

THE TOWNSHIP OF AUGUSTA

REPORT NUMBER: 2023-129
REPORT TO COUNCIL: December 11, 2023
RE: Accessibility 2023 Annual Status Report
AUTHOR: Annette Simonian, Clerk.

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT Council receives the 2023 Annual Accessibility Status report for information.

BACKGROUND:

The purpose of this report and attached Status Report is to provide Council and the public with an annual update on the Augusta Multi-Year Accessibility Plan, which outlines the municipality's strategy to improve accessibility for people with disabilities.

The annual progress report outlines the accessibility initiatives that were completed in 2023 that support our strategy outlined in the Multi-Year Plan.

This Status Report will be posted on the website and fulfil our legal obligation to publish an annual accessibility plan under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA).

The municipality remains committed to proceeding with plans to ensure that we comply with the requirements under the AODA and continues to make continual improvements to prevent and remove barriers in all our operations.

The Township is working with a third-party vendor and working internally to remediate PDF documents for the website to keep it compliant.

Staff have had ongoing training on how to build an accessible public facing document for the website, in order to remain compliant and ensure that outside documents acquired for third party vendors are in an accessible format.

FINANCIAL IMPACTS

Any necessary software purchases needed to keep compliant with accessibility requirements.



Annette Simonian, Clerk



Shannon Geraghty, CAO

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ACCESSIBILITY STATUS REPORT: 2023

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Introduction

This 2023 Accessibility Status Report provides an annual update on Augusta's 2020-2025 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan.

This Status report in conjunction with the Multi-Year Plan fulfills Augusta's legal obligations for 2023 under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) to publish an annual status report on its multi-year plan.

This report and other accessibility documents can be found on the Augusta website at www.augusta.ca.

Augusta's accessibility program is guided by the following commitment statement:

The Township of Augusta is committed to treating all people in a way that allows them to maintain their dignity and independence. The Township believes in integration and equal opportunity. The Township is committed to meeting the needs of people with disabilities in a timely manner and will do so by preventing and removing barriers to accessibility and meeting accessibility requirements under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act*.

The Council of the Corporation of the Township of Augusta is committed to:

- ensuring the participation of people with disabilities in the identification and review of barriers.
- considering recommendations from people with disabilities and the public with respect to accessibility of municipal buildings, facilities, operations, and services; and
- meeting the standards of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act*, 2005 (AODA) thereby removing barriers creating a municipality where every person who lives or visits can participate fully.

The Township Council and staff continue to show their commitment to creating a barrier free community for residents, businesses, and tourists by developing and implementing policies, procedures, and practices to provide service to persons with disabilities.

Accessibility planning will help ensure that Township services, policies, procedures, and practices meet the needs of everyone with a disability, including Township residents, visitors, tourists, and staff.

Augusta's accessibility accomplishments for 2023 included the following:

Municipal Facilities (built environment)

Employees continue to find ways to improve accessibility at municipal owned facilities for both small and large projects.

Ensured new playground equipment purchased and installed meet the standard for accessibility.

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A new elevator was installed at the Roebuck Recreation Center.

The stairs to the office main door were removed and replaced with a level walkway.

Accessible Employment

Accommodation continues to be available throughout the recruitment process and employment life cycle.

The orientation package includes human rights, accessibility customer service and integrated accessibility standard regulation training.

Customer Service

2022 training continued to ensure all staff, including Councillors, volunteers and new employees are aware of the accessibility accommodation requirements under the AODA.

Information and Communication

The Township ensures all documents are available in an alternate format upon request. Ensuring that public facing documents for the website are created in accessible format. The Website has been upgraded to meet WCAG 2.0 level AA requirements. Township maintains the website on an ongoing basis for compliance and purchases the necessary tools for remediation.

Virtual electronic access to Council meetings open to the public, which is placed on our YouTube channel.

Ongoing Accessibility Goals

Continue to improve the quality of documents on the website for increased accessibility.
Move to ensure renovations at municipal facilities and parks do not create barriers and address barriers which may still exist in our buildings and facilities.
Create a culture of Accessibility.

Augusta successfully completed an audit from AODA Compliance Assurance Branch with only minor changes needed to comply.

Augusta provided a Touch a Truck event, with the first hour being sensory free for children disturbed by noise and too many people.

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Availability of the Plan and Status Report

Multi-Year Plan and the annual accessibility Status Report can be accessed through Augusta's website: www.augusta.ca.

For more information contact the Clerk's Department

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Email: asimonian@augusta.ca

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Alternate format available upon request.