



## Municipality of Northern Bruce Peninsula Council Report

**Report Number:** DC 21-01

**Subject:** Accessibility Annual Status Report for 2020

**From:** Tessa Swanton, Deputy Clerk/Accessibility Coordinator

**Date:** January 25, 2021

**Recommendation:**

THAT Council receives Deputy Clerk Report No. 21-01, Accessibility Annual Status Report for 2020, as information.

**Background:**

The purpose of the Accessibility Annual Status Report for 2020 is to highlight some projects the Municipality has undertaken in 2020 to improve accessibility by both removing and preventing barriers within our facilities, programs, and services.

A copy of this report will be posted on the [municipal website](#) under Municipal Services, Accessibility.

To request an alternative format of this report, please contact Tessa Swanton, Deputy Clerk, at [deputyclerk@northernbruce.ca](mailto:deputyclerk@northernbruce.ca)

**Comments:**

**Accessibility Projects in 2020**

Website AODA Compliance

- As outlined within the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, the Information and Communications Standards section reflects that “by January 1,

2021, all internet, websites, and web content must comply with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0, Level AA. These guidelines make websites more accessible for people who use computers differently because of their disabilities.”

- Staff are pleased to announce that webpages within the municipal website are AODA compliant. All webpages were scanned by our website provider to detect any noncompliance and all necessary changes have been completed. Staff have detected some accessibility non-compliance within third-party documents posted on the website; all third-party non-compliant documents have been removed and replaced with website links, where applicable (all non-compliant third-party documents must be removed to comply with new regulations). Links to third-party websites are permitted despite whether the linked website is accessible.
- Staff have compiled a list of all attached documents within the website and will be individually scanning and updating municipal documents to meet the new accessibility requirements.
- An accessible template for Council reports has been created and staff are encouraged to scan their finished reports through the accessibility checker on Word prior to approval.
- Staff have been working on creating accessible fillable forms through Adobe Acrobat and are building fillable forms into the website that are submitted online.

#### Accessibility Requirements for Site Plan Control Agreements

- The Clerk has mandated that accessibility requirements be considered when preparing new Site Plan Control Agreements, such as the need for accessible parking spaces.

#### Portable Washrooms

- Portable washrooms continue to be placed throughout the Municipality. A goal for 2021 is to ensure that there is at least one accessible portable washroom at each location where portable washrooms are being placed.

#### New Accessible Customer Service Window and Wall in Front Office Space

- The COVID-19 pandemic has created challenges and resulted in the need to adapt how we conduct daily municipal operations. Once fully installed, the accessible customer service window in the Municipal Office will allow everyone to access a receptionist.
- The accessible customer service window was framed and drywalled at the end of December 2020. The window will be installed in early 2021. The customer service window complies with accessible service requirements as outlined within the Design of Public Spaces Standard, AODA and the Ontario Building Code

(OBC). There is an accessible route to the customer service window and the height from the finished floor to the top of the counter falls within the height requirement of between 710 mm (28 in.) and 865 mm (34 in.). The clear knee space requirement measurement (enough room under the counter for the knees of a person sitting in a wheelchair) will be determined once the counter is installed and comply with accessible design requirements. The accessible customer service window will be clearly identified with signage. The counter surface will have a minimum width of 920 mm (36 inc.).



- A wall was constructed in the front office space of the Municipal Office that eliminated a trip hazard while creating more useable space for staff.



## Initiatives Planned for 2021

### Training for all Municipal Office Staff on Accessible Documents (March 2021)

- Continuous accessibility training is essential for municipal staff as regulations are frequently changing. The creation of documents, records and messages is a common task that occurs daily for office staff. All staff would greatly benefit from training on how to create and remediate accessible documents in Microsoft Office and Adobe Acrobat programs. This training will ensure that accessible documents are being created across all departments.
- The newly formed Social Media and Communication Internal Committee will frequently update the website to make it more user-friendly. The Committee will be meeting regularly in 2021 to discuss the website, the Facebook page and creating/remediating accessible documents.

### Review of the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan 2017-2021

- The current Multi-Year Accessibility Plan will require updating in 2021. The new 2022-2026 plan will outline new accessibility regulations; summarize the Accessibility Standards as outlined in Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005; identify initiatives undertaken from 2017-2021; indicate accessibility plans for 2021 onward; include updated charts of municipal facilities and their barrier issues; and an overview of types of disabilities. Meetings will be held to gather feedback from staff, Council, and members of the public including persons with disabilities that can be incorporated into the 2022-2026 plan.

### Review of By-law No. 2016-31 and 2016-45

- In early 2021, the Accessibility Coordinator will review and update By-laws 2016-31 and 2016-45. Attached schedules (forms and other documents) will also be reviewed and updated. The by-laws focus on integrated accessibility standards and procedures and customer service and the use of assistive devices.

### File an Accessibility Compliance Report (early/mid 2021)

- As a public-sector organization, the Municipality is required to submit an Accessibility Compliance Report every other year. The report will confirm our compliance with the accessibility requirements under AODA.

### Accessible Sidewalks

- Council approved the extension of the Moore Street sidewalk from 5 Moore Street (Bruce Peninsula District School) to the intersection of Joseph Street. The project will be going to tender soon.
- Council supported staff removing trip hazards in the Alexander Street sidewalk, including returning locations to a gravel state, where necessary, until such time as watermain replacements on Alexander Street can be funded and scheduled.

## Facilities

- Change the locks on some facility entrances and install touchpads.
- Install automatic door openers on some facility doors.
- Pending funding and Council approval, renovate the Lion's Head Arena/Community Centre by relocating the dressing rooms to the main floor of the building.
- Install an outward facing door at the Tobermory Community Centre serving as a separate entrance to the Information Centre.
- Install a kayak launch ramp compliant with AODA regulations at the Lion's Head Harbour.

## Online Booking System for Municipal Facilities

- A new accessible online booking system for municipal facilities is planned to launch in 2021. The system improves accessibility by allowing customers to book when it is most convenient including outside of regular office hours (online 24/7). Persons with disabilities will be able to complete a booking for the campground online without having to use a telephone or send an email.

## Purchase of Ergonomic Office Chairs

- Ergonomic office chairs have been purchased for some office staff that will assist in better sitting posture and any accessibility needs. New staff members will also be provided with an ergonomic office chair. Pending the lifting of COVID-19 restrictions, an Ergonomics Study will be conducted for office staff.

## Complaints

No formal accessibility complaints were filed in 2020.

## Attachments:

Nil

## Budget Implications:

Funds required to meet accessibility standard requirements have been allocated annually through the accessibility budget and other applicable departments.

## Municipal Strategic Commitment:

- Well managed and fiscally responsible municipal government is enhanced
- Health, safety, and education of the community are enhanced
- Citizen involvement is enhanced

- Economic development strategies are enhanced
- The option(s) recommended creates value across all strategic priorities
- The option(s) recommended makes Northern Bruce Peninsula a municipality of choice for high performance public servants

Respectfully submitted by Tessa Swanton, Deputy Clerk

Approved by Peggy Van Mierlo-West, Chief Administrative Officer