



STAFF REPORT **Municipality of Wawa**

Maury O'Neill, CAO-Clerk



To: Mayor and Council	Report No.: CAO 2023-13
Date: December 5, 2023	Council Meeting: Dec. 12, 2023

2023 Annual Municipal Accessibility Report

Introduction and Background

In 2005, the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA), was passed by the Provincial Government with the intent of achieving accessibility with respect to goods, services, facilities, employment, buildings, structures and premises by January 1, 2025. The AODA is supported by the Integrated Accessibility Standard Regulation O. Reg. 191/11 (IASR) which consists of standards addressing Customer Service, Information and Communication, Employment, Design of Public Spaces, Built Environment, and Transportation.

Per Section 4 of the IASR, the Government of Ontario, Legislative Assembly and designated public sector organizations shall:

4.(1)(a) establish, implement, maintain and document a multi-year accessibility plan, which outlines the organization's strategy to prevent and remove barriers and meet its requirements under this Regulation;

(b) post the accessibility plan on their website, if any, and provide the plan in an accessible format upon request; and

(c) review and update the accessibility plan at least once every five years.

(3)(a) prepare an annual status report on the progress of measures taken to implement the strategy referenced in clause (1) (a), including steps taken to comply with this Regulation; and (b) post the status report on their website, if any, and provide the report in an accessible format upon request.

The Municipality of Wawa adopted its Multi-Year Accessibility Plan for the period 2019 to 2024. A Municipal Accessibility Plan is required to be updated every five years. Following the annual status report outlining the accessibility initiatives that were completed by the Municipality in 2023, a mandatory requirement of the legislation.

2023 Activities

Over the past year, municipal staff have accomplished the following:

- Provided annual AODA training to all staff, Council and Committees;
- Posting all available job opportunities in accessible formats, offering alternative formats for potential interviews upon request;
- Continued to install and improve accessible sidewalks and curb cuts in the community, particularly along Toronto Avenue;
- Continued with the building review of Town Hall to ensure upgrades may be made to the building to make the building accessible. The OPP a recently vacated the Town Hall and the municipality is now undertaking a review to the building and accessibility requirements;
- Staff continued to live-stream all Council and Committee Meetings via You-Tube. Members of the public can participate in meetings remotely through Zoom or view the meetings through YouTube Channel;
- Installed additional handicap parking and required signage on Broadway Avenue so persons would have access to various businesses and buildings such as the Royal Canadian Legion;
- Installed new benches in the downtown core to provide a resting area for persons requiring places to rest;
- Completed new landfill making it more accessible, especially with designated places for people to walk and park to drop their garbage into a bin versus the original set up with people walking on the uneven face of the landfill site to dispose of their waste;

Plans to improve community accessibility for 2024 include;

- Complete new 2024-2028 Five-Year Accessibility Plan;
- Review AODA policies to ensure accessibility compliance;
- Ensure that new facilities, programs, and services are designed and created considering AODA and regulatory requirements;
- Continue to provide resources and training to staff and volunteers to promote awareness regarding accessibility requirements;
- Work with all staff and Age-Friendly Committees to explore new and innovative methods to remove and prevent barriers to accessibility;
- Increase the use of online customer portals or electronic billing, to send billing electronically to customers.

Recommendation

That the CAO 2023-13 - 2023 Annual Accessibility Report be received by Council for information and posted on the Municipal website.

Maury O'Neill
CAO-Clerk