3. **SRCFS.18.013 – Richmond Hill 2017 Status Report of the 2013-2017 Richmond Hill Accessibility Plan**

Moved by: S. Waldman

That the Accessibility Advisory Committee recommends to Committee of the Whole:

a) That the 2017 Status Report of the 2013-2017 Richmond Hill Accessibility Plan, attached as Appendix A to staff report SRCFS.18.013, be received;

b) That the 2017 Status Report be posted on the Town's website as required by the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (AODA).

Carried Unanimously

Staff Report for Accessibility Advisory Committee Meeting

Date of Meeting: March 28, 2018
Report Number: SRCFS.18.013

Department: **Office of the Clerk**

Subject: Richmond Hill 2017 Status Report of the 2013-2017 Richmond Hill Accessibility Plan

Purpose:

The purpose of this staff report is to present the 2017 Status Report of the 2013-2017 Richmond Hill Accessibility Plan.

Recommendation(s):

That the Accessibility Advisory Committee recommends to the Committee of the Whole:

a) That the 2017 Status Report of the 2013-2017 Richmond Hill Accessibility Plan, attached as Appendix A to Staff Report SRCFS.18.013, be received.

b) That the 2017 Status Report be posted on the Town's website as required by the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (*AODA).

Contact Person:

Daniel Ruberto, Legislative & Accessibility Coordinator, extension 6521

Submitted by:

"Original signed by Stephen M.A. Huycke, Acting Commissioner of Corporate and Financial Services, on file in the Office of the Clerk"

Stephen M.A. Huycke
Acting Commissioner of Corporate and Financial Services

Approved by:

"Signed version on file in the Office of the Clerk"

Neil Garbe
Chief Administrative Officer

Background:

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) requires municipalities to create a multi-year Accessibility Plan and to prepare an annual status report on the implementation of plan. The Town is also required to post the status report on its website.

The 2013-2017 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan, approved by Council in 2013, outlined Richmond Hill's strategy to prevent and remove barriers for persons with disabilities, and meet the requirements under the AODA, including the Town's legislated obligations under each of the standards. 2017 was the fifth and final year of the plan.

As demonstrated in the 2017 Status Report, the Town of Richmond Hill has met the deliverables outlined in the 2013-2017 Multi-Year Plan. The 2017 Status Report highlights the initiatives taken by the Town as part of delivering accessible services, including policy and work processes updates; staff training; alternative formats and communication supports; community safety programs and accessible and integrative library programs; and accessible built environment initiatives for the Town's trails and parks.

Financial/Staffing/Other Implications:

There are no financial, staffing or other implications associated with this report.

Relationship to the Strategic Plan:

This report relates to the Town's Strategic Plan goal of Stronger Connections in Richmond Hill by removing barriers to effective participation for all people in the community, improving access to local information and services and by increasing accessibility for those with disabilities.

Conclusion:

This staff report presents the 2017 Status Report for the 2013- 2017 Richmond Hill Accessibility Plan. The Status Report was developed in consultation with the Richmond Hill Accessibility Advisory Committee and has been designed and built to be an accessible document for persons with disabilities. Moving forward, the Town will continue to meet the accessibility planning requirements as outlined by the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act*, 2005.

Attachments:

- Appendix A – 2017 Status Report of the 2013-2017 Richmond Hill Accessibility Plan

2017 Status Report for the

Richmond Hill

Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

January to December 2017

Moving Toward an Accessible Richmond Hill

An update on actions by the Town of Richmond Hill to prevent and remove barriers for people with disabilities from the 2013-2017 Richmond Hill -Year Accessibility Plan

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Message from the Mayor

Thank you for reading Richmond Hill's 2017 Status Report! A tremendous amount of work went into ensuring our accessibility goals and deliverables were met last year like AODA training for staff, volunteers and third-party service providers; improved website accessibility; accessible public spaces for residents to enjoy; and so many more achievements.

This report outlines how we're continuously striving to improve our programs, facilities and services, so that residents of all abilities can use them. I'm pleased to say that we've met all of the deliverables we committed to in our 2013-2017 Accessibility Plan and that we're now planning how to identify, remove and prevent barriers in the five years to come (2018-2022).

Our community is important to us and I'm proud of our achievements to date. I invite you to read through this report to learn more about our accessibility initiatives and progress, and how we're working to make Richmond Hill even more accessible and inclusive.

Sincerely,

Dave Barrow
Mayor

Message from the Accessibility Advisory Committee

The Town of Richmond Hill is dedicated to ensuring that our community is accessible in all areas of service provided to the public.

The Richmond Hill Accessibility Advisory Committee continues to support Richmond Hill in its commitment to accessibility by providing advice on programs, services, and facilities. In addition, we were pleased to provide advice on various new parks and public spaces under development in 2017.

The Committee is proud of the work we have done and the support we receive from the Town and community. As this is the last year reporting on the 2013-2017 Accessibility Plan, we are excited to provide feedback on the next Multi-Year Accessibility Plan for 2018-2022.

We encourage you to review the 2017 status report to learn more about Richmond Hill's achievements and accessibility initiatives.

Accessibility Advisory Committee Members

The Accessibility Advisory Committee serves to advise Council and staff on the requirements and implementation of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA.) The committee serves to advise Council and staff about the requirements and implementation of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA). They meet throughout the year to discuss issues related to the AODA and to review the following:

- Site plans for new and existing municipal buildings;

- Plans for parks and trails;

- Significant renovations in municipal buildings;

- Plans for accessible municipal elections;

- Accessibility policies and procedures including those required by the standards made under the AODA;

- Any other work related to accessibility and or the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act.

The Town of Richmond Hill is grateful for their commitment, time and expertise: There are 11 members on the Accessibility Advisory Committee as listed below:

- Lilian Hulme-Smith, Chair;
- George Tannous, Vice Chair;
- Regional and Local Councillor Vito Spatafora;
- Jenny Clement;
- Rosanna Giannasca;
- Marion Menezes;
- Marisol Pestana;
- Manfred Segall;
- Simon Waldman;
- Lena Sampogna, Staff; and
- Daniel Ruberto, Staff

Background and Legislation

The *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (AODA) has established accessibility standards and requirements for Customer Service, Information and Communications, Employment, Transportation and the Design of Public Spaces. The five standards under the AODA are explained and listed below:

- **Customer Service Standard** - provide accessible customer service to people with disabilities so that they can access the same goods and services as everyone else;

- **Information and Communication Standards** – create, provide and receive information in ways that are accessible for people with disabilities;

- **Employment Standard** – employers provide accessibility support to employees across all stages of the employment life cycle;
- **Transportation Standard** – transportation providers will make their services and vehicles accessible to people with disabilities;
- **Public Spaces Standard** – newly constructed and redeveloped public spaces must be designed to meet specific accessible design criteria. Public spaces include; recreational trails, beach access routes, outdoor public use eating areas, outdoor play spaces, exterior paths of travel, accessible parking and service related elements and then the maintenance of the public spaces.

Under the *Ontario Human Rights Code*, The Town of Richmond Hill has ongoing obligations to ensure that as an organization, we respect non-discrimination. We incorporate the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) but also recognize that additional accommodation measures may be required as per the Ontario Human Rights Code.

Richmond Hill's Implementation of AODA

Richmond Hill is committed to ensuring we meet all deliverables required under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA). In order to ensure that Richmond Hill continuously identifies, removes, and prevents barriers, we created a five year accessibility plan. We continue to update policies, practices and procedures, and ensure that staff follows the specific guidelines so that everyone remains committed to incorporating accessibility into all areas of service provided to the public.

This is the last report for the 2013-2017 Richmond Hill Accessibility Plan. The report shows the many activities and initiatives that Town departments were to carry out in order to meet the legislated requirements of the AODA, and most importantly help to provide programs and services that are more accessible to our community. Our success is shown in having completed all of our deliverables forecasted over a five year period and most specifically for 2017 as shown below.

Update on 2017 Accessibility Initiatives

Richmond Hill continues to undertake and complete a number of initiatives in our ongoing strategy to prevent and remove barriers for persons with disabilities that live, work and visit the community. Below is a list of initiatives that the Town of Richmond Hill was regulated to comply with. For each initiative we will show the following:

Deliverable: what we are legislated to do under the AODA and what we committed to in our Multi-Year Accessibility Plan (2013-2017).

Status Update: what we have accomplished for the year 2017, as indicated in this report.

Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

The Multi-Year Accessibility Plan has specific deliverables which must be met and are listed below, along with the status update.

Deliverable

Richmond Hill is mandated to establish, implement, maintain and document a multi-year accessibility plan, which is reviewed and updated at least once every five years. We are also required to prepare an annual status report on the measures and steps taken to implement the plan.

Status Update - Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

The 2013 – 2017 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan is an outline of Richmond Hill's strategy to prevent and remove barriers and meet the requirements under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) and our legislated obligations under each of the standards; Customer Service, Information and Communications, Employment, Transportation and Public Spaces.

Richmond Hill has met all of the deliverables outlined in the 2013-2017 Multi-Year Plan. Our staff's commitment to ensure accessibility is reflected in the many accomplishments achieved over a five year period.

This is the fifth and final year of the plan that we are reporting on, as per the requirements of the AODA to provide an Annual Status Report. The progress of the initiatives identified, and any additional removal of barriers and improved access for people with disabilities is shown throughout this document.

Our focus for 2017 has been to complete the final deliverables in the plan and then work towards creating a Multi-Year Accessibility Plan (MYAP) for 2018-2022, which will highlight the Town's accomplishments and how we will continue to identify and remove barriers for persons with disabilities. The upcoming MYAP is currently under development and will be completed in 2018.

Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities on Town Committees

Listed is the deliverable and status update for the inclusion of people with disabilities on Town Committees.

Deliverable

In order to include persons with disabilities on Town committees, we plan to encourage persons with disabilities or representatives of persons with disabilities to become citizen members of committees of Council.

Status Update - Inclusion on Town Committees

More than 50% of our Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC) members are persons with disabilities. They offer valuable input on accessible design and development for newly constructed and or renovated facilities. They also advise Council and staff on legislated AODA requirements.

Recruitment for the new Accessibility Advisory Committee will commence in late 2018 after the municipal elections. The Town will continue to ensure that persons with disabilities and this Committee as a whole play an integral role in identifying barriers to accessibility. In addition to the AAC, we will continue to encourage people with disabilities to join other committees as well.

Accessibility Policies

Listed below, is the deliverable and status update for accessibility policies.

Deliverable

Develop and maintain policies as to how the Town will achieve accessibility through meeting the requirements of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA.) The policies will cover each of the standards: Customer Service, Information and Communications, Employment, Transportation and Public Spaces. Other procedures related to each of the standards should be developed, reviewed and revised as required.

Status Update - Accessibility Policies

The Town of Richmond Hill has an Accessibility Policy covering each of the standards. The policy outlines how we will meet our obligations under the AODA with specific procedures explaining the process that staff will follow. The Town also has Accessible Customer Service Procedures that outlines the detailed processes and accommodations pursuant to the Accessible Customer Service Standards. A copy of the Accessibility Policy and Accessible Customer Service Procedures is provided to staff as part of their orientation process. The policy and procedures are continually reviewed and changes are communicated to staff.

Accessible Procurement

Listed are the deliverable and status updates for accessible procurement.

Deliverable

Develop processes to incorporate accessibility criteria and features when procuring or acquiring goods, services or facilities. This includes accessibility features when designing, procuring or acquiring self-service kiosks. When purchasing goods, services or facilities, organizations must incorporate accessibility.

Status Update - Accessible Procurement

Richmond Hill incorporates accessibility considerations and guidelines in all procurement matters, where possible. The Town's Accessibility Policy states that "when procuring goods, services, self-service kiosks or facilities, the Town shall incorporate accessibility criteria and features, unless it is not feasible (practicable). If not practicable, the Town shall provide an explanation, upon request."

The Town's Procurement Department has undertaken several initiatives in 2017 to continue incorporating accessibility considerations in procurement:

- Implemented an online, AODA-compliant electronic bidding system (bidsandtenders.ca), which removes physical barriers for persons with disabilities that participate in procurement activities.
- The Town's Procurement and Financial Control By-Laws was made AODA-compliant.

- When AODA requirements are identified as a requirement for award of any contract, Procurement works with the Client Division to ensure these requirements are met by the selected vendor.

The Town continues to mandate accessibility training for all employees, agents, and volunteers providing goods and services on behalf of the Town. Vendors must provide the Town with proof of training completion upon request.

We also continue to follow **accessibility rules for procurement** when coordinating the procurement of goods and services.

AODA and Accessible Customer Service Training

Listed is the deliverable and status update for accessibility training.

Deliverable

Develop, update, and deliver mandatory accessibility training applicable to all employees, volunteers and those that make decisions on behalf of the Town.

Status Update - Accessibility Training

The Town of Richmond Hill continues to provide training to all full time and part time employees on the Customer Service Standard and the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation.
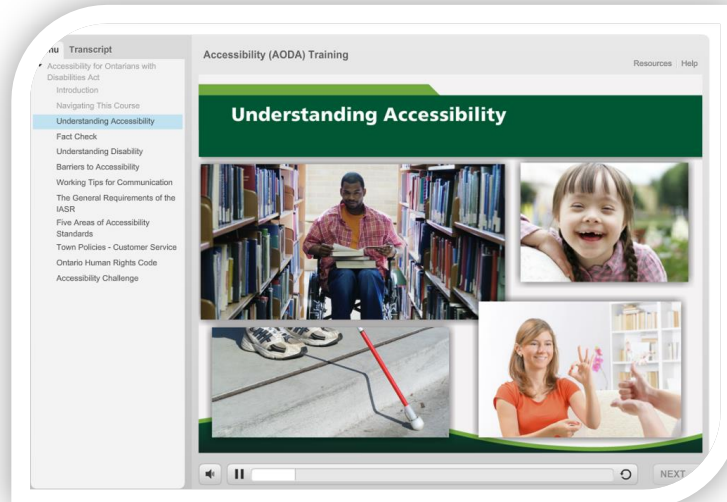
The training is interactive and includes:

- Understanding disabilities;
- Barriers to accessibility;
- Working tips for communication;
- General requirements of accessibility standards;
- Town of Richmond Hill's accessibility policies;

- Ontario Human Rights Code; and
- Accessibility Challenges.

Upon completion of the training, a certificate is produced as proof of training, as per the legislated requirements to maintain records of training. For new staff the above training is part of their orientation.
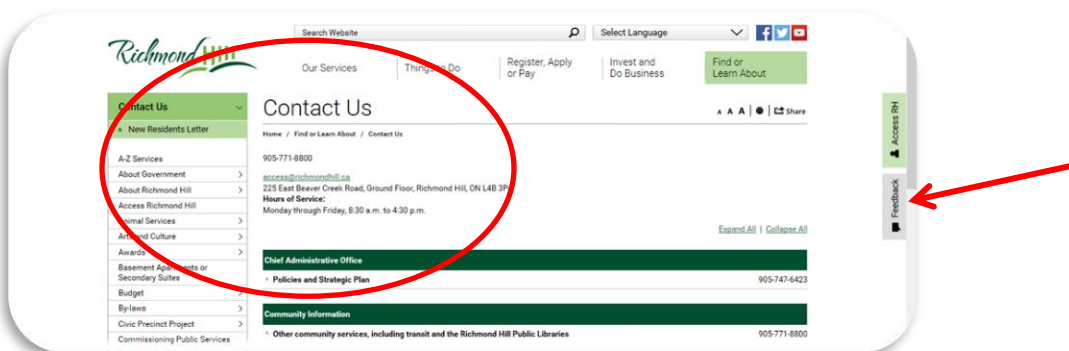
Accessible Feedback Process

Listed are the deliverable and status updates for the accessible feedback process.

Deliverable

The Town of Richmond Hill's feedback process shall be provided in an accessible manner.

Status Updates - Accessible Feedback Process

For a person with a disability, it is important that there are various ways to provide feedback. The Town of Richmond Hill provides a number ways to provide comments or suggestions: emailing, calling, visiting in person, or faxing. Or they may wish to choose our on-line process through the **"Contact Us"** page or the "**Feedback**" tab.

Additionally, residents may complete and submit the Accessible Customer Service Feedback Form located on Richmond Hill's website, which will assist in monitoring and improving our services.

Alternative Formats and Communication Supports

Listed are the deliverables and status updates for alternative formats and communication supports.

Deliverables

Provide or arrange for accessible formats and communication supports when requested. Review relevant policies, continue to reinforce accessibility training and develop guidelines so that we are ensuring we are able to provide alternative formats and communication supports.

Status Updates - Accessible Formats and Communication Supports

Richmond Hill has policies, procedures and guidelines that staff follow so that they ensure the public is being provided with accessible formats and communication supports upon request.

An example of providing an alternative communication support is providing UbiDuo to customers with disabilities. Access Richmond Hill Advisors continue to provide access to an UbiDuo communication device that enables Deaf, deafened and hard of hearing individuals to communicate with each other face to face. There is also one workstation that has been designed to serve persons with disabilities.

Alternative formats to documents are provided in a timely manner and at a cost no more than the regular cost charged to others. Over the last two years, we have been providing training to staff on how to provide accessible formats and communication supports. Training on accessible documents continues to be provided to staff.

The following initiatives took place in 2017 and were provided to staff:
- Human Resources Division developed Accessible Documents Training workshops on Microsoft Office.
- Communications Division hosted Web Design workshops that reviewed best practices for uploading accessible materials to the website.
- The Office of the Clerk developed new accessible corporate templates such as agendas, minutes, staff reports, memos, letter, by-laws, policies and procedures.
- The Office of the Clerk provided and coordinated training on eScribe, an accessible agenda/meeting management program for staff and Council.

Staff continue to follow guidelines that the Town developed in 2016, which are:
- How to Write for the Web Style Guide
- AODA Web Accessibility Toolkit
- Accessibility Document Guide

Emergency Procedures, Plans or Public Safety Information

Listed are the deliverable and status updates for emergency procedures, plans or public safety information.

Deliverable

Organizations must provide its emergency procedures, plans or public safety information that it makes available to the public in an accessible format upon request.

Status Updates - Emergency Procedures, Plans or Public Safety Information

The Town had numerous documents and pieces of information that needed to be considered under this section as per the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act.

The Town ensures that they provide any emergency procedure, plan or public safety information in an accessible format, upon request. Emergency information is easily accessed through the Town's website. Despite being upon request, the Town has proactively produced select documents on accessible formats, including information on how to make an emergency kit and the Emergency Preparedness Guide.
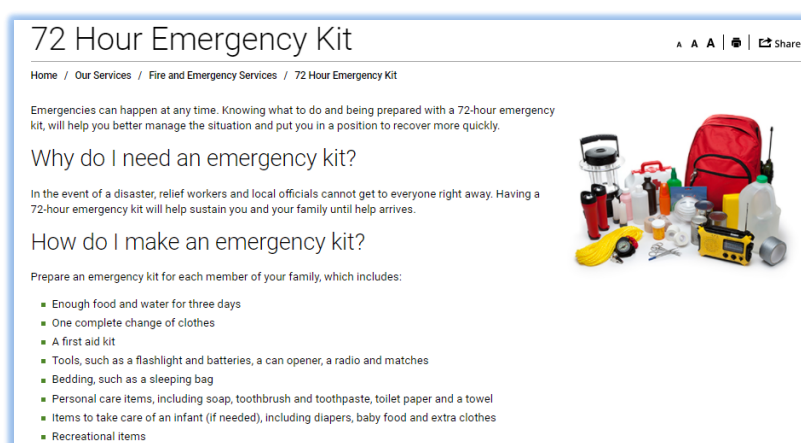
When a customer or resident with a disability visits the municipal offices to access the Town's services, a pager to "Notify of an Emergency" is available at Access Richmond Hill's front desk for any person with a hearing impairment that requires to be informed of an emergency while on the premises.

Richmond Hill's Public Fire and Life Safety Education Program

Richmond Hill's Public Fire and Life Safety Education program helps to protect our community by teaching residents about fire and injury prevention and other safety and emergency topics. There are two full-time Fire and Life Safety Educators to help all residents learn how to make a safe community.

There are a number of programs, presentations and brochures available:

- Arson Prevention Program for Children;
- Juvenile Fire-Setter Intervention;
- Arson Prevention Program for Elementary Schools;
- Fire Safety Program for Elementary School Children;
- Safety for Seniors Program;

- Smoke and Carbone Monoxide Alarm Program;
- Fire Prevention Program
- Emergency Preparedness Awareness Sessions
- Fire Extinguisher Training;
- High Rise Buildings - Fire Safety Presentations;
- Hospital and Long Term Care Facility Services;
- RiskWatch Injury Prevention Program; and
- Workplace Safety Programs.

Accessible Website and Web Content

Listed are the deliverable and status updates for accessible websites and web content.

Deliverable

In accordance with the Information and Communications Standard, the Town must ensure its website is accessible. Website accessibility includes further enhancements, improvements and ensuring compliance with WCAG, 2.0, Level A initially and working towards Level AA.

Status Update - Accessible Website and Web Content

Richmond Hill launched its new website in October 2016 and it continues to be accessible. In 2016, the website was compliant with WCAG 2.0, Level A and we were working towards achieving Level AA. However, in 2017 we are pleased to report compliance with a higher standard, WCAG 2.0 Level AA. This was accomplished before the legislated deadline of 2021 and was a significant accomplishment of the Town of Richmond Hill in 2017.

Some accessibility features of our website include:

- Accessible HTML content: accessible fonts and headings are used throughout content, as well as alternative text on photos, images and links;

- Distinguishable content: there are minimum standards for contrast with the ability to resize text;
- Predictable Web Pages: all pages have consistent top and left navigation and the contact information is consistently presented at the bottom of pages;
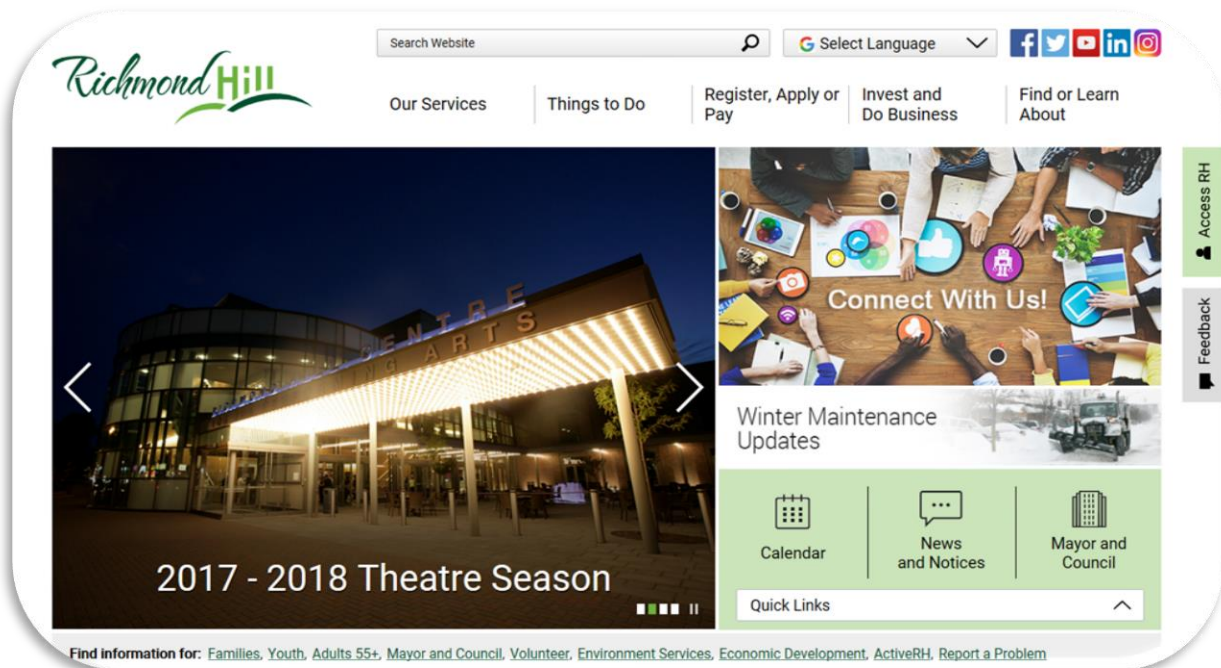
In 2016, all PDF documents on the website created after January 1, 2012 were made accessible in compliance with the Information & Communications Standard. PDF documents on the website continued to be remediated and made accessible upon request from the public and staff.

Where possible, the Town aims to make new content accessible before posting to our website. For example, the Fall/Winter and Spring/Summer Community Recreation Guides, which are among the Town's most read publications, are made accessible before they become available electronically. The Communication Advisors and/or the Web and Social Media Coordinator have processes in place to review all content for accessibility before it is published on the new website.

BrowseAloud

The Town's website, including Richmond Hill Public Library's website, includes BrowseAloud, a high-quality speech reader to assist when browsing the web. It helps those with dyslexia, literacy difficulties, mild visual impairments and those for who English is a second language.

York Maps

York Maps web application complies with WCAG 2.0 Level AA and meets international standards for accessibility. It enables full keyboard control, is screen reader friendly,

and contains other features to make mapping technology more accessible to the largest possible audience, regardless of their level of ability.

eScribe Meeting Management Software

In 2017, the Town implemented eScribe software to manage materials for its Council and committee meeting. Town staff does its best to ensure agendas and meeting materials uploaded to eScribe and shared with the public are accessible. Additionally, eScribe meets the WCAG 2.0 Level AA standard and is accessible to persons with disabilities.

Public Library Services

Listed are the deliverables and status updates for public library services.

Deliverables

Provide access to existing accessible materials. Make information about accessible materials publicly available known and upon request provide this information in accessible formats with appropriate communication supports.

Status Update – Richmond Hill Public Library Services

Public libraries have a desire and a legal responsibility to provide accessible Library services to everyone in their communities, which includes:

- a robust selection of books and information resources produced in accessible formats; and
- training opportunities for Library staff in the provision of accessible services.

Richmond Hill Public Library (RHPL) has four facilities, including Central Library, Oak Ridges Library, Richmond Green Library and Richvale Library. All buildings are physically accessible with wheelchair ramps and elevators where required. Entrances are equipped with automatic doors and parking spots are available for those with accessible parking permits.

Collections

The Library offers a number of various accessible formats of printed materials, including Large Print, Braille, audio and electronic. There is also a Visiting Library Service available for those that are homebound.

To assist with the borrowing of materials, the Library offers self-check units that can be adjusted in height for customers' needs.

Website

Available on Library website, RHPL provides BrowseAloud, a high-quality speech reader to assist those with dyslexia, literacy difficulties, mild visual impairments and where English is a second language when browsing the web.

The Library also offers the free digital app MagnusCards that uses pictures and text to provide step-by-step instructions in using Library services for those with cognitive special needs, including autism.
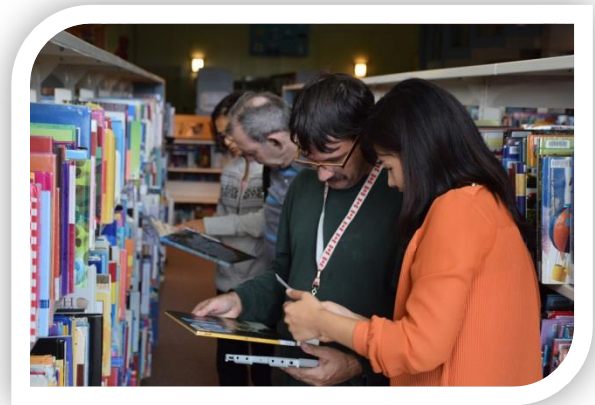
Programs

A number of programs are also offered for those with disabilities, including the Adult Friendship Club, the Friendship Colouring Club and the Vision Loss Book Club.

Staff Training

All Library staff has received customer service and information/communication and employment standards training in compliance with the *Accessibility for Ontarians Disability Act* for the provision of accessible services.
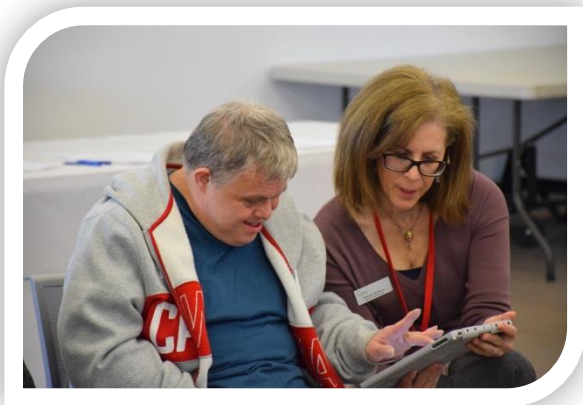
In 2017, Library staff also received training on creating accessible documents. These accessible documents facilitate inclusiveness and enhance access to Library services

and resources in a way that respects the independence of all customers, including those with disabilities.

Adaptive Technology

Central Library has two accessible workstations that offer adjustable tables, joystick-style mouse, zoom text, large keyboard, SARA Reading (scans and reads books), smart view CCTV Unit (enlarges text), accessible software programs including Job Access With Speech (JAWS) and BrowseAloud, and a Victor Reader (portable digital book player).

In addition, Central has an accessible workstation complete with large keyboard, joystick and software (ex. zoom text and JAWS) to allow for work to be completed by patrons who require such services.
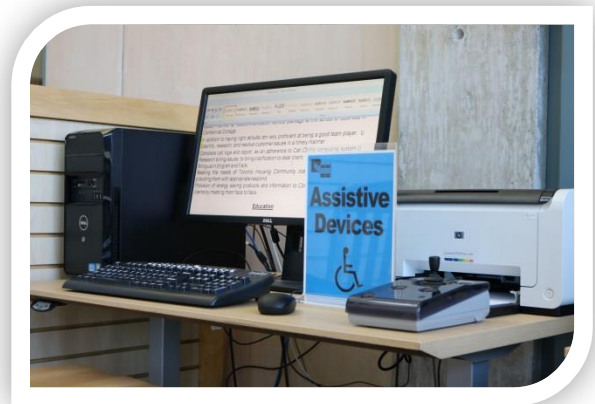
The other accessible station has a SARA reader and SmartView Synergy CCTV unit and is on a table that can be raised and lowered. The SARA station can scan and read a book to an individual in one of 18 languages, and patrons have the ability to change the reading speed and volume. The SmartView Synergy CCTV is designed for people with macular degeneration, diabetic retinopathy or other low vision eye conditions as it can enlarge the text.

Richmond Green Library has an assistive technology station. It includes a Big Keys keyboard, a SARA CE reader and document scanner, a Smartview Synergy Pi document magnifier, Dragon Speak speech recognition software, JAWS screen reader software, and Zoom Text (a screen magnifier for computer systems.)

Coming Soon - New Oak Ridges Library

Coming soon is the new Oak Ridges Library!

A 19,000 square foot library is currently under construction that includes many accessibility features. Presentations were made to the Accessibility Advisory Committee to review the schematic design of the Oak Ridges Library for compliance with new accessibility amendments to the Ontario Building Code, the Design of Public Spaces Standard and overall accessibility. The incorporated accessibility features include the following 10 items:


- Universal washrooms
- Barrier-free washrooms in both male and female washrooms
- Accessible employee washroom
- All ramps leading into the building are 1:15
- Minimum corridor width is 1500 mm
- Door operators are used for majority of exterior doors
- Accessible ramp to lowered sunken children's area
- Accessible and van accessible parking with shared access aisle
- Accessible exterior paths of travel
- Clear and open interior routes

In Partnership with Centre for Equitable Library Access (CELA)

Richmond Hill Public Library has also partnered with the Center for Equitable Library Access (CELA). In Ontario, the Centre provides books and other accessible resources in French and English and offers a borrowing service to schools for students who have a print disability. Access to the CELA collection is available to people who are unable to read conventional print due to a disability. The Centre provides public libraries with a collection of over 230,000 books, magazines, newspapers and described videos in a choice of formats for people with a print disability, including:

- Current bestsellers, award-winners and classics

- Fiction, non-fiction, self-help, business and more

- Books for kids, teens and adults
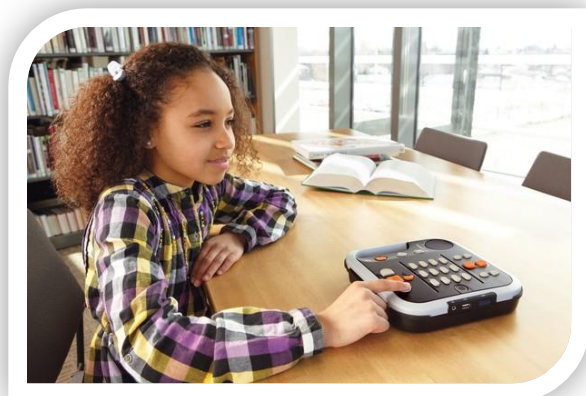
- Books in audio, braille or accessible e-book formats

- Download books or receive home delivery by mail

Information on the availability of the accessibility services are posted on the Library's **website** under Accessibility Services.

Accessible Employment Initiatives

Listed are the deliverable and status updates for accessible employment initiatives.

Deliverable:

Revise existing policy and work processes, where required, to ensure accessibility accommodations are provided to employees across all stages of the employment life cycle.

Status Updates - Accessible Employment Initiatives

When employers create workplaces that are accessible it allows employees to reach their full potential.

The Town of Richmond Hill continues to follow its employment accommodation procedures and processes. Once an individual discloses that they have a disability, the Employment Accommodation Procedures are followed and implemented ensuring all efforts are made to support employees in need of accommodation. An Individual Accommodation Plan is created with participation from the employee and HR staff.

Accessible formats and communication supports to perform job duties are provided and workplace emergency response information is gathered to accommodate employees during an emergency. During Performance Management, Career Development and Advancement an individual's accessibility needs are considered. There is also a Return to Work process and an opportunity for employees to provide feedback if an individual does not feel their need for accommodation is being addressed.

All Job Postings include a statement which says "The Town of Richmond Hill is committed to inclusive, barrier-free recruitment and selection processes. If contacted to anticipate in the recruitment and selection process, please advise HR if you require an accommodation."

Accessible Built Environment Initiatives

Listed below, are the deliverables and status updates for built environment initiatives.

Deliverables:

The Public Spaces Standard requires organizations to incorporate accessibility features when constructing new or undergoing major renovations to public spaces as of January 1, 2016, and to maintain those spaces. Accessible public spaces include specific features that make it easier for everyone to use public spaces; people with disabilities, seniors and families.

There are seven areas covered under the Public Spaces Standard:

1. Recreational trails and beach access routes;
2. Outdoor public use eating areas;
3. Outdoor play spaces;
4. Exterior paths of travel;
5. Accessible parking;
6. Service counters and waiting areas;
7. Obtaining services; and
8. Maintenance.

Status Updates - Built Environment Initiatives

The Town of Richmond Hill has been very proactive in designing and implementing accessible built initiatives into the design of outdoor public spaces. The Town began implementing barrier-free design and access into its parks and publicly accessible urban spaces much before the introduction of the AODA and Design of Public Spaces Standard. The Town's parks continue to comply with the AODA and are among best practices in accessible public spaces. Our outdoor public spaces are also maintained so that the accessibility elements we incorporate remain safe and usable for everyone

Some of the accessibility features of trails, parks, and play spaces include:

- Way finding signage;
- Gently sloped ramps with railings;
- Accessible swing seats;
- Rubberized play surfaces;
- Elevated sandboxes;
- Double width slides that can accommodate a child and caregiver;
- Rest areas for parents and caregivers;
- Accessible seating and eating areas;
- Sensory gardens with a variety of annuals, herbs, perennials and grasses;
- Accessible board game tables;
- Special drum tables; and
- Many more inclusive elements.

Accessibility Features in New Trails, Parks and Play Spaces
Although no new parks were built, funding and conceptual designs for significant improvements to parks were completed in 2017. Many of the improvements include new and redesigned accessibility features.

Lake Wilcox Park and New Youth Area
New features were completed in 2016 and 2017 and include a waterfront promenade, splash pad, playground, washrooms, parking lot, seating and picnic areas. Design began 2016 and was completed in 2017. Construction began 2017 and is planned for completion in 2018. Located at the south end of Lake Wilcox Park, it will include four beach volleyball courts, skateboard area, adventure play equipment area, two multi-use court spaces for basketball, ball hockey, futsal soccer, fitness equipment, Wi-Fi, seating and many more exciting features.

Morgan Boyle Canada 150 Revitalization
This park was re-designed to commemorate Canada's Sesquicentennial (150 year) anniversary. Updates include a new splash pad, decorative metal elements, newly constructed playground, baseball diamond, tennis court and parking lot.

Bradstock Park – Design Complete
Design was completed and funding was secured for Bradstock Park in 2017. We're planning to replace some facilities within Bradstock Park and upgrade them to meet current demands. The new design for the park will add a host of upgraded play

equipment including a disc swing, accessible climbers and slides, sand play equipment, spinners, plenty of built-in seating and a picnic area. A fitness station with a circuit training hub complete with equipment as well as a mirrored kaleidoscope passage will also be featured in the park.

Kings College Park Revitalization Project
Plans began for the redevelopment of King's College Park in 2017. This includes the replacement and updating of playground equipment and improvements throughout the park, which will incorporate accessibility requirements and guidelines. In April 2017, we surveyed the community for feedback on this existing park and a public open house was held on July 6 to review and comment on the proposed design. The project will be compliant with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), and the Canadian Standards Association (CSA), Annex H Guideline.

Trails
In 2017, two new trails were created. The trails followed the accessibility requirements as per the Public Spaces Standard. The Parks Design and Construction Department continued to ensure new trails incorporated proper slopes and ramps, and considered the location and design of rest areas, passing areas, viewing areas, amenities on the trail and any other accessibility features. The trails are listed below:

Lake to Lake Cycling Route and Walking Trail
The Lake to Lake Cycling Route and Walking Trail will be a 121 km recreational and commuter trail connecting Lake Simcoe to Lake Ontario. In Richmond Hill, the fully-realized Lake to Lake Route will span 18km, running north-south from Bloomington Road to Highway 7. As part of the Town's 2017 Capital Program, a 2.26km multi-use pathway was recently constructed in the west boulevard of Leslie Street from Highway 7 to the Beaver Greenway Trail north of 16th Avenue. With this multi-use pathway now open, approximately 6km of the Route in Richmond Hill has been completed. This project has been funded in part by contributions from the Town of Richmond Hill, the York Region and the Government of Ontario.

Newberry Park Trail Rehabilitation Project

As suggested in the Pedestrian and Cycling Master Plan, the existing gravel pathway has been upgraded to asphalt pathway to accommodate recreational cyclists and pedestrians. As part of the project, the existing light fixtures have been upgraded to LED for better accessibility.

Town Facilities and Building Requirements

Although the AODA and Design of Public Spaces Standard contain accessibility requirements for service counters and waiting areas, it does not cover public and private sector buildings. The Ontario Building Code regulates barrier-free requirements and accessible design for new and significantly-renovated buildings.

In 2015, the Building Code was amended to enhance accessibility requirements. The Town's Planning and Regulatory Services Department continues to incorporate the Ontario Building Code and Public Spaces Standard into their building permit requirements.

Similarly, the Town's Facility Design, Construction & Maintenance Services ensures that our offices and facilities continue to comply with the Ontario Building Code. We regularly implement improvements to accessibility in our facilities, such as redesigning Access Richmond Hill's front counter and expanding the Ed Sackfield Arena in 2017.

Access Richmond Hill Front Counter Redesign

In 2017, Access Richmond Hill's front counter was redesigned to become more accessible. The new design has a dedicated accessible station in clear view and with close proximity to the front entrance. Accessible design was also incorporated in the staff workspace, which includes clear design lines and increased open areas.

Ed Sackfield Arena Expansion – Construction Initiated

Connecting with our community is an important part of the design and redevelopment of our recreation facilities. The Ed Sackfield Arena expansion (located on Valleymede Drive, south of 16th Avenue and west of Leslie Street) and the revitalization of the neighbouring David Hamilton Park are two projects where input from the community has helped ensure these two facilities will meet the needs of our residents. The Ed Sackfield Arena expansion will include an NHL-size arena with viewer capacity for 350 people. The accessibility of this facility will improve with six barrier-free player change rooms, two change rooms for referees/coaches, and accessible washrooms. All residents will also be able to enjoy a 180-metre indoor walking track.

Conclusion

The Town of Richmond Hill is committed to ensuring that all Town goods and services are fully accessible to everyone. We had a very productive year and we feel proud to share our accomplishments for 2017. Our staff and the Accessibility Advisory Committee will continue to build an inclusive community by identifying barriers and incorporating accessible practices into our goods and services provided to the public.

We will communicate a renewed approach to implementing the requirements of the AODA in the upcoming 2018-2022 Town of Richmond Hill Multi-Year Accessibility Plan.

Feedback

We welcome your feedback. Please let us know if you have any questions about the 2017 Status Report and any accessibility matters in general. Previous Status Reports and Accessibility Plans are available online at **richmondhill.ca/accessibility.**

If you require this document in an alternative format please feel free to contact us.

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