

For Information

REPORT TITLE: Accessibility Planning Program Update – November 18, 2021

FROM: Gary Kent, CPA, CGA, ICD.D, Chief Financial Officer and Commissioner of Corporate Services

OBJECTIVE

To provide an update on the activities undertaken by the Region of Peel Accessibility Planning Program and the Accessibility Advisory Committee, subsequent to the September 16, 2021 Accessibility Advisory Committee meeting.

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.
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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 (the Committee).

2. Activity List

a) Consultation and Compliance

i) AODA Corporate Training Refresh

- Part of the requirements of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (AODA), is that all Region of Peel employees must complete mandatory accessibility training on the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation and the Human Rights Code as it pertains to persons with disabilities.
- In April 2020, the Region of Peel launched a new training module to meet this requirement.
- The new module is concise and provides auditing capabilities to ensure we are meeting legislated requirements.

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- The pandemic has highlighted gaps in the provision of services to the public, in particular persons with disabilities and the retraining of staff will further assist in the removal of barriers.
- The re-launch of the training is planned for the fall of 2021 targeting staff that have not had the opportunity to take the new module, however, the date may be pushed to January 2022 depending on organizational capacity as we continue to focus on the pandemic.

ii) 2021 Accessibility Compliance Report

- Relevant program areas have been consulted for confirmation of AODA compliance status.
- The Region of Peel will be reporting compliance to all questions posed in the Provincial questionnaire, except for the question related to website compliance.
- The report must be filed by December 31, 2021 deadline.
- A full report titled “2021 Accessibility Compliance Report – Ministry for Seniors and Accessibility” is listed on the November 18, 2021 AAC agenda.

iii) Discover Ability Network (DAN)

- At the May 20, 2021 AAC meeting, a presentation was received from the Ontario Chamber of Commerce (OCC) on the Discover Ability Network (DAN).
- DAN is a free online portal and resource that connects businesses directly with persons with disabilities seeking employment.
- Staff was requested to investigate a potential partnership between the Region of Peel and the Ontario Chamber of Commerce regarding joining the DAN program.
- On October 5, staff met with staff from the OCC and was provided an overview of the services offered through DAN which includes an online job portal and resources as well as training on various accessibility-related topics.
- The Region of Peel agreed to pilot the online job portal with selected job postings.

iv) Digital Accessibility Planning

- As part of the work to meet legislated website compliance, the Region of Peel is undertaking a number of strategies and initiatives to ensure we are meeting the requirements.
- A related presentation is being provided at the November 18, 2021 AAC meeting.

b) Participation in Community Events

i) National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM)

- The Region of Peel commemorated National Disability Employment Awareness Month in October.
- This observance aims to increase public awareness of the positive outcomes of hiring persons with disabilities in Canada and the positive impact persons with disabilities have when they are employed.
- The Region observed this month through an internal awareness campaign that informed staff of the reality that persons with disabilities face in obtaining

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employment as well as the positive contributions employees with disabilities make to Canadian workplaces.

ii) Treat Accessibly Initiative

- On September 16, 2021, the Committee received a presentation regarding the Treat Accessibly campaign.
- The movement aims to promote accessible trick-or-treating for children with disabilities through the use of an accessible trick-or-treating lawn sign, which encourages the removal of barriers to create an inclusive and accessible Halloween experience.
- In support, the Region of Peel launched an awareness campaign on October 7th with a story posted to our intranet site and shared the information through our social media channels.

c) Upcoming Events and Observances

i) 2021 International Day of Persons with Disabilities (IDPD)

- The Region of Peel will be once again observing December 3rd as International Day of Persons with Disabilities as proclaimed by the United Nations.
- This day aims to promote the full and equal participation of persons with disabilities and to take action for the inclusion of persons with disabilities in all aspects of society.
- The Region will be commemorating the day through an internal education and awareness campaign.
- More details will be shared as planning gets underway.

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 16, 2021. 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.

Authored By: Veronica Montesdeoca, Accessibility Planning Specialist