2019 Status Report
for the Richmond Hill
Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

January to December 2019

Moving Toward an Accessible Richmond Hill

An Update on Actions by Richmond Hill to Prevent and Remove Barriers for Persons with Disabilities from the 2018-2022 Richmond Hill Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

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2019 Status Report of the Richmond Hill Accessibility Plan

Message from the Mayor

I am pleased to share Richmond Hill's 2019 Accessibility Status Report, highlighting progress achieved on our Multi-Year Accessibility Plan.

Richmond Hill continues to strive to be an accessible, inclusive community and I am once again proud we have achieved all objectives set out in the plan for this year. Of note, the City has made significant changes to our employee recruitment program to make the process more accessible to all; provided automated access to accessible document templates for all staff; and piloted a new summer camp – Camp AdaptAbility – offering an opportunity for teens with disabilities to have an enjoyable camp experience in a specialized setting. The City also carefully considered accessibility needs in the design and construction of the Ed Sackfield Arena and the Oak Ridges Library. You will find details of these initiatives and more throughout this report.

I would like to thank our dedicated staff for their continued work in making Richmond Hill a place for all to enjoy. Together, we are building a community where respect and dignity for people of all abilities is part of everything we do.

2018 to 2022 Accessibility Advisory Committee

Richmond Hill is dedicated to ensuring our community is accessible in all areas of service provided to the public.

The 2018 to 2022 Accessibility Advisory Committee serves to advise Council and staff on the requirements and implementation of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA.) The Committee meets throughout the year to discuss AODA-related issues and to review:

- Site plans for new and existing municipal buildings;
- Plans for new and renovated parks and trails;
- Significant renovations in municipal buildings;
- Plans for accessible municipal elections;
- Accessibility policies and procedures, including those required by the standards made under the AODA;
- Any other work related to accessibility and/or the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act.

The 2018 to 2022 Accessibility Advisory Committee is comprised of 11 members:

- Councillor Cilevitz (Chair)
- Lopa Banerjee (Vice Chair)
- Bernardina Bathory
- Paul Edwards
- Edwin Greenfield
- Marisol Pestana
- Kidambi Raj
- Lisa Rosenberg
- Patricia Rybka
- Paul Scotland
- Simon Waldman

Richmond Hill is grateful for their commitment, time and expertise.

Background and Legislation

The *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (AODA) established the Integrated Accessibility Standards, which contain requirements for Customer Service, Information and Communications, Employment, Transportation and the Design of Public Spaces. The five standards under the AODA include:

- **Customer Service Standard** - Provide accessible customer service to people with disabilities so that they can access the same goods and services as everyone else;
- **Information and Communication Standards** – Create, provide and receive information in ways that are accessible for people with disabilities;
- **Employment Standard** – Employers provide accessibility support to employees across all stages of the employment life cycle;
- **Transportation Standard** – Transportation providers will make their services and vehicles accessible to people with disabilities;
- **Public Spaces Standard** – Newly constructed and redeveloped public spaces must be designed to meet specific accessible design criteria. Public spaces include recreational trails, beach access routes, outdoor public use eating areas, outdoor play spaces, exterior paths of travel, accessible parking and service related elements as well as maintenance of the public spaces.

Under the *Ontario Human Rights Code*, Richmond Hill has ongoing obligations to ensure that as an organization we prevent discrimination. We incorporate the AODA and recognize that additional accommodation measures that go beyond the AODA may be required under the Ontario Human Rights Code.

Richmond Hill's Implementation of AODA

Richmond Hill is committed to ensuring we meet all deliverables required under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA). In order to ensure we continue to comply with accessibility requirements, we created a new five-year accessibility plan. We continue to update policies, practices and procedures, and ensure that staff follows specific requirements so that everyone remains committed to incorporating accessibility into all areas of service provided to the public.

We have completed the second year of the 2018-2022 Richmond Hill Multi-Year Accessibility Plan. The plan outlines activities and initiatives Richmond Hill departments are going to implement to meet AODA legislated requirements and provide programs and services that are more accessible to our community. Notably, we completed all deliverables planned for 2019.

Update on 2019 Accessibility Initiatives

Richmond Hill continues to undertake and complete a number of initiatives in our ongoing strategy to prevent and remove barriers for persons with disabilities that live, work and travel in Richmond Hill. Each initiative outlines:

- **Deliverable:** What the City is legislated to do under the AODA and what we committed to in our Multi-Year Accessibility Plan (2018-2022).
- **Status Update:** What we accomplished in 2019 related to the specific initiative.

Initiative: Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

Listed below is the deliverable and status update for the 2018-2022 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan.

Deliverable

Richmond Hill is mandated to establish, implement, maintain and document a multi-year accessibility plan that is reviewed and updated at least once every five years. We are also required to prepare an annual status report on the measures and steps taken to implement the plan.

Status Update - Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

The 2018-2022 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan is an outline of Richmond Hill's strategy to prevent and remove barriers and meet the requirements under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), including our obligations under each standard (Customer Service, Information and Communications, Employment, Transportation and Public Spaces).

Richmond Hill has met all deliverables outlined in the 2018-2022 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan for 2019. The many accomplishments achieved in 2019 reflect our staff's commitment to accessibility.

This is the second year of the new plan we are reporting on, as per AODA requirements to provide an Annual Status Report. Explained in the report is our progress on committed to initiatives as well as any additional removal of barriers and improved access for people with disabilities.

Initiative: Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities on City Committees

Listed below is the deliverable and status update for the inclusion of people with disabilities on City Committees.

Deliverable

In order to include persons with disabilities on City committees, we plan to encourage persons with disabilities or representatives of persons with disabilities to become citizen members of committees of Council.

Status Update - Inclusion on City Committees

In February 2019, the new Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC) was appointed. Committee membership is comprised of more than 50% of people with disabilities. Many of the remaining members support people with disabilities and are extremely familiar with barriers that persons with disabilities face. The AAC provides valuable input on accessible design and development for newly constructed and renovated facilities. They also advise Council and staff on the AODA requirements.

In addition to the AAC, we continue to encourage people with disabilities to join other committees.

Initiative: Accessibility Policies

Listed below is the deliverable and status update for accessibility policies.

Deliverable

Develop and maintain policies as to how the City will achieve accessibility through meeting the requirements of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA). Policies will cover each of the standards (Customer Service, Information and Communications, Employment, Transportation and Public Spaces). Other procedures related to each of the standards should be developed, reviewed and revised as required.

Status Update - Accessibility Policies

Richmond Hill has an Accessibility Policy covering each of the standards. The policy outlines how we will meet our obligations under the AODA with specific procedures explaining the process staff will follow. The City also has Accessible Customer Service Procedures that outline the detailed processes and accommodations pursuant to the Accessible Customer Service Standards. Staff are provided with a copy of the Accessibility Policy and Accessible Customer Service Procedures as part of their orientation process. Policy and procedures are reviewed continually with any changes being communicated to staff.

Initiative: Accessible Procurement

Listed are the deliverable and status updates for accessible procurement.

Deliverable

Develop processes to incorporate accessibility criteria and features when procuring or acquiring goods, services or facilities. This includes accessibility features when designing, procuring or acquiring self-service kiosks. When purchasing goods, services or facilities, organizations must incorporate accessibility considerations.

Status Update - Accessible Procurement

Richmond Hill incorporated accessibility considerations and guidelines in all procurement matters, where possible. The City's Accessibility Policy states that "when procuring goods, services, self-service kiosks or facilities, the City shall incorporate accessibility criteria and features, unless it is not feasible (practicable). If not practicable, the City shall provide an explanation, upon request."

The Procurement Department continued to implement several initiatives that continued to incorporate accessibility considerations in procurement, such as:

- An online electronic bidding system (bidsandtenders.ca), which is AODA-compliant and removes physical barriers for persons with disabilities that participate in procurement activities.

- Implementing the City's Procurement and Financial Control By-Laws, which were made AODA-compliant.

- When AODA requirements were identified as a requirement for award of any contract, Procurement worked with the Client Division to ensure the selected vendor met requirements.

The City continued to mandate accessibility training for all employees, agents and volunteers providing goods and services on behalf of the City. Vendors must provide the City with proof of training completion upon request.

We also continued to follow Ontario's **accessibility rules for procurement** when coordinating the procurement of goods and services.

Initiative: AODA and Accessible Customer Service Training

Listed below is the deliverable and status update for accessibility training.

Deliverable

Develop, deliver and coordinate mandatory accessibility training applicable to all employees, volunteers and those that make decisions on behalf of the City.

Status Update - Accessibility Training

Richmond Hill continued to provide training to all full time and part time employees on the Customer Service Standard and the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation.

The training is interactive and engaging and covers:

- Understanding disabilities;
- Barriers to accessibility;
- Working tips for communication;
- General requirements of accessibility standards;
- Richmond Hill's accessibility policies and procedures;
- Ontario Human Rights Code;
- Accessibility Challenges.
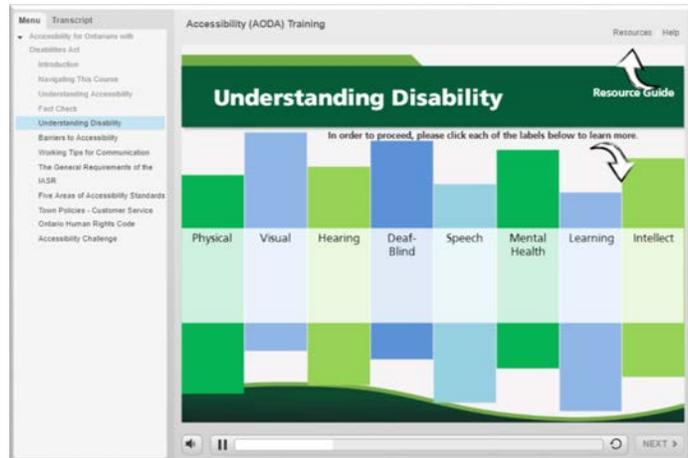
Upon completion of the training, a certificate is produced as proof of training, as per the legislated requirements to maintain records of training. For new staff, the above training is part of their orientation.

Initiative: Accessible Feedback Process

Listed below are the deliverable and status updates for the accessible feedback process.

Deliverable

Richmond Hill's feedback process shall be provided in an accessible manner.

Status Updates - Accessible Feedback Process

For a person with a disability, it is important that a way to provide feedback is available and that there are various ways to do so. Richmond Hill provides a number ways to provide feedback, including through email, calling, visiting in person and/or faxing. Alternatively, a person may wish to choose our online process through the "Contact Us" page or "Feedback" tab on our website.
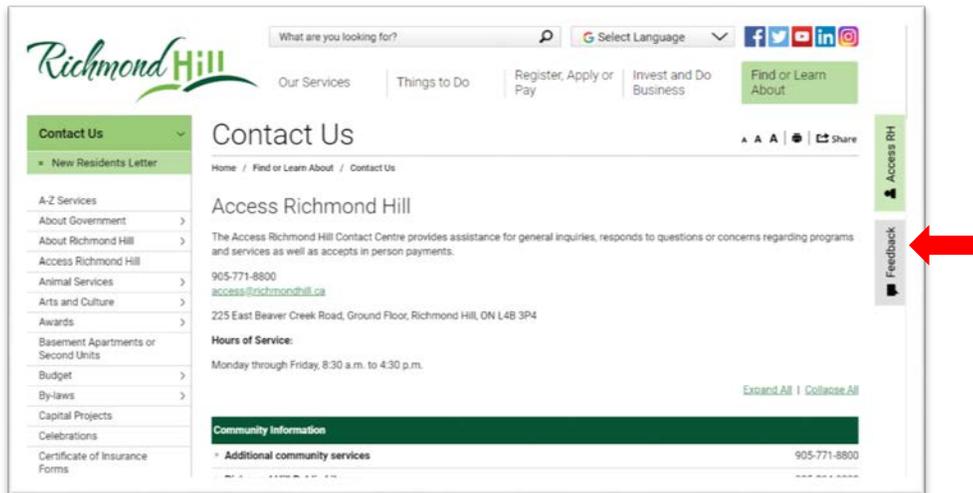
Additionally, residents may complete and submit the Accessible Customer Service Feedback Form located on Richmond Hill's website, which will assist in monitoring and improving our services.
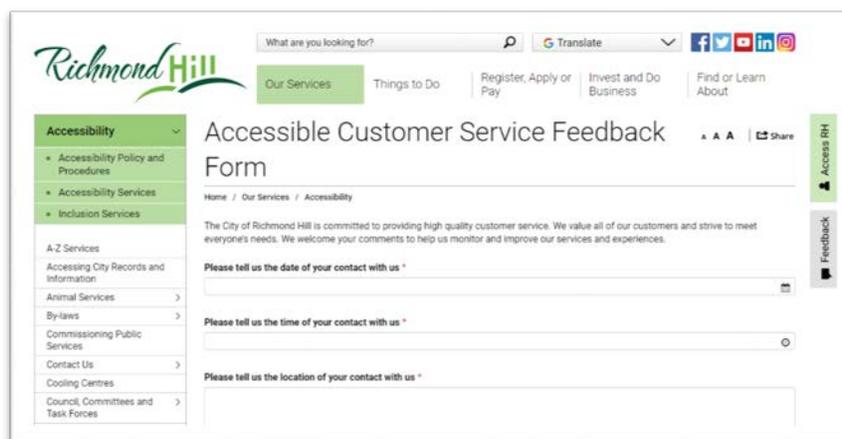
Initiative: Alternative Formats and Communication Supports

Listed below are the deliverables and status updates for alternative formats and communication supports.

Deliverables

Provide or arrange for accessible formats and communication supports when requested. Review relevant policies, continue to reinforce accessibility training and develop guidelines so that we are ensuring we are able to provide alternative formats and communication supports.

Status Updates - Accessible Formats and Communication Supports

Richmond Hill has policies, procedures and guidelines that staff follow so that they ensure the public is being provided with accessible formats and communication supports upon request.

An example of an alternative communication support is providing UbiDuo to customers with disabilities. Access Richmond Hill Advisors continue to provide access to an UbiDuo communication device that enables Deaf, deafened and hard of hearing individuals to communicate with each other face to face. There is also one workstation designed to serve persons with disabilities.

Documents are available and provided in alternative formats when requested at a comparable cost to other requests. An example of an alternative format is a document in large print. Over the last three years, we have been providing training to staff on how to provide accessible formats and communication supports. Staff continue to be trained on accessible documents.

In addition, the following initiatives continued to be offered to staff in 2019:
- Human Resources delivered workshops on how to develop accessible Word, Excel and PDF documents.
- Communication Services hosted Web Design workshops that reviewed best practices for uploading accessible materials to the website.
- The Office of the Clerk developed new accessible corporate templates, such as agendas, minutes, staff reports, memos, letter, by-laws, policies and procedures.
- The Office of the Clerk provided and coordinated training on eScribe, an accessible agenda/meeting management program for staff and Council.
- Communication Services completed the accessible Microsoft Word template in 2018 and updated the template in 2019. All Richmond Hill employees now have an accessible template with City branding when they open up a Word document.

Staff continued to follow 2016 City guidelines on:
- "How to Write for the Web" Style Guide
- AODA Web Accessibility Toolkit
- Accessibility Document Guide

Initiative: Emergency Procedures, Plans or Public Safety Information

Listed below are the deliverable and status updates for emergency procedures, plans or public safety information.

Deliverable

Organizations must make available to the public its emergency procedures, plans or public safety information in an accessible format upon request.

Status Updates - Emergency Procedures, Plans or Public Safety Information

The City had numerous documents and pieces of information for consideration under this section as per the AODA.

The City ensured that they provide any emergency procedure, plan or public safety information in an accessible format, upon request. People can easily access emergency information through the City's website. Despite being upon request, the City has proactively produced select documents in accessible formats, including information on how to make an emergency kit and the Emergency Preparedness Guide.

When a person with a disability visits the municipal offices to access the City's services, Access Richmond Hill's front desk has "Notify of an Emergency" pagers available for any person with a hearing impairment that requires notification of an emergency while on the premises.

Richmond Hill's Public Fire and Life Safety Education Program

Richmond Hill's Public Fire and Life Safety Education program helps to protect our community by teaching residents about fire and injury prevention and other safety and emergency topics. There are two full-time Fire and Life Safety Educators to help all residents learn how to make a safe community.

There are a number of programs, presentations and brochures available:

- Arson Prevention Program for Children
- Juvenile Fire-Setter Intervention
- Arson Prevention Program for Elementary Schools
- Fire Safety Program for Elementary School Children
- Safety for Seniors Program
- Smoke and Carbone Monoxide Alarm Program
- Fire Prevention Program
- Emergency Preparedness Awareness Sessions
- Fire Extinguisher Training
- High Rise Buildings - Fire Safety Presentations
- Hospital and Long Term Care Facility Services

- RiskWatch Injury Prevention Program
- Workplace Safety Programs

Initiative: Accessible Website and Web Content

Listed below are the deliverable and status updates for accessible websites and web content.

Deliverable

In accordance with the Information and Communications Standard, the City must ensure its website is accessible. Website accessibility includes further enhancements, improvements and ensuring compliance with WCAG, 2.0, Level A and working towards Level AA.

Status Update - Accessible Website and Web Content

In 2016, Richmond Hill launched its new accessible website. The website was compliant with WCAG 2.0, Level A and we worked towards achieving Level AA. In 2017, we were pleased to report compliance with a higher standard, WCAG 2.0 Level AA. This was in advance of the 2021 legislated deadline and was a significant accomplishment for Richmond Hill. Richmond Hill's website continues to be compliant with WCAG 2.0 Level AA.

Accessibility features of our website include:
- **Accessible HTML content:** Accessible fonts and headings are used throughout content, as well as alternative text on photos, images and links.
- **Distinguishable content:** There are minimum standards for contrast with the ability to resize text.
- **Predictable Web Pages:** All pages have consistent top and left navigation and the contact information is at the bottom of pages.
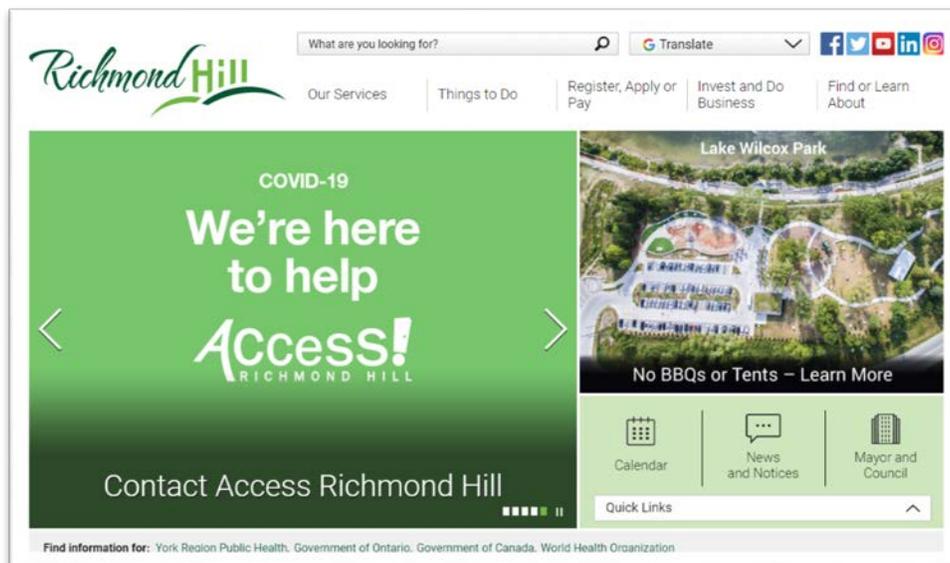
In 2016, PDF documents on the website that were created after January 1, 2012 were made accessible in compliance with the Information & Communications Standard. PDF documents on the website continue to be remediated and made accessible upon request from the public and staff.

Where possible, the City aims to make new content accessible before posting to our website. The Communication Advisors and/or the Web and Social Media Coordinator have processes in place to review all content for accessibility before publishing on the website.

BrowseAloud

The City's website, including Richmond Hill Public Library's website, includes BrowseAloud, a high-quality speech reader to assist when browsing the web. It helps those with dyslexia, literacy difficulties, mild visual impairments and those for who English is a second language.

York Maps

York Maps web application complies with WCAG 2.0 Level AA and meets international standards for accessibility. It enables full keyboard control, is screen reader friendly, and contains other features to make mapping technology more accessible to the largest possible audience, regardless of their level of ability.

eScribe Meeting Management Software

In 2017, the City implemented eScribe software to manage materials for its Council and committee meetings. City staff does its best to ensure agendas and meeting materials uploaded to eScribe and shared with the public are accessible. Additionally, eScribe meets the WCAG 2.0 Level AA standard and is accessible to persons with disabilities. eScribe continued to be used for Council and committee meetings in 2019.

Initiative: Public Library Services

Listed below are the deliverables and status updates for public library services.

Deliverables

Provide access to existing accessible materials. Make information about accessible materials publicly available known and upon request provide this information in accessible formats with appropriate communication supports.

Status Update – Richmond Hill Public Library Services

Public libraries have a desire and a legal responsibility to provide accessible Library services to everyone in their communities, which includes:

- A robust selection of books and information resources produced in accessible formats; and
- Training opportunities for Library staff in the provision of accessible services.

Richmond Hill Public Library (RHPL) has four facilities, including Central Library, Oak Ridges Library, Richmond Green Library and Richvale Library. All buildings are

physically accessible with wheelchair ramps and elevators where required. Entrances are equipped with automatic doors and parking spots are available for those with accessible parking permits.

Collections

The Library offers a number of various accessible formats of printed materials, including Large Print, Braille, audio and electronic. There is also a Visiting Library Service available for those that are homebound.

To assist with the borrowing of materials, the Library offers adjustable self-check units that customers can adjust in height for their needs. Also introduced at all sites were accessible kiosks as information/way-finding aids.

Website

Available on the Library website, RHPL provides BrowseAloud, a high-quality speech reader to assist those with dyslexia, literacy difficulties, mild visual impairments and where English is a second language when browsing the web.

The Library also offers MagnusCards, a free digital app that uses pictures and text to provide instructions on using Library services for those with cognitive special needs, including autism.

In 2018, the Library launched a redesigned website, which is accessible in accordance with the specifications of the Web Content Accessible Guidelines (WCAG) and the AODA Information and Communications Standard.

Programs

The RHPL offers a number of programs for those with disabilities, including the Adult Friendship Club, the Friendship Colouring Club and the Vision Loss Book Club.

Staff Training

All Library staff has received customer service, information/communication and employment standards training in compliance with the *Accessibility for Ontarians Disability Act* for the provision of accessible services.

In 2018, Library staff also received training on creating accessible documents. These accessible documents facilitate inclusiveness and enhance access to Library services

and resources in a way that respects the independence of all customers, including those with disabilities.

Adaptive Technology

Central Library has two accessible workstations offering adjustable tables, joystick-style mouse, zoom text, large keyboard, SARA Reading (scans and reads books), smart view CCTV Unit (enlarges text), accessible software programs like Job Access With Speech (JAWS) and BrowseAloud, and a Victor Reader (portable digital book player).

In addition, Central Library has an accessible workstation complete with large keyboard, joystick and software (i.e. zoom text and JAWS), allowing work to be completed by patrons who require such services.

The other accessible station has a SARA reader and SmartView Synergy CCTV unit that is on an adjustable table for raising and lowering in height. The SARA station can scan and read a book to an individual in one of 18 languages, and patrons have the ability to change the reading speed and volume. The SmartView Synergy CCTV is for people with macular degeneration, diabetic retinopathy or other low vision eye conditions as it can enlarge the text.

Richmond Green Library has an assistive technology station. It includes a Big Keys keyboard, a SARA CE reader and document scanner, a Smartview Synergy Pi document magnifier, Dragon Speak speech recognition software, JAWS screen reader software, and Zoom Text (a screen magnifier for computer systems.)

New Oak Ridges Library

Construction of the new Oak Ridges Library is complete. Presentations were made to the Accessibility Advisory Committee to review the schematic design of the Oak Ridges Library for compliance with new accessibility amendments to the Ontario Building Code, the Design of Public Spaces Standard and overall accessibility.

Accessibility features incorporated into the building include:

- Universal washrooms
- Barrier-free washrooms in both male and female washrooms
- Accessible employee washroom
- All ramps leading into the building are 1:15
- Minimum corridor width is 1,500 mm
- Door operators are used for majority of exterior doors
- Accessible ramp to lowered sunken children's area
- Accessible and van accessible parking with shared access aisle
- Accessible exterior paths of travel
- Clear and open interior routes

In Partnership with the Centre for Equitable Library Access (CELA)

Richmond Hill Public Library partnered with the Center for Equitable Library Access (CELA). In Ontario, the Centre provides books and other accessible resources in French and English, and offers a borrowing service to schools for students who have a print disability. Access to the CELA collection is available to people who are unable to read conventional print due to a disability. The Centre provides public libraries with a collection of over 230,000 books, magazines, newspapers and described videos in a choice of formats for people with a print disability. The selection includes:
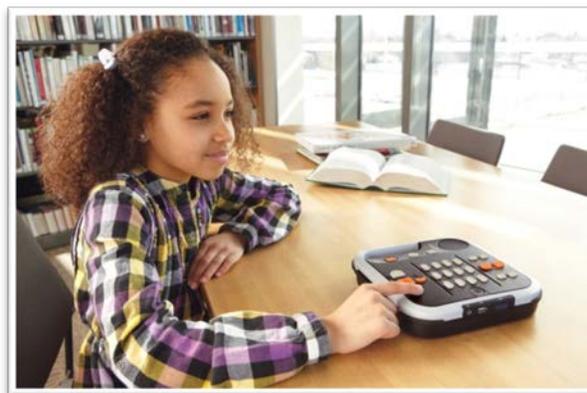
- Current bestsellers, award-winners and classics
- Fiction, non-fiction, self-help, business and more
- Books for kids, teens and adults
- Books in audio, braille and accessible e-book formats
- Downloadable books
- Books delivered to the home by mail

The Library's **website** lists information on the availability of the accessibility services under the Accessibility Services section.

Initiative: Accessible Employment

Listed below are the deliverables and status updates for accessible employment initiatives.

Deliverables

Revise existing policy and work processes, where required, to ensure accessibility accommodations are provided to employees across all stages of the employment life cycle.

Status Updates - Accessible Employment Initiatives

When employers create workplaces that are accessible, it allows employees to reach their full potential.

Richmond Hill continued to follow its employment accommodation procedures and processes. Once an individual disclosed that he or she had a disability, the City implemented Employment Accommodation Procedures, ensuring all efforts are made to support the employee in need of accommodation. The employee and Human Resources staff would work together to create an Individual Accommodation Plan.

Accessible formats and communication supports to perform job duties are provided and workplace emergency response information is gathered to accommodate employees during an emergency, if applicable. During Performance Management, Career Development and Advancement, an individual's accessibility needs are considered. We continue to implement a Return to Work process to assist in fulfilling any accommodations in the workplace. There is an opportunity for staff to provide feedback if an individual does not feel his or her need for accommodation is being addressed.

Richmond Hill offered many mental health and wellness programs for staff, such as workshops on work/life balance, stress management and mental health first aid. All staff are offered worksite fitness programs and free fitness membership to Richmond Hill's fitness facilities.

In 2019, Richmond Hill offered employees training courses for Word Accessibility and Creating Accessible PDF Documents.

All Job Postings state, "The City of Richmond Hill is committed to inclusive, barrier-free recruitment and selection processes. If contacted to anticipate in the recruitment and selection process, please advise HR if you require an accommodation." Accommodations continue to be provided upon request.

Through the onboarding process, new staff are educated on Richmond Hill's accessibility policies and procedures, including Employee Accommodation Procedures. In 2018, we updated the onboarding process to include a Hiring Managers Resource Guide and a "buddy" program to support new employees.

In 2019, we updated the onboarding process to include accessible documents. Additionally, to help ensure equality with recruitment, we updated the recruitment process for part-time hires so that it follows the same practice applied to non-union, full-time staff.

Initiative: Accessible Built Environment Initiatives

Listed below are the deliverables and status updates for built environment initiatives.

Deliverables

As of January 1, 2016, the Public Spaces Standard requires organizations to incorporate accessibility features when constructing new or undergoing major renovations to public spaces, and to maintain those spaces. Accessible public spaces include specific features that make it easier for everyone to use public spaces, including people with disabilities, seniors and families.

The Public Spaces Standard covers the following areas:

- Recreational trails and beach access routes
- Outdoor public use eating areas
- Outdoor play spaces
- Exterior paths of travel
- Accessible parking
- Service counters and waiting areas
- Obtaining services
- Maintenance

Status Updates - Built Environment Initiatives

Richmond Hill has been very proactive in designing and implementing accessibility into the design of outdoor public spaces. The City began implementing barrier-free design and access into its parks and publicly accessible urban spaces much before the introduction of the AODA and Design of Public Spaces Standard. The City's parks continue to comply with the AODA and are among best practices in accessible public spaces. We also maintained our outdoor public spaces so that the accessibility elements we incorporated remained safe and usable for everyone.

Some of the accessibility features of trails, parks and play spaces include:

- Way finding signage
- Gently sloped ramps with railings
- Accessible swing seats

- Rubberized play surfaces
- Elevated sandboxes
- Double width slides that can accommodate a child and caregiver
- Rest areas for parents and caregivers
- Accessible seating and eating areas
- Sensory gardens with a variety of annuals, herbs, perennials and grasses
- Accessible board game tables
- Special drum tables and many other inclusive elements

Accessibility Features in New Trails, Parks and Play Spaces

In 2019, the City designed and built several new parks. Construction also began on some parks projects in 2019. Many of the improvements included new and redesigned accessibility features.

Lake Wilcox Park and New Youth Area

In 2016 and 2017, the City added new features to Lake Wilcox Park, including a waterfront promenade, splash pad, playground, washrooms, parking lot, accessible seating and picnic areas. Design began 2016 with completion in 2017. Construction for the shoreline of Lake Wilcox continued in 2019.

In 2019, the Youth Area opened featuring a concrete skatepark, beach volleyball courts, multi-use sport courts, shade structures, rope climber, fitness equipment, Wi-Fi, and a variety of seating opportunities. This park complies with AODA standards and the Canadian Standards Association (CSA), Annex H.

Abraham Law Parkette

In 2019, Construction finished on the Abraham Law Parkette (formerly Briggs Parkette) located on Briggs Avenue and Genuine Lane. The parkette includes a junior and senior playground with swings, sand play and seating opportunities. This parkette is accessible and complies with the AODA and the Canadian Standards Association (CSA), Annex H Guidelines.

Bradstock Park

Upgrades on Bradstock Park finished in 2019 and includes facilities that are more accessible. The playground and fitness area includes rubber surfacing and accessible equipment. The playground equipment complies with CSA-Z614, Children's Playspaces and Equipment Standards including Annex H Guidelines.

David Hamilton Park

Construction for redeveloping David Hamilton Park continued in 2019. The modernized park will include new play areas, a splash pad, multi-use courts, new walkways, seating, lighting and sports facility upgrades. The park is designed in compliance with AODA standards and the play areas in compliance with the Canadian Standards Association (CSA), Annex H Guideline.

Flood Farmstead Park

Construction of this new park will be completed in 2020. The park includes a junior and senior playground, multi-sport court, shade structure, walkways and a variety of seating opportunities. This park complies with the AODA and the Canadian Standards Association (CSA), Annex H Guidelines.

Kings College Park Revitalization Project

The majority of the King's College Park Revitalization Project occurred in 2019. The park features an updated playground area, two basketball courts, a new central walkway, outdoor pickle ball courts, a walking loop around the park, no-mow and wildflower meadows, tree plantings, shade structures and seed shaped thematic elements. The new playground features Junior and Senior play structures, swings and spring toys. It is designed to meet the Canadian Standards Association (CSA) Annex H Guideline.

Lennox Park Revitalization

Design for Lennox Park Revitalization is underway to replace the existing park facilities. The design includes updates to the playground equipment that incorporate accessibility requirements and guidelines, including the Canadian Standards Association (CSA Z614 Children's Playspaces and Equipment), Annex H Guidelines. The improvements to the park will also include new walkways, pedestrian bridge, seating, and lighting.

Private Charles Hill Park

This is a new park being constructed in an existing neighborhood with expected completion in 2020. Features will include a play area, shelter, benches and tables, pathways and passive landscape areas. The park is designed in compliance with AODA standards and the play area in compliance with the Canadian Standards Association (CSA), Annex H Guideline.

Ritter Park Playground Replacement

In 2019, Ritter Park's playground and safety surfacing was replaced to meet current standards. The park features Junior and Senior play structures, swings and spring toys and is designed to meet the Canadian Standards Association (CSA) Annex H Guideline.

Westview Parkette

In 2018, construction of Westview Parkette finished. It included walkways and seating that comply with AODA standards. The playground equipment complies with CSA-Z614 Children's Playspaces and Equipment Standard including Annex H Guidelines.

Trails

Since 2018, one new trail and several upgrades to trails were completed. The trails followed the accessibility requirements as per the Public Spaces Standard. The Parks Design and Construction Department continue to ensure new trails incorporate proper slopes and ramps, and consider the location and design of rest areas, passing areas, viewing areas, amenities on the trail and any other accessibility features. Trails include:

1. **Direzze to Oxford Trail Connection**

   We are planning a new trail connection between Oxford Street and Direzze Court. This project is currently on hold pending the completion of the Transportation Master Plan project.

2. **Lake to Lake Cycling Route and Walking Trail**

   The Lake-to-Lake Cycling Route and Walking Trail will be a 121 km recreational and commuter trail connecting Lake Simcoe to Lake Ontario. In Richmond Hill, the fully realized Lake-to-Lake route will span 18 km, running north-south from Bloomington Road to Highway 7. A 2.26 km multi-use pathway was recently constructed in the west boulevard of Leslie Street from Highway 7 to the Beaver Greenway Trail north of 16th Avenue. As of 2018, approximately 7 km of the route has been completed in Richmond Hill.

3. Trans Richmond Trail – Gamble Glen Walkway Connection

The Trans Richmond Trail – Gamble Glen Walkway Connection completed in 2018 is a new trail that serves as an extension of the existing Trans Richmond Trail located south of Gamble Road and runs from Bathurst Street to Yonge Street. The trail extension runs north of the existing Trans Richmond Trail to provide a pedestrian connection to Gable Glen Crescent. The trail includes asphalt and mulch pathways, elevated boardwalks with metal decking to accommodate snowplows, planting, armourstone seating, and trail/wayfinding signage.

City Facilities and Building Requirements

Although the AODA and Design of Public Spaces Standard contain accessibility requirements for service counters and waiting areas, it does not cover public and private sector buildings. The Ontario Building Code regulates barrier-free requirements and accessible design for new and significantly renovated buildings.

In 2015, the Building Code was amended to enhance accessibility requirements. The City's Planning and Regulatory Services Department continued to incorporate the Ontario Building Code and Public Spaces Standard into their building permit requirements.

Similarly, the City's Facility Design, Construction and Maintenance Services ensured that our offices and facilities continued to comply with the Ontario Building Code. We regularly implemented improvements to accessibility in our facilities, such as expanding the Ed Sackfield Arena.

Ed Sackfield Arena – Construction Completed

Construction for the Ed Sackfield Arena expansion finished in 2019. The expansion includes an NHL-size arena with viewer capacity for 350 people. The accessibility of this facility has improved with six barrier-free player change rooms, two change rooms for referees/coaches, and accessible washrooms. All residents will also be able to enjoy a 180-metre indoor walking track.

Going Beyond the AODA

Below are Richmond Hill's initiatives that exceed the requirements and scope of the AODA.

Providing Inclusion Services in Recreation

In 2019, the Recreation Division's Inclusion Services section expanded the amount of adapted programming and inclusive events for the community. The section piloted Camp AdaptAbility, a teen adapted camp, for two weeks in the summer, offering teens with disabilities that had aged out of the general children's camps to have an enjoyable camp experience in a specialized setting. Inclusion Services hired a Camp Supervisor to program and run the camp as well as two Inclusion Counsellors who worked in a 1:4 staff to participant ratio. Campers were able to participate in a variety of camp activities as well as swimming, special guest appearances and a field trip each week. The camp was so popular and in demand that registration numbers were much higher than expected. Camp AdaptAbility was very successful with positive feedback provided by campers, parents and staff alike, all requesting it run for more weeks in 2020.

The Inclusion Services section also ran multiple inclusive events in 2019, including:

- Two **"Try a Sledge"** events were held during March Break in partnership with All Sports All People and Children's Treatment Network. