Your Mental Health

## **Transportation**

As noted above, conventional transportation, specialized transportation and light rail are federally and/or independently regulated. Therefore, the provincial IASR does not apply to those services. That said, the Transportation Services Department remains committed to meeting the “spirit and intent” of the provincial legislation. As a result of the corporate organizational alignment in 2016, certain transportation planning functions mandated under the Built Environment Standard that were the responsibility of the previous Planning and Growth Management Department have been transferred to the Transportation Services Department. Accordingly, this department is now responsible for ensuring that these requirements adhere to the applicable AODA requirements.

In 2017, work will continue in City sidewalk and pedestrian connection improvements to better connect residents to transit stops and other amenities in a number of neighbourhoods, improving mobility for older adults and those with disabilities. With funding provided through the Public Transit Infrastructure Fund, affordable sidewalk

network projects from Phase Two of the Ottawa Pedestrian Plan were reviewed for candidate projects to advance for 2017 implementation. Three projects were selected for design and construction in 2017:

- Chimo Drive between Katimavik Road and Anik Way
- Sherway Drive between Fable Street and Malvern Drive; and Malvern Drive between Fable Street and Greenbank Road.

The Pedestrian Accessibility – Intersection & Ramping Program improves intersection accessibility through the addition of curb ramps, tactile warning surface indicators and through the removal of path of travel obstructions. Intersection accessibility improvements through 2017 include the construction of a project at Bridgestone & Bridle Park and also the review and design of new candidate projects, including the Public Transit Infrastructure Fund (PTIF) projects with timing for construction yet to be determined. Work completed through this program will bring existing intersections into compliance with the AODA and City of Ottawa Accessibility Design Standards and ensure a greater degree of accessibility for people with disabilities to cross City intersections.

Design will also begin on a new pedestrian and cycling bridge over the Rideau Canal from Fifth Avenue to Clegg Street. This new link will be fully accessible, and will improve connections and shorten distances between the Glebe and Old Ottawa East, as well as with the Confederation Line's Hurdman and Lees Stations.

In 2017, transit station and facility improvements will include continuing work on modernizing some older on-street bus stops and facilities to reflect the City's Accessibility Design Standards, Transitway station bench and seating improvements, stair tread replacements, accessible parking improvements at Park & Rides and curb ramp improvements to ensure universal access for residents with disabilities. In addition, Para Transpo will expand the options available to customers who would like to book a trip. This may include the development of new online and integrated voice response (IVR) booking systems

### **Built Environment**

The Planning, Infrastructure, and Economic Development (PIED) Department have a number of accessibility initiatives proposed for 2017.

The City's Retro-fit Program has detailed design underway or completed and construction in 2017 is planned for:

- Elevator at "Entrance Three" of the Nepean Sportsplex
- Washroom barrier removal at Elizabeth Manley Park Field House
- Entrances and ground floor barrier removal at Carling Family Shelter
- Ground floor barrier removal at Hintonburg Community Centre
- Exterior paths of travel barrier removal at Rideau Branch of the OPL
- Second floor universal accessible washroom at Arts Court
- Exterior ramp, stairs and path of travel barrier removal at Churchill Seniors Recreation Centre
- Ground floor universal accessible washroom at the Constance and Buckham's Bay Community Centre/Constance Bay Branch of the OPL
- Complete barrier removal at Bel Air Park Field House and Optimiste Park Pool Change House
- Various accessible upgrades to the alternative needs pool change room at Walter Baker Sports Centre

A full study of the impacts of the Clear Path initiative will be completed in 2017 by By-Law and Regulatory Services to assess the results in detail and provide recommendations for changes to by-laws covering temporary signs. Given that the high-traffic neighbourhoods targeted in this initiative are frequently visited by tourists and residents alike, it is possible that as many as eight million people of all abilities will benefit from travelling through unobstructed Ottawa sidewalks.

In March 2017, Council approved the Right of Way (ROW) Patio By-law to establish a higher standard width for the pedestrian clearway adjacent to outdoor patios, from the current minimum standard of 1.8m width to the recommended best practice of 2m width, where possible, to increase knowledge about the impacts of sidewalk encroachment and continuous improvement in sidewalk accessibility. In adopting this recommendation into the by-law, people with disabilities will have a wider pathway and will encounter less obstructions in the navigation of City sidewalks. The development and implementation of the ROW Patio By-law demonstrates this commitment by providing Ottawa residents and visitors a clear path on sidewalks throughout the City by 2018.

To increase awareness of accessibility requirements for people with disabilities within the housing market and foster a barrier-free approach to design concepts; promotion of an accessibility lens in urban design and planning within the housing market is planned. It is anticipated that this will be achieved through an interactive presentation and/or round table discussion co-ordinated with key stakeholders from the development industry and the City of Ottawa.

The Transportation Services Department plans on reaching the goal of 85 per cent of City intersections being equipped with Accessible Pedestrian Signals by 2020. Moving forward, all accessible pedestrian signal installations will include the AODA compliant vibro-tactile push-button. As a result of the increased costs for such installations, staff will review the projected audible pedestrian signal spending plan post 2018 to determine whether this goal will need to be revised.

Through the Pedestrian Crossover Program, in 2017, staff will endeavour to install up to 60 additional pedestrian crossovers throughout the city. The intent is to install at least one pedestrian crossover in each ward.

In 2017, the Pedestrian and Cycling Design Toolbox will finalize the design guidelines for typical pedestrian and cycling facilities, which can be applied to future design planning of roads, sidewalks, multi-use pathways and cycling facilities. The guidelines will be consistent with the IASR - Design of Public Spaces Standard and the City of Ottawa Accessibility Design Standards and will help support accessible travel for all residents and visitors.

OC Transpo will develop guiding principles and a framework for an on-street bus stop accessibility review of current on-street bus stops to identify barriers to accessibility.

Once completed, the review will provide OC Transpo with baseline data on the accessibility of its stops. This information is needed to identify and prioritize future accessibility improvements for transit riders. In addition, improvements to transit stations and facilities will continue to be made in 2017, including:

- Modernizing some older on-street bus stops and facilities to reflect the City's Accessibility Design Standards
- Making Transitway station bench and seating improvements
- Stair tread replacements
- Accessible parking improvements at Park & Rides
- Curb ramp improvements

Throughout 2017, work will continue on the construction of the Confederation Line in preparation for its 2018 opening. The Rideau Transit Group (RTG) will submit a feasibility study for constructing a fully accessible multi-use pathway (MUP) between Michael Street and St-Laurent Station to the Transportation Committee for consideration. This MUP will improve access to the station for those living and working in the vicinity of Michael and Labelle Streets, as well as Cummings Avenue and Ogilvie Road. In addition, curb ramps with tactile walking surface indicators (TWSIs) will be installed at a number of pedestrian intersections leading to Confederation Line stations and facilities. These curb ramps with TWSIs will improve access to the stations for persons with mobility related disabilities and vision loss. An additional elevator is also planned for installation to/from each platform at Tremblay Station – like all other stations on the Confederation Line – to minimize the incidence of elevator service disruptions at this station when it opens in 2018. This cumulative work will improve the accessibility of the rapid transit network from Blair Station to Tunney's Pasture Station, through the opening of 13 new light rail stations and the introduction of new light rail transit vehicles, all of which have been designed to be accessible to all customers.

In 2017, staff will explore potential opportunities to partner with organizations such as the Rick Hansen Foundation ("RHF") on accessibility initiatives relating to the built environment. The RHF is a registered Canadian charity that develops "programs and initiatives that raise awareness, change attitudes and remove barriers for people with

disabilities in the built environment,” with a goal of seeing the built environment in <sup>1</sup>Canada fully accessible by 2050. In 2017, in celebration of Canada’s 150th birthday and the 30th anniversary of the Rick Hansen Man in Motion World Tour, the RHF has issued a request for Mayors and other public officials to sign a declaration in support of this goal. The RHF has also launched an Accessible Cities Award program that allows municipalities to demonstrate their efforts to increase accessibility in the built environment.

In addition, the RHF has developed a Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (“LEED”)-style Accessibility Certification Program that will identify developments and buildings that demonstrate leadership in accessible design. A pilot of the Accessibility Certification Program has been launched in parts of British Columbia, and the British Columbia government announced in February that it was contributing \$5 million to support the development of this program. As the next step toward the full program launch, the RHF is conducting a survey with respect to the program name. Staff will explore potential opportunities to have the RHF test or demonstrate its Accessibility Certification Program on the City’s facilities and built environment. Any accessibility certification from a third party such as the RHF would not replace requirements under the AODA and the City’s Accessibility Design Standards, and would not be intended as an audit of compliance with the AODA or Accessibility Design Standards. That said, such an initiative may provide an opportunity for the City to highlight its accessibility achievements while contributing to the RHF’s work to promote accessibility within the built environment across Canada.

## **RURAL IMPLICATIONS**

The City’s COMAP update speaks to accessibility actions and initiatives that assist residents from all areas of the City. The Accessibility supports in programs, services and initiatives identified in this report are equally available to residents in rural communities.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.rickhansen.com/About-Us/About-the-Foundation>

## **CONSULTATION**

On February 21, 2017, in preparation for the release of this report, the City's Accessibility Office provided a presentation to the City's Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC) on the highlights of the 2016 outcomes as well as upcoming initiatives in 2017. In addition, a meeting was held to with the AAC Chair and Vice-Chair to discuss the content of the report.

## **COMMENTS BY THE WARD COUNCILLOR(S)**

This is a City-wide report.

## **ADVISORY COMMITTEE(S) COMMENTS**

The Chair and Vice Chair of the Accessibility Advisory Committee have been made aware that the Accessibility Office is preparing an annual progress report on the City of Ottawa Municipal Accessibility Plan (COMAP) outlining the accomplishments within the 2016 calendar year and the 22 additional initiatives brought forth by staff as a result from the city's recent organizational alignment.

The committee appreciates the efforts of the Accessibility Office and all City staff towards creating an accessible, open and inclusive city.

The committee fully supports the City in its efforts to obtain further powers and authority under the AODA to enforce and promote accessibility at the municipal level. One such situation in which further municipal powers are necessary is in the regulation of private transportation companies (PTCs) like Uber. The committee commends the City's forward-thinking approach to its regulation of PTCs and it's commitment to negotiating a voluntary accessibility levy for those PTCs who choose not to offer accessible vehicle services in Ottawa.

However, it is clear that in the case of PTCs, full accessibility and inclusion for Ontarians living with disabilities in Ottawa will only be possible once the City is properly empowered to enforce accessibility in PTC services under the AODA. The barrier to this at the moment is the lack of authority to do so under the AODA. The Government of Ontario must react more quickly in ensuring that emerging markets like PTCs are covered by the AODA and that municipalities have the powers necessary to enforce and promote accessibility throughout these emerging markets.

## **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no legal implications associated with Committee and City Council's receipt of this Report, for information.

The AODA requires ongoing compliance, which is monitored through the Accessibility Office and certified to the Province biennially through the City Clerk and Solicitor Office. The City is required to submit an accessibility report in 2017 to the provincial Accessibility Directorate to confirm that it has met its current accessibility requirements under the AODA. Since January 1, 2014, various City departments have procured twenty (20) new websites and/or applications. The contractual terms and conditions governing the procurement of these new websites and applications required that they meet the World Wide Web Consortium's Web Content Accessibility Guidelines ("WCAG") 2.0 AA compliance as of that date. An internal City quality assurance review revealed that these conditions were not being consistently met in all instances. Staff are continuing steps to address this matter through the City's Contract Administration and Supplier Performance procedures and the affected City departments with the objective of achieving compliance. Performance management is conserved to be a prudent first step to initiate compliance as termination and/or litigation proceedings may be time consuming and expensive.

With regards to the development and implementation of the Right of Way (ROW) Patio By-law, the specific legal implications associated with that initiative were outlined by Legal Services in the Transportation Committee Report 21, Item 2, entitled "NEW RIGHT OF WAY PATIO PROGRAM AND EVALUATION OF STREETSIDE SPOTS PILOT PROGRAM" submitted February 22, 2017, to that Committee on March 1, 2017, and subsequently to Council on March 8, 2017.

With regards to the regulation of private transportation companies as they relate to AODA, the specific legal implications were previously outlined by Legal Services in the Community and Protective Services Report 11, Item 3, entitled "REGULATING VEHICLES-FOR-HIRE IN THE CITY OF OTTAWA – TAXIS, LIMOUSINES AND PRIVATE TRANSPORTATION COMPANIES" submitted March 31, 2016 to that Committee on April 7, 2016, and subsequently to Council on April 13, 2016. City staff have implemented the Council direction that the City petition the Province to amend the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* to include a reference to Private



Transportation Companies to establish a linkage to the accessibility levy to ensure that appropriate accessible transportation requirements are mandated for Private Transportation Companies and to also foster a more level playing field with taxicabs and accessible taxicabs already captured in the *Act* and its regulations.

## **RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

There are risk implications associated with not meeting the AODA legislative obligations. These risks are monitored and brought forward to appropriate staff as warranted. In December 2015, the City reported to the Province that it is in non-compliance with an AODA requirement with respect to Section 14 WCAG compliance for websites of the IASR under the AODA. City departments have been addressing the issue with their vendors to ensure that all new City websites and web applications, published since January 1, 2014, become compliant as soon as possible. Additional measures have been put into place to ensure that going forward, all newly purchased web products will be tested to confirm vendor's compliance claims and the City will use a standardized compliance reporting tool with all vendors.

In 2016, the Province asked the City for additional information about its remediation status, which the City has provided. No further details have been required by the Province; the City is due to report on its compliance with the IASR as a whole at the end of 2017.

The AODA states that if a Director, as appointed by the Deputy-Minister Accessibility, Francophone Affairs and Seniors Affairs, concludes that a person or organization has contravened a provision of an accessibility standard or of any other regulation, the Director may, by order, require the person or organization to do either or both of the following:

1. Comply with the accessibility standard or other regulation within the time specified in the Order.
2. Subject to Subsection (6), pay an administrative penalty in accordance with the regulations.

If a person or organization fails to comply with an order and no appeal of the order is made within the time specified, a Director may, make an order requiring the person or

organization to pay an administrative penalty in accordance with the regulations in this regard the Director provides as follows:

Every person who is guilty of an offence under this Act is liable on conviction,

- (a) to a fine of not more than \$50,000 for each day or part of a day on which the offence occurs or continues to occur; or,
- (b) if the person is a corporation, to a fine of not more than \$100,000 for each day or part of a day on which the offence occurs or continues to occur.

### **ASSET MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

The City of Ottawa's Accessibility Design Standards (ADS) help ensure that all City owned and operated spaces and facilities are inclusive and accessible to everyone moving forward. The ADS are harmonized with AODA's Design of Public Spaces Standards and recent Ontario Building Code amendments and are mandatory and apply to both new construction and rehabilitation projects. There is no requirement under the AODA to retrofit existing facilities or public spaces. The City of Ottawa already follows a best practice model for considering accessibility early in the planning and design phase of construction projects. For retrofit, alterations and additions to existing facilities owned, leased or operated by the City, the standards will be applied to the greatest extent possible and funded through the Comprehensive Asset Management program.

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no financial implications associated with this report.

### **ACCESSIBILITY IMPACTS**

All the initiatives, actions and plans referenced throughout this report are both designed and developed to decrease or eliminate disability-related barriers and enhance accessibility. Feedback from the Accessibility Advisory Committee and people with disabilities has been solicited and integrated into the planning of the initiatives and the review of this report. The consultation, design and delivery of the wide array of City programs, services and accessibility initiatives will ensure integration and inclusion of residents, visitors and employees with all types of disability.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

Under several legislative authorities, the City is required to design and develop initiatives with consideration to the environment. Exceptions to the AODA requirements that apply to recreational trails and beach access routes are permitted where obligated organizations can demonstrate that there is a significant risk that the requirements, or some of them, would adversely affect water, fish, wildlife, plants, invertebrates, species at risk, ecological integrity or natural heritage values, whether the adverse effects are direct or indirect.

## **TECHNOLOGY IMPLICATIONS**

As described in the WCAG sections of this report, technology plays a significant role in providing the City with the ability to meet the AODA accessible websites and web content clauses. Information Technology Services of the Corporate Services Department and ServiceOttawa of the Service Innovation and Performance Department remain engaged in the WCAG Implementation Strategy.

## **TERM OF COUNCIL PRIORITIES**

The accessibility initiatives outlined in this report directly impact and support Council Strategic Priorities. All departmental initiatives are designed to advance equity and inclusion in the city's diverse population through continuous planning and execution of barrier removal at all City programs, services and facilities.

## **SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION**

Updated COMAP Initiatives Chart, previously distributed and held on file with the City Clerk and Solicitor.

## **DISPOSITION**

Efforts to meet AODA compliance requirements throughout the corporation are co-ordinated through the Corporate Accessibility Office. Specific initiatives, goals and programs outlined in the five-year plan have been assigned to operational departments and progress is monitored by the City Clerk and Solicitor Department. All City departments are responsible for the implementation of the City's COMAP plan and for compliance with the AODA and its regulations.

**FINANCE AND ECONOMIC  
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