



REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF PEEL
ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE
AGENDA

Meeting #: AAC-2/2020
Date: Thursday, November 19, 2020
Time: 1:30 PM - 3:30 PM
Location: Council Chamber, 5th Floor
Regional Administrative Headquarters
10 Peel Centre Drive, Suite A
Brampton, Ontario

Members: C. Belleth, C. Chafe, R. Chopra (Chair), P. Crawford-Dickinson, M. Daniel (Vice-Chair), P. Fortini, A. Groves, N. Husain, N. Iannicca, A. Karim, M. Mahoney, A. Misar, I. Sinclair

Due to the efforts to contain the spread of COVID-19 there will be limited public access to the Council Chambers, by pre-registration only. Please email regional.clerk@peelregion.ca to pre-register. The meeting will be live streamed on <http://www.peelregion.ca/>.

1. CALL TO ORDER
2. DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST
3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA
4. DELEGATIONS
5. REPORTS
 - 5.1. Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act – Website Compliance
Presentation by Shauna Marshall, Manager, Marketing and Digital Communications and Michail Karteros, Supervisor, Digital Marketing (Related to 6.1)
 - 5.2. Overview of Key COVID-19 Response Activities to Mitigate Vulnerabilities and Support Accessibility
(For Information)
Presentation by Dr. Nicholas Brandon, Associate Medical Officer of Health and Andrew Cooper, Manager, Regional Emergency Management
(As requested at the September 17, 2020 Accessibility Advisory Committee meeting)

- 5.3. Accessibility Planning Program Update – November 19, 2020
(For information)

6. COMMUNICATIONS

- 6.1. Tammy Fowkes, Deputy Clerk, Town of Amherstburg
Regarding the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* Website Compliance Extension
Request (Receipt recommended) (Related to 5.1)
- 6.2. Matt MacDonald, Director of Corporate Services/City Clerk, City of Belleville
Regarding the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* - Website Funding Support for
Municipalities (Receipt recommended)

7. OTHER BUSINESS

8. NEXT MEETING

Thursday, March 4, 2021
1:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.
Council Chamber, 5th Floor
Regional Administrative Headquarters
10 Peel Centre Drive, Suite A
Brampton, Ontario

9. ADJOURNMENT

REPORT TITLE: **Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act – Website Compliance**

FROM: Kathryn Lockyer, Interim Commissioner of Corporate Services

RECOMMENDATION

That the Minister for Seniors and Accessibility be requested to extend the compliance deadline for website accessibility by one year to January 1, 2022 to allow public sector organization to meet the compliance requirements.

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

- The *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* (AODA) was introduced in 2005 with the goal of creating a fully accessible Ontario by 2025.
- To help achieve this goal, the *Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation* (IASR), was introduced which contains a grouping of five standards that assist to prevent and remove barriers for people with disabilities.
- Under the Information and Communications Standard, there are certain requirements that designated public sector organizations must meet related to website accessibility.
- The timeline for meeting the requirements is January 1, 2021.
- The response to the COVID-19 pandemic caused a shift in focus, priorities and resources, forcing the work related to website accessibility to pause.
- A 12-month extension is being requested.

DISCUSSION

1. Background

The *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* (AODA) has been active in Ontario since 2005. The AODA was introduced with the goal of creating a fully accessible Ontario by 2025. This law mandates that organizations must follow a set of standards to become more accessible to people with disabilities. The AODA applies to all levels of government, private sector, and non-profit organizations.

Under the AODA there are a set of five standards that make up the *Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation* (IASR) (O.Reg. 191/11). The five standards include:

- Customer Service
- Employment
- Information and Communication
- Transportation
- Design of Public Spaces

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act – Website Compliance

Each of these standards include requirements that all organizations must meet, with deadlines specific to an organization's type and size. The Information and Communication Standard of the IASR includes compliance standards specific to websites and web content:

14(2) Designated public sector organizations and large organizations shall make their internet websites and web content conform with the World Wide Web Consortium Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0, initially at Level A and increasing to Level AA, and shall do so in accordance with the schedule set out in this section.

(4) Designated public sector organizations and large organizations for their internet websites shall meet the requirements of this section in accordance with the following schedule:

1. By January 1, 2014, new internet websites and web content on those sites must conform with WCAG 2.0 Level A.
2. By January 1, 2021, all internet websites and web content must conform with WCAG 2.0 Level AA, other than
 - i. Success criteria 1.2.4. Captions (Live), and,
 - ii. Success criteria 1.2.5. Audio Descriptions (Pre-recorded).

The World Wide Web Consortium, in cooperation with individuals and organizations around the world develop Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) with the goal of providing a single shared standard for web content accessibility that meets the needs of individuals, organizations, and governments internationally. This includes making web content more accessible to people with disabilities. It involves the creation of standards that are designed to apply broadly to different Web technologies now and in the future, built with specific success criteria which indicate the level to which web content must comply to be rated as compliant.

2. Current Status

Since the introduction of the new web template in 2015, the Region of Peel has introduced several front-end enhancements to make content more accessible and meet WCAG 2.0 Level AA compliance. In March 2020, work on website accessibility was reduced due to pandemic priorities and redeployed resources who were shifted to manage COVID-19 communications.

Across the organization, staff have historically used PDFs as a way to expedite publishing and secure content, and as such, the scope of inaccessible PDF assets (PDFs that are not in computer-readable formats, not mobile-friendly) on peelregion.ca is vast. The peelregion.ca domain currently does not have a web content lifecycle management system. Without this capability, all content (webpages, images, PDFs, etc.) uploaded to peelregion.ca remain without governance.

An audit of the website was recently conducted by vendor AbleDocs, and data was pulled to inform a PDF reduction and compliance strategy.

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act – Website Compliance

a) PDF Reduction

PDFs have been sorted by Program area, those most accessed, date of posting and by accessibility rating. This information has identified assets that can be safely removed with little to nil impact to partners and residents across the Region of Peel. Meetings are in progress with groups to discuss this process and rethink ineffective practices.

b) Compliance Strategy

New practices to ensure that outdated PDF assets meet compliance include installing automated tools that generate compliant PDF files, on-demand remediation and providing alternative formats of content. A corporate policy to ensure that content placed on the site is accessible is underway.

The COVID-19 response has caused some of this work to pause. A shift in priorities, reallocation of resources and change in focus to address the needs brought on by the pandemic were some of the factors that impeded this work from moving forward. The current status of remediating and/or reducing the number of PDF assets is at 20% complete. An additional 10-12 months is required for a full and comprehensive remediation of these assets and to conform with the legislated requirements.

3. Next Steps

The immediate steps being taken to meet compliance are as follows:

a) New Tools

New tools are being implemented that can produce accessible PDFs that meet requirements. New practices could include:

- Automated tools that crawl site and report on accessibility of documents
- Provide alternative formats of content
- On-demand remediation
- Tools that generate compliant PDF files in one click

In addition to the above, all media assets posted to the site will be reviewed using Accessibility Checkers.

b) Change Management

We are meeting with staff across the organization to brief them on AODA requirements, pull data to inform strategic decisions about reducing scope of PDFs and rethink ineffective practices such as using peelregion.ca as an archive.

c) New Website

Rolling out beginning 2021, the new peelregion.ca offers users a high-contrast design and common look throughout representing the organization's updated Brand. The site, built on Drupal 8 Content Management System (CMS), features usability and accessibility enhancements including the increased usage of breadcrumbs and the ability to reach pages from different places, improved ability to browse with keyboard

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act – Website Compliance

and ease of navigation on mobile devices. The new CMS also features expiration dates to aid with content governance.

d) Digital Champions Network and Publishers

Staff who have been identified as Digital Champions and Divisional Publishers are core audiences that will be leveraged as a way to educate and inform and identify potential challenges and unique attributes of various divisions and departments.

4. Moving Forward

Long term plans include:

- a)** Establish beneficial partnership with Digital Marketing & AAC (beta testing, ongoing consult, etc.).
- b)** Develop corporate policy to ensure content placed on site is accessible.
- c)** Work with stakeholders on records management accountability. Note that new website features expiration dates to aid with content governance.
- d)** Continue to develop guidelines to rethink ineffective practices, like using peelregion.ca as an archive.
- e)** Training sessions advising on methods to create compliant documents with groups that regularly author and publish content.

RISK CONSIDERATIONS

Not meeting the compliance timeline is a legal and financial liability, as well as a reputational risk. A website that is compliant with the AODA is mandatory for businesses over 50 people in Ontario. After January 1, 2021, non-compliance can result in fines of \$50,000 per day for Directors and Officers and fines of up to \$100,000 per day for the organization.

CONCLUSION

The Region of Peel realizes the importance of accessibility and inclusion and ensuring that our properties, including digital, are accessible by persons of all abilities. Ongoing accessibility work on peelregion.ca was paused in 2020 due to the pandemic. Resources were redeployed internally to manage emergency communications. At this time, there is a risk that the Region of Peel could fail to meet the January 1, 2021 legislated requirements and be ordered into compliance, face administrative penalties, or both. While accessibility is based on an 100% accessibility rating, status of this project is as follows:

- Regional Government - 90% compliant with exception to section of legacy HTML and PDFs on Agendas, Minutes and Reports, By-laws and Decisions newsletter
- News & Media - 90%
- Contact Us -100%
- Public Works - 70%
- Human Services - 85%
- Health Services - 20%

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act – Website Compliance

The Region of Peel will continue in its efforts to comply, however, an additional 10-12 months is required for a full and comprehensive remediation of these assets and to conform with the legislated requirements. A one-year extension is being requested.

For further information regarding this report, please contact:

Lisa Duarte, Director, Marketing and Communications, Ext. 4862, lisa.duarte@peelregion.ca

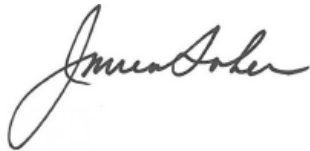
Juliet Jackson, Director, Culture & Inclusion, Ext. 6741, juliet.jackson@peelregion.ca

Authored By: Shauna Marshall, Manager Digital Marketing & Communications and Veronica Montesdeoca, Accessibility Planning Specialist.

Reviewed and/or approved in workflow by:

Department Commissioner and Division Directors.

Final approval is by the Chief Administrative Officer.



J. Baker, Chief Administrative Officer

The accessibility of peelregion.ca

Presentation to Accessibility Advisory Committee

Marketing & Communications
November 2020

AODA compliance

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) states that external websites and web content modified after 2012 must comply with WCAG 2.0 Level AA by **January 1, 2021**.

The following presentation spotlights how we are preparing to meet this deadline.



Our journey

We have improved peelregion.ca in the following ways:

1) Skip navigation

Those using assistive technologies had navigation read to them each time a page loaded, forcing users to listen or tab through the same items repeatedly. We implemented code to intercept this process. When selected, the code skips navigation and places users at page content.

2) Link anchor labels

We ensure that link anchor labels are contextual in the content of the link's destination. Example:
Our website contains information about healthcare.

Corrected: Our website contains information about healthcare.

3) Focus and tabbing

Users can tab through all links on a page and are presented with visual cues on linked elements.

Our journey – page 2

4) Colour contrast

We ensure sufficient colour between background on which text is placed so that sighted users can read content properly.

5) Alt text

Images are tagged with blank alt text. This is to ensure that screen readers ignore decorative images that are not relevant to page content. Generally we avoid images with text, or that are crucial to communicating the message on the site.

6) Unique link text labels

We make sure that we don't have identical linked text that go to different targets (have different URL's). For example, we would not link “contact us” twice on the page, one instance going to waste@peelregion.ca and the other to housing@peelregion.ca. Alternatively, we note contact Waste and the other contact Housing.

