



The Corporation of the Town of LaSalle

To: Members of the Accessibility Advisory Committee

Prepared by: Linda Jean, Deputy Clerk

Department: Council Services

Date of Report: January 24, 2021

Report Number: CL-01-2021

Subject: 2020 Year End Accessibility Report

Recommendation

That the report of the Deputy Clerk dated January 24, 2021 (CL-01-21) regarding the annual year end Accessibility Report for 2020 be received.

Report

The year-end Accessibility Status Report is an annual update outlining completed and ongoing initiatives meant to improve accessible standards implemented under the Accessibility for Ontarians Disability Act (AODA). The purpose of the status report is to provide awareness of actions taken by the Municipality to prevent and remove barriers while meeting the requirements under the AODA.

In this past year where so many changes have taken place, the Town of LaSalle has made an effort to promote a barrier free and accessible environment, ensuring compliance is met under all regulations of the Act. In addition, through the Town of LaSalle Accessible Customer Service Standards Policy, service delivery is provided in a way that preserves the dignity and independence of all persons with disabilities.

Information and Communications

- Ongoing: continually updating Town website pages and communications to meet accessibility standards. In addition, when adding new documents to the Town website, documents are created in an accessible format

- Ongoing: continued use of SiteImprove software to identify broken links and spelling errors on our website and work with the appropriate departments to correct these errors, the software is also being used to identify accessibility issues beyond only spelling and links
- With the COVID-19 pandemic, an online engagement software has been launched called PlaceSpeak. This has allowed for the sharing of information with the community about Town projects, allowing those interested to provide feedback in response. As we are unable to hold in-person open houses, this software allows us to share relevant information with the public and encourages them to respond at a time that is suitable to meet their individual needs. In addition, the project team leaders are always available by phone and/or email to respond to any inquiries.

Webpage

- Ongoing: continuous training is provided to staff regarding accessible web content using AdobePro to create accessible documents
- Ongoing: the webpage is being continually monitored and attachments being repaired using AdobePro
- Ongoing: Consultants are now required to provide reports and correspondence in an accessible format in order for it to be placed on the website (ie. development charges background study)
- Ongoing: procurement for Accessible Document Creation Software is being undertaken

Design of Public Spaces

In an ongoing attempt to continually remove barriers, the following projects have been undertaken:

- Completed: the installation of accessible sidewalks and crosswalks at the Volmer complex, including the addition of new sidewalks, accessible curb cuts and crosswalks
- Completed: a new crosswalk at Malden and Reaume
- Completed: Heritage Park upgrade including accessible Playground equipment, a rubber playsurface, paved pathways, and new courts
- In progress: playground play surface upgrades at Wilkinson Park, Chapeau Park, Ojibway Oaks Park, Seven Lakes Park, and Col. Bishop Park which include play surface upgrades, and pathways
- In progress: the upgrade of two bathroom facilities, one at Town Hall and one at the Vollmer, including new doors and interior lifts

- Completed: the addition of materials on staircases in Rink A at the Vollmer Complex to ensure slip resistance
- In progress: the addition of materials on staircases in Rink B at the Vollmer Complex to ensure slip resistance
- Ongoing: upgrades to sidewalk approaches including tactile warning plates and proper curb cuts

Access to recreation:

Due to the global pandemic, the Culture and Recreation department was forced to quickly change their program delivery model from in person programming to virtual/online programs. Despite this challenging new way of offering programs, the department was able to offer initiatives that accommodated participants with accessibility needs such as:

- Virtual Fantastic Fridays - this virtual program was geared towards youth ages 6-12 years and was offered virtually. Participants met online to create arts and crafts, participate in games and connect with others of the same age. Department staff consulted with Family Respite Services when developing the program to ensure that all activities would be appropriate and engaging for youth participants with a developmental disability. Family Respite Services was able to encourage their clients to take part in this program which was offered at no cost to participants.
- Cyber Seniors - this program paired Town of LaSalle summer students with local seniors for one-on-one telephone guided computer/smartphone/tablet lessons at no charge to participants. Online accessibility resources was one of the highlighted topics and provided information and teaching on digital tools to assist with common accessibility challenges.
- Sit and Be Fit Fitness - chair fitness programs allows those with limited mobility to experience the health benefits of exercise. Due to the pandemic, in person classes were moved to the telephone. Twice a week, participants could call in and be guided through chair exercises in the safety and comfort of their home.

Grant applications:

- Ongoing: Continue to apply for grants related to accessibility ie: the Inclusive Community Grant Program is in progress
- Completed: Grant received to convert playground bases to accessible woodchips. This proposed project consists of removing the current pea gravel base contained within four community parks/playground areas and installing engineered wood fibre. The parks slated for installation are Jim Chappus Park, Meo Boulevard Park, Ojibway Park and Paul Wilkinson Park

Emergency Response:

- Ongoing: Continue to provide emergency information in formats that are accessible and take into account the various disabilities of members of the public
- Ongoing: Continue to ensure the Everbridge emergency notification system is accessible for the hearing impaired
- Ongoing: Continue to collect individualized emergency response information for new employees

Continuous Improvements:

In 2021 the Town of LaSalle is undertaking a project to improve and enhance the parkland located at St. Clair Park located between St. Clair Avenue and Betts Avenue. The plan includes the installation of a new playground structure including components of a swing, slide and balance feature for children. The structure will be accessible meeting the requirements of the AODA. In addition a wood fiber base will be installed under the play equipment.

Consultations

Each department has provided information regarding respective accessible initiatives undertaken in 2020.

Financial Implications

None.

Prepared By:

Deputy Clerk

Link to Strategic Goals

1. Enhancing organizational excellence - Yes
2. Strengthen the community's engagement with the Town - Yes
3. Grow and diversify the local economy - Not Applicable
4. Build on our high-quality of life - Yes

Communications

Not applicable.

Report Approval Details

Document Title:	2020 Year End Accessibility Report.docx
Attachments:	Media Release - Improvements to St. Clair Park in LaSalle.pdf
Final Approval Date:	Jan 26, 2021

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:



Director, Council Services/Clerk

Agatha Robertson