Our journey – page 3

7) Aria labels

Sometimes it's not possible to have different linked text. Aria labels allow unique labels to be placed on identical links. The content is grouped under relevant headings, for the sighted, and an additional attribute is placed in the link tag.



8) Live chat

Introduced in spring 2019, Live Chat sits on our Contact Us page and features an added usability menu.

New website

- Rollout in phases beginning mid 2021.
- High contrast, design and common look represents updated Brand.
- Usability and accessibility enhanced by breadcrumbs and ability to reach pages from different places.
- Improved ability to browse with keyboard.
- Ease of navigation on mobile.
- AAC to test beta version.



Asset management

- Our biggest challenge is the scope of inaccessible PDFs.
- Staff have historically used PDFs as a way to expedite publishing and secure content.
- Our website has a history of being used as an archive.
- The current CMS does not have a content lifecycle management system.



Preparing for AODA

- Audit site and reduce scope of PDFs.
- Continue to develop guidelines to rethink ineffective practices.
- Develop corporate policy to ensure content placed on site is accessible.
- Use Accessibility Checkers and conduct training sessions.
- Work with stakeholders on records management accountability.
- Leverage Digital Champions Network (160 employees in all Departments) as way to educate and inform.
- Work with vendor to produce accessible PDFs that meet requirements.



Expert consult

We're working with AbleDocs to help produce accessible PDFs.

AbleDocs is the vendor of record for Ontario.ca as well as other municipalities including Toronto, Ottawa, Burlington and Oakville.

New practices could include:

- Automated tools that crawl site and report on accessibility of documents
- Providing alternative formats of content
- On-demand remediation
- Tools that generate fully-compliant PDF files in one click



New intranet

- While AODA does not require Intranets to be accessible, we are employing strategies to ensure Pathways+ is.
- Microsoft SharePoint is accessible out of the box.
- We have minimal customization and the content that is customized is accessible.
- SharePoint has a built-in screen reader.
- Microsoft has a disability answer desk providing help to users on Office, Windows and SharePoint. We now link to this resource on Pathways+.



Partnership with AAC

We would like to establish an effective partnership with the AAC to ensure that Peel's digital tools continue to allow for meaningful participation by persons of all abilities as well as seek alliances for new ideas, insights and innovation.

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Thank you!

Presentation to Accessibility Advisory Committee

Marketing & Communications
November 2020



For Information

REPORT TITLE: **Overview of Key COVID-19 Response Activities to Mitigate Vulnerabilities and Support Accessibility**

FROM: Kathryn Lockyer, Interim Commissioner of Corporate Services
 Nancy Polsinelli, Commissioner of Health Services
 Lawrence C. Loh, MD MPH FCFP FRCPC FACPM, Medical Officer of Health
 Janice Sheehy, Commissioner of Human Services

OBJECTIVE

To provide an overview of actions to address issues concerning accessibility and the needs of vulnerable populations during the Region's COVID-19 response.

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

- The consequences of COVID-19 have surpassed any previous response by the Region of Peel to a significant event or emergency.
 - To facilitate and coordinate response efforts, the Peel Public Health Emergency Operations Centre was activated on January 23, 2020, followed by the activation of the Regional Emergency Operations Centre on March 10, 2020.
 - On March 18, 2020, a Regional Declaration of Emergency was made due to consequences of COVID-19.
 - Through collaboration with internal and external stakeholders, a wide range of measures have been implemented or supported to assist vulnerable populations and those with accessibility needs.
 - The Region will continue to coordinate and support response and recovery activities for the foreseeable future, including measures to mitigate the risk to vulnerable populations and individuals with accessibility needs.
-

DISCUSSION

1. Background

In late January 2020, Regional Emergency Management supported Peel Public Health's activation of their Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) due to the developing concerns related to COVID-19. In the following weeks, Regional Emergency Management established regular contact with various internal and external Emergency Management stakeholders, including Peel Regional Police and the local municipalities.

As the footprint of COVID-19 expanded with associated issues and concerns, so did the scope of activities undertaken by the Public Health Emergency Operations Centre and Regional Emergency Management. Where possible, guidance was prepared and distributed to stakeholders to support their organizational and operational changes. In

Overview of Key COVID-19 Response Activities to Mitigate Vulnerabilities and Support Accessibility

consultation with Public Health, Regional Emergency Management provided information to transit operators, including accessible transit, to mitigate the risk of exposure to both clients and operators. Further guidance was provided to develop and implement service delivery changes to mitigate the risk of further COVID-19 spread.

On March 10, 2020, the Regional Emergency Operations Centre (REOC) was activated to ensure a corporate response to address the evolving consequences of COVID-19 within the Region of Peel. On March 18, 2020, a Regional Declaration of Emergency was made and remains in effect. This marked the first time a Declaration of Emergency has been made by the Region of Peel.

Since the activation of the REOC, numerous operations, communications, planning processes and stakeholder consultations have been undertaken by REOC Command, staff, task forces and associated working groups. There has been extensive collaboration with other levels of government, local municipalities and community partners. This extensive collaboration resulted in numerous effective measures to cope with COVID-19 including a community response table to assist agencies in need and for the distribution of personal protective equipment.

Wherever possible, the actions of the REOC have worked to address the interests and concerns of all stakeholders and populations within the Region of Peel including those of vulnerable populations and persons with accessibility needs.

Support to Vulnerable Populations and Those with Accessibility Needs

The initial priority of both the REOC and Public Health was to implement measures to “flatten the curve” through both Public Health guidance and REOC supported community efforts such as the Community Response Table and the Temporary Isolation and Recovery Sites. These approaches supported the Region’s vulnerable populations, and individuals with accessibility needs along with community support and advocacy partners in mitigating against further COVID-19 spread.

Five high-level approaches were taken to support in-need populations. These included:

a) Collaboration with Community Stakeholders

On March 23, 2020 the Region of Peel convened a virtual Community Response Table (CRT) to support Peel's most vulnerable residents during COVID-19. The goal of the CRT is to help local agencies support vulnerable and at-risk populations by responding to the needs emerging as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The CRT affords stakeholders an opportunity to better understand how COVID-19 has impacted vulnerable populations in the region and to collaborate on solutions.

Stakeholders at the CRT include the local municipalities, agencies and local community partners representing community health, social service organizations, not-for-profits, and Region of Peel staff. In total, over 160 organizations make up the CRT. Members initially met three times each week and now meet weekly.

The REOC has been able to support the CRT through the provision of messaging and public health guidance and in some cases, with the distribution of community donations. Several donations of non-medical personal protective equipment (PPE) received through

Overview of Key COVID-19 Response Activities to Mitigate Vulnerabilities and Support Accessibility

the REOC's Logistics Section were distributed to CRT members and other community stakeholders.

b) Temporary Isolation and Recovery Sites

Human Services established Isolation and Recovery Sites for homeless and shelter system clients to ensure that proper isolation and care could be provided. This approach also provided safeguards to minimize the potential spread of COVID-19 through the permanent shelter locations.

A model of care was developed and implemented with input and guidance from Peel Public Health and other healthcare organizations. Through this effort, individuals who were required to isolate, could do so with suitable supports on hand and available to them. In the few instances where an individual tested positive for COVID-19, the recovery site provided a full suite of health and social supports to help aid in their recuperation.

Currently this program remains active with the previously separate isolation and recovery locations having been consolidated into a single location. The consolidation has enabled the streamlining of operations, easing many of the logistical and resourcing challenges associated with operating several sites concurrently.

c) COVID-19 Emergency Funding

In March 2020, the Region's Community Partnerships Division in Human Services established a COVID-19 Emergency Fund. The fund provides additional funding in response to the growing needs in Peel's not-for-profit sector due to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Of the 65 not-for-profits provided funding to date the following service sectors were supported:

Peel's Service Sector	Percentage
Food security	29%
Services for families, children and youth at-risk	17%
Health and Multiservice agencies	14%
Services for women and victims/survivors of domestic violence	12%
Services for those precariously housed and the homeless population	12%
Services for vulnerable older adults and those with physical and/or intellectual disabilities	10%
Services for Newcomers	3%
Volunteer Programming	3%

To be responsive to Peel's urgent community needs during the pandemic, 78 per cent of the COVID-19 funding supported:

- a) the immediate needs of low income and vulnerable clients including access to food, hygiene and other basics.
- b) 4-8 weeks of direct service delivery due to the economic impact faced by not-for-profits during COVID-19.

This immediate funding supported items such as, meal cards, food hampers, water, cleaning supplies, hygiene and toiletry kits, diapers and formula. As face to face frontline delivery

Overview of Key COVID-19 Response Activities to Mitigate Vulnerabilities and Support Accessibility

shifted to online and phone supports, 22 per cent of COVID-19 funding supported information technology and operational costs for not-for-profits to adapt service delivery due to program closures and increased service demands.

d) Peel Housing Corporation Supports

Peel Housing Corporation's (PHC) tenant population is comprised of almost 25 per cent seniors. With 28 seniors buildings located across Peel, health and safety considerations were a top priority for these vulnerable residents. Programming in common rooms delivered by community partners was put on hold to minimize risk of exposure to COVID-19. As a result, many of tenants lost an important social aspect of their regular lives. To mitigate this, PHC has developed programs and enhanced communication to offer new connections during the pandemic.

Regular communications were developed to provide information and assistance to those in need. Tenant newsletters were created, which included a seniors resource specific section, as well as regular updates on PHC operations and stories from the tenant community. In the early days of the pandemic, a senior call out strategy was deployed, with staff calling all seniors living in PHC buildings, offering a general wellness check and connections to supports and services within the community. If a tenant indicated concern regarding access to essential supplies or otherwise indicated a lack of any social connect, they were added to a call back list so that PHC staff could check back up on them. For ongoing connection, PHC partnered with Volunteer Services in Health Services, for the Seniors Connect Volunteer Telephone program that provides a free weekly phone call with a friendly volunteer to share in the warmth and connection of conversation. In addition, an onsite volunteer-run Ambassador Program has been developed at three senior sites, which offer physically distanced in person connection and information on services such as food, prescription delivery and online programming. The program has also provided information about topics relevant to seniors such as falls prevention, mental health and wellbeing, healthy eating and fire safety. PHC also reopened community gardens and cooling centres during the summer with enhanced safety measures which followed Public Health guidelines.

As Peel Region is facing another rise in COVID-19 cases and communities are facing more restrictive measures, PHC is planning a second wellness check initiative for our seniors population to ensure that they continue to do well and to update them on any new available supports and programs. PHC will continue to explore partnerships and opportunities to enhance connections for seniors as the pandemic continues.

e) Coordinated Marketing and Communication Approaches

With any emergency event, effective communications have always been a fundamental requirement throughout the full duration of the event. Given the scope and scale of the COVID-19 response, the need for coordinated messaging by all stakeholders was quickly identified and has been a significant operational undertaking of the REOC.

The Region of Peel online Virtual Assistant allows residents and members of the community to ask questions and access automated assistance to locate up-to-date information. The application updates information based on trends with respect to information that is most frequently requested by the community.

Overview of Key COVID-19 Response Activities to Mitigate Vulnerabilities and Support Accessibility

Wherever possible, messaging and materials have been prepared and developed to account for the needs of many diverse groups. High-contrast infographics, translated content and concise language are a few of the many considerations that designers consider when developing COVID-19 information materials.

A Communications and Marketing Task Force, comprised of Region of Peel, local municipal, public health and health sectors, and when needed, first responder stakeholders, meets regularly to address any critical messaging issues and coordinate communications efforts to the extent possible. This Task Force continually assesses the effectiveness of any communications efforts and implements new approaches when necessary.

f) Peel Public Health's COVID-19 Response

As part of Peel Public Health's case, contact, exposure and outbreak management, accessible services to individuals is done on a case-by-case basis according to the individual's needs. If accessible services are required, the case and contact management team reach out to partners to problem solve based on the individual's needs. Examples of what the case and contact management team has done in the past include advocating for continued services in the home while isolating, providing direction on what personal protective equipment service providers should wear, accessing food deliveries, alternate methods of testing (in home) or working with TransHelp to ensure transportation options with appropriate precautions.

Peel Public Health also provides advice for infection prevention and control and manages outbreaks in congregate living situations including long-term care homes, retirement homes, group homes and shelters. Peel Public Health works with onsite staff to ensure that vulnerable residents are protected; testing for COVID-19 is available on site when needed; appropriate precautions are taken to reduce transmission of the virus; and the homes are able to screen and respond to any potential cases of infection.

Peel Public Health works with regional partners, Ontario Health and hospital managed assessment centres to plan community testing, including initiatives to serve vulnerable populations.

In addition to the COVID-19 response, Peel Public Health maintains critical public health programs and services at reduced capacity. This includes critical services such as management of urgent reportable diseases (e.g. Tuberculosis and Hepatitis B and C), harm reduction, and telephone-based infant feeding supports. The available critical programs are maintaining regular processes to support accessible services to those clients who require it (e.g. accessible format of print and web information, translation services).

CONCLUSION

The Regional response to COVID-19 has surpassed the scale and scope of all previous significant events or emergencies, with supports having been mobilized across every department and division since March. Wherever possible, efforts to address issues related to accessibility and vulnerable populations have, and continue to be, factored into the Regional and Public Health response.

Overview of Key COVID-19 Response Activities to Mitigate Vulnerabilities and Support Accessibility

Overall lessons learned from the COVID-19 response will be prepared at a later date and will include both successes and areas of improvement for supporting vulnerable populations and individuals with accessibility needs during significant events or emergencies.

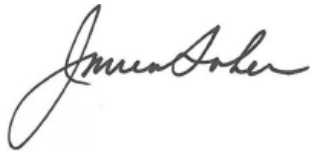
For further information regarding this report, please contact Andrew C Cooper, Manager, Regional Emergency Management, Ext.4437, andrew.cooper@peelregion.ca and/or Dr. Nicholas Brandon, Associate Medical Officer of Health, Nicholas.brandon@peelregion.ca.

Authored By: Andrew C Cooper, Manager, Regional Emergency Management and Inga Pedra, Advisor, Public Health

Reviewed and/or approved in workflow by:

Department Commissioners, Division Directors and Medical Officer of Health.

Final approval is by the Chief Administrative Officer.



J. Baker, Chief Administrative Officer

For Information

REPORT TITLE: **Accessibility Planning Program Update – November 19, 2020**

FROM: Kathryn Lockyer, Interim Commissioner of Corporate Services

OBJECTIVE

To provide an update of the activities undertaken by the Region of Peel Accessibility Planning Program and the Accessibility Advisory Committee subsequent to the September 17, 2020 Accessibility Advisory Committee meeting (the Committee).

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

- The Accessibility Advisory Committee and Accessibility Planning Program have been involved in various activities during this period, which are categorized as follows:
 - Consultation and compliance support provided to Regional Programs;
 - Participation in community events.
 - This report also highlights upcoming events and observances.
-

DISCUSSION

1. Background

The main objective of the Region of Peel's Accessibility Planning Program (the Program) is to ensure that Regional programs, services and facilities continue to be inclusive and accessible for persons with disabilities. In order to accomplish this objective, the Program works collaboratively with all Regional departments and the Region of Peel Accessibility Advisory Committee.

2. Activity List

a) Consultation and Compliance Support

i) Update to the AAC Terms of Reference

- In the fall of 2019, Regional Council revised the process to appoint community members.
- This change ensures consistency for the appointment of community members to all applicable Regional Council committees through a standardized process.
- It also allows for Council involvement earlier in the proceedings.
- The process to appoint public members to a committee is set out in the committee's terms of reference.
- The most notable change as it pertains to the AAC terms of reference is that the AAC Interview Panel shall now include the AAC Chair and/or Vice-Chair.

Accessibility Planning Program Update – November 19, 2020

- The terms of reference for the appointment of public members to the AAC has been revised accordingly and is attached as Appendix I.

ii) Recruitment - Town of Caledon AAC Representative

- The AAC application form and public notice are under review to ensure that it is consistent with current legislation and updated AAC terms of reference.
- A new application will be developed to ensure an accessible recruitment process.
- Recruitment and interview processes are also being revised in light of the current pandemic situation to allow for virtual recruitment.
- The Committee will be notified once advertisement goes public.

iii) AODA Compliance – Accessible Websites

- The AODA compliance for accessible websites is January 1, 2021.
- In order to meet this time, the Region of Peel has taken many steps to make our website accessible, including the revamping of our website with various accessibility features.
- A full report titled “Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act – Website Compliance” is listed on the November 19, 2020 AAC agenda.

b) Participation in Community Events

i) World Alzheimer’s Day

- On September 21, 2020 the Region of Peel observed World Alzheimer’s Day.
- The Region of Peel commemorate this day through a story on Pathways, the Region’s intranet site.
- The aim was to educate staff and raise awareness about Alzheimer disease and challenge the stigma and discrimination associated with this disease.

c) Upcoming Events and Observances

i) 2020 International Day of Persons with Disabilities (IDPD)

- The Region has set aside December 2, 2020 to commemorate this day.
- We will be working with the AAC Event Planning Working group to assist with planning this observance.
- More information will be shared as it becomes available.

CONCLUSION

This report summarizes the activities and consultations that the Accessibility Planning Program (the Program) has been involved in, together with participation of members of the Accessibility Advisory Committee (the Committee) since September 17, 2020. The Committee and the Program continue to engage in activities that support the Region of Peel’s primary accessibility objective of ensuring Regional programs, services and facilities are inclusive and accessible for all persons with disabilities and respond to the evolving community needs, including during times of a pandemic.

APPENDICES

Appendix I – AAC Terms of Reference

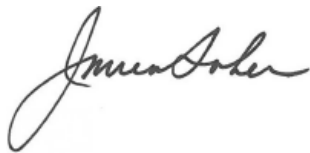
For further information regarding this report, please contact Juliet Jackson, Director, Culture & Inclusions, Ext. 6741, juliet.jackson@peelregion.ca.

Authored By: Veronica Montesdeoca, Accessibility Planning Specialist

Reviewed and/or approved in workflow by:

Department Commissioner and Division Director.

Final approval is by the Chief Administrative Officer.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. Baker", is positioned above a horizontal line.

J. Baker, Chief Administrative Officer

**TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE
REGION OF PEEL
ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE**
(As amended by Resolution 2019-1156)

1. Committee Name

The committee shall be known as the Region of Peel Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC).

2. Mandate

The Region of Peel Accessibility Advisory Committee shall act in an advisory capacity to Region of Peel Council as outlined in the Region of Peel Procedure By-law 9-2018, section 9.2.2.

The mandate of the AAC is as follows:

- To advise Regional Council on ways to improve opportunities and remove barriers for persons with disabilities through the identification and removal of barriers with respect to programs and services delivered by the Region of Peel.
- To advise Regional Council on the requirements and implementation of the Accessibility Standards under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* (AODA) and the preparation of accessibility reports.
- To advise Regional Council each year on the preparation, implementation and effectiveness of the Region of Peel Multi-Year Accessibility Plan.
- To review in a timely manner site plans and drawings described in section 41 of the *Planning Act*.
- To review in a timely manner all site plans and drawings as set out in the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulations (IASR) of the AODA as pertaining to the Design of Public Spaces Standards: exterior paths of travel, rest areas, and on-street parking spaces.
- To assist with planning and participate in community events and trade fairs to promote accessibility; and
- To perform all other functions specified in the *Ontarians with Disabilities Act* (ODA), AODA and subsequent regulations.

3. Definitions

“Barrier” as defined by the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act*, section 2 means:

anything that prevents a person with a disability from fully participating in all

aspects of society because of his or her disability, including a physical barrier, an architectural barrier, an information and communication barrier, an attitudinal barrier, a technological barrier, a policy or practice.

“Disability” as defined in the Ontario Human Rights Code means:

- (a) any degree of physical disability, infirmity, malformation or disfigurement that is caused by bodily injury, birth defect, or illness and, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, includes diabetes mellitus, epilepsy, a brain injury, any degree of paralysis, amputation, lack of physical co-ordination, blindness, or visual impediment, deafness or hearing impediment, muteness or speech impediment, or physical reliance on a guide dog or other animal or on a wheelchair or other remedial appliance or device;
- (b) a condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability;
- (c) a learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language;
- (d) a mental disorder; or
- (e) an injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the *Workplace Safety and Insurance Act*, 1997.

4. Reporting Function

The AAC shall report to Regional Council through the minutes to a Regional Council Agenda.

5. Membership

The AAC shall be comprised of a minimum of ten to a maximum of fourteen members in total. A majority of the members shall be persons with disabilities. To ensure that the AAC is able to carry out its duties each of the three local municipalities in the Region of Peel (Brampton, Caledon and Mississauga) shall have representation: one from among the elected membership and one from among the non-elected membership.

i) Elected Members

A minimum of three Regional Councillors, one being from each local municipality (Brampton, Caledon and Mississauga) and the Regional Chair (ex-officio*) shall comprise the elected representation on the AAC. Vacant positions from among the elected member component of the Committee shall be filled by seeking interest from among members of Regional Council, and approved by Council resolution.

If the Regional Chair is a member of the committee he/she shall be counted in determining the size of the committee.

ii) Non-Elected Members

There shall be a minimum of seven non-elected members of the AAC appointed by Regional Council and who fulfill the eligibility requirements as set out in section 14, Eligibility Requirements.

Each local municipality (Brampton, Caledon and Mississauga) shall have, at a minimum, one non-elected member.

There may be up to two members who represent a group or organization that acts on behalf of persons with disabilities residing in the Region of Peel and shall be counted as a member of the Municipality in which the organization serves its clients.

Any recruitment that occurs for non-elected member positions shall adhere to the *Recruitment of Non-Elected Members Procedure*, included as Schedule A.

6. Term of Appointment

The term of appointment for Committee members, both elected and non-elected members, shall coincide with the term of Regional Council.

The term of appointment for Committee members, both elected and non-elected members, is limited to two consecutive terms not to exceed eight years. Following a break in service of at least one term, or at the will of Council a member may be reappointed but may not serve more than two terms or eight years upon reappointment.

Members will continue to serve on the Committee past the expiration of their term until they are reappointed or replaced.

7. Committee Chair and Vice-Chair

The AAC shall elect a Chair and Vice-Chair from among its membership at the first meeting subsequent to Council and Committee appointments for a new term of Council and at the first meeting subsequent to mid-term Council and Committee appointments (thus being generally a two-year term).

8. Membership Responsibilities

Members are expected to be familiar with the ODA, the AODA, and subsequent regulations as well as the Terms of Reference for the Committee. Members will be expected to contribute their expertise actively during meetings of the AAC.

Members are required to declare any situation that creates a conflict of interest between the member's personal or family financial interests and the interests of the Region of Peel in relation to any proposal for reducing barriers that may be under consideration and refrain from participating in the discussion and decision making in respect of that matter. A financial interest in common with all persons who have similar disabilities, without more, is not a conflict of interest.

Each member of the AAC is an independent member of the Committee and does not represent the concerns of only one disability, geographic area or group. Members of the AAC will work together for the purpose of developing a common approach that is reasonable and practical.

The AAC may form specific ad hoc working groups as may be practical to address specific accessibility action items. A Chair shall be selected from amongst the membership for any ad hoc working group and the Chair of the ad hoc working group shall be a voting member of the AAC.

Members will participate in training as deemed required by the Regional Clerk.

Members will be subject to the requirements of the *Membership Responsibility Agreement*, included as Schedule B.

9. Frequency of Meetings

Meetings of the AAC will be held in accordance with the Region of Peel Procedure By-law 9-2018, section 4.2.

10. Quorum

Quorum for the AAC shall be set at five members. Of the five members required for quorum, one shall be a member of Council.

11. Procedure

The Chair, or in the absence of the Chair, the Vice-Chair, or in the absence of both a member appointed by those in attendance at the meeting as Acting Chair, shall preside at all meetings of the AAC. The meetings shall be conducted in accordance with the rules of procedure applicable to committees of Regional Council, including the power to waive the rules of procedure so that meetings may be conducted informally as necessary, provided that all decisions shall be approved by the indication of a majority of those members in attendance at the meeting.

The basis of the Committee rules shall be the Region of Peel Procedure By-law 9-2018.

12. Staff Resources

The Regional Clerk will provide administrative support to the Committee. This will include preparing the minutes, agendas, meeting preparations and other duties as provided in the Region of Peel Procedure By-law 9-2018. The Regional Accessibility Planning Specialist will provide advisory support to the Committee.

13. Remuneration and Expenses

Members of the AAC will serve without remuneration. Non-elected members of the AAC shall be eligible for reimbursement of expenses incurred which are deemed necessary for full participation in the Committee (such as, sign language interpretation services, braille translation services, transportation, and support care services).

14. Eligibility Requirements

Persons eligible for appointment to the non-elected membership of the AAC shall be those who are:

- A qualified elector of the Region of Peel pursuant to the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*; and/or
- A person who is a qualified elector in Ontario, that represents a group or organization that acts on behalf of persons with disabilities that reside in the Region of Peel;
- Not an elected official of Regional Council or of the Council of a municipality in the Region of Peel; and
- Not an employee of the Region of Peel or of a municipality in the Region of Peel

Preference will be given to individual applicants who have specific skills, knowledge or experience which may be an asset to the AAC.

EFFECTIVE DATE	December, 2019
LAST REVIEW DATE	March, 2018
LAST UPDATE	April, 2013

Regional of Peel Accessibility Advisory Committee
Recruitment of Non-Elected Members Procedure in Accordance with
Resolution 2019-1156

A new non-elected member of the Region of Peel Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC) may be appointed at any time within the term of Regional Council as outlined in the following procedure.

1. The prospective candidate must express their interest in participating in the AAC. They can do so by submitting a resume and/or cover letter to the Regional Clerk.

The prospective member must meet the following minimum eligibility requirements as outlined in the Terms of Reference.

The prospective candidate MUST be:

- i. A qualified elector in the Region of Peel pursuant to the *Municipal Elections Act*, 1996 OR
- ii. A qualified elector in Ontario that represents a group or organization that acts on behalf of persons with disabilities that reside in the Region of Peel.

The prospective candidate CANNOT be:

- i. An elected official of Regional Council or of the Council of a municipality in the Region of Peel.
 - ii. An employee of the Region of Peel or of a municipality in the Region of Peel.
2. The prospective candidate must be familiar with the *Ontarians with Disabilities Act* (ODA), the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* (AODA) and subsequent regulations.
 3. The Regional Clerk, the Director of Culture and Inclusion and the Accessibility Planning Specialist will prepare and post an advertisement and application form based on the approved eligibility criteria. The advertisement will be posted for a minimum of two weeks.
 4. Applications must be received in the Office of the Regional Clerk by the set due date; no applications will be accepted after the due date.
 5. The Regional Clerk, the Director of Culture and Inclusion and the Accessibility Planning Specialist will prepare a skills matrix to measure applicant skills and experience with respect to the approved eligibility criteria.
 6. The Regional Clerk, the Director of Culture and Inclusion and the Accessibility Planning Specialist will review applications for minimum eligibility requirements and provide scoring on the skills matrix.
 7. The AAC Interview Panel shall be comprised of the Regional Clerk, the Director of Culture and Inclusion, the Accessibility Planning Specialist and the Committee Chair and/or Vice Chair.
 8. The interview panel will choose applicants to be interviewed.

9. Interviews will be scheduled in cooperation with the interview panel for candidates meeting the eligibility requirements and scoring highest on the skills matrix.
10. The Director of Culture and Inclusion and the Accessibility Planning Specialist (with the assistance of Human Resources staff) will prepare interview questions based on the approved eligibility requirements.
11. The interview panel will select the top candidates based on results of the skills matrix and interview questions.
12. Subsequent to completion of the interviews, the Director of Culture and Inclusion shall forward a report to Regional Council regarding the suitability of the prospective candidates and their rankings. Information from all eligible candidates will be made available to Council for review.
13. Regional Council shall appoint all community members by resolution.
14. The term of membership for new members appointed through this process will coincide with the term of Regional Council in which the appointment occurs.

EFFECTIVE DATE	December, 2019
LAST REVIEW DATE	March, 2018
LAST UPDATE	January 2020

SCHEDULE B

Region of Peel Accessibility Advisory Committee
Membership Responsibility Agreement

The Region of Peel Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC) assists Council in removing barriers for persons with disabilities to access Regional programs, services, and facilities.

Individual members are subject to the following responsibilities in carrying out their duties as a member of the AAC. Failure to fulfill these responsibilities may result in the removal of the member from the AAC.

- 1) A member shall make every effort to attend AAC meetings and the meetings of the ad hoc working group to which they are appointed.
- 2) A member shall promptly notify the Regional Clerk or their designee if they are not able to attend a regular scheduled meeting.
- 3) A member shall make every effort to actively participate in all AAC meetings and in the ad hoc working group to which they are appointed.
- 4) A member is responsible for complying with the AAC Terms of Reference and the Region of Peel Procedure By-law 9-2018.
- 5) An AAC member shall not speak as a representative of the AAC before any organization or professional association unless expressly authorized to do so. Requests to speak on behalf of the committee must be forwarded to the Director of Culture and Inclusion; and the AAC Chair or Vice-Chair if the request to speak is from the AAC Chair. Committee members speaking at conferences or meetings who are not representing the Region of Peel must not appear to represent the opinion or policy of the Region of Peel and may not present any confidential information gained as a result of their membership on the AAC.
- 6) Members approached by the media shall refer all inquiries to the Region of Peel's Marketing and Communications division.
- 7) Members should recognize that information discussed at AAC meetings is made available to the public.
- 8) AAC members shall not use confidential information shared with the AAC about Regional initiatives or use Regional material for business uses without written consent from the Region of Peel.

Name of AAC Member

Member Signature

Date



The Corporation of The Town of Amherstburg

RECEIVED
October 14, 2020
REGION OF PEEL
OFFICE OF THE REGIONAL CLERK

September 21, 2020

VIA EMAIL

The Right Honourable Raymond Cho, Minister for Seniors and Accessibility
College Park 5th Flr, 777 Bay St,
Toronto, ON
M7A 1S5

Re: AODA Website Compliance Extension Request

At its meeting of September 14, 2020, Council passed the following for your consideration:

Resolution # 20200914-281

- "1. **WHEREAS** Section 14(4) of O.Reg 191/11 under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act requires designated public sector organizations to conform to WCAG 2.0 Level AA by January 1, 2021;
2. **AND WHEREAS** the municipality remains committed to the provision of accessible goods and services;
3. **AND WHEREAS** the municipality provides accommodations to meet any stated accessibility need, where possible;
4. **AND WHEREAS** the declared pandemic, COVID-19, has impacted the finances and other resources of the municipality;
5. **AND WHEREAS** the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act contemplates the need to consider the technical or economic considerations in the implementation of Accessibility Standards;
6. **BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED THAT** the municipality requests that the Province of Ontario extend the compliance deadline stated in Section 14(4) of O.Reg 191/11 to require designated public sector organizations to meet the compliance standards, by a minimum of one (1) year to at least January 1, 2022; **AND**,
7. **BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED THAT** the municipality requests that the Province of Ontario consider providing funding support and training resources to meet these compliance standards."

REFERRAL TO _____
RECOMMENDED _____
DIRECTION REQUIRED _____
RECEIPT RECOMMENDED ☒ _____

The impacts of the pandemic on municipal finances and resources affect the ability of municipalities to meet the January 1, 2021 deadline for full compliance with WCAG 2.0 Level AA.

We humbly request the Ontario government consider an extension request, in addition to financial support and training due to the unprecedented impacts of the global pandemic.

Regards,



Tammy Fowkes
Deputy Clerk, Town of Amherstburg
(519) 736-0012 ext. 2216
tfowkes@amherstburg.ca

cc:

The Right Honourable Doug Ford, Premier of Ontario
The Association of Municipalities of Ontario
All Ontario Municipalities



RECEIVED
November 3, 2020

REGION OF PEEL
OFFICE OF THE REGIONAL CLERK

CORPORATE SERVICES DEPARTMENT
TELEPHONE 613-968-6481
FAX 613-967-3206

City of Belleville

169 FRONT STREET
BELLEVILLE, ONTARIO
K8N 2Y8

October 28, 2020

The Honourable Doug Ford
Premier's Office, Room 281
Legislative Building, Queen's Park
Toronto, ON M7A 1A1

Dear Premier Ford:

**RE: Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act – Web-site Support
New Business
10, Belleville City Council Meeting, October 26, 2020**

This is to advise you that at the Council Meeting of October 26, 2020, the following resolution was approved.

“WHEREAS Section 14(4) of O. Reg 191/11 under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act requires designated public sector organizations to conform to WCAG 2.0 Level AA by January 1, 2021; and

WHEREAS the City remains committed to the provision of accessible goods and services; and

WHEREAS the City provides accommodations to meet any stated accessibility need, where possible; and

WHEREAS the declared pandemic, COVID-19, has impacted the finances and other resources of the City; and

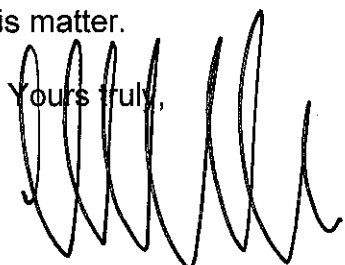
WHEREAS the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act contemplates the need to consider technical or economic considerations in the implementation of Accessibility Standards;

REFERRAL TO _____
RECOMMENDED _____
DIRECTION REQUIRED _____
RECEIPT RECOMMENDED ☒ _____

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED THAT the Corporation of the City of Belleville requests that the Province of Ontario consider providing funding support and training resources to municipalities to meet these compliance standards; and

THAT this resolution be forwarded to the Premier of the Province of Ontario, Prince Edward-Hastings M.P.P., Todd Smith, Hastings – Lennox & Addington M.P.P., Daryl Kramp, the Association of Municipalities of Ontario and all municipalities within the Province of Ontario.”

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Yours truly,


Matt MacDonald
Director of Corporate Services/City Clerk

MMacD/nh

Pc: AMO

Todd Smith, MPP Prince Edward-Hastings
Daryl Kramp, MPP Hastings – Lennox & Addington
Councillor Thompson, City of Belleville
Ontario Municipalities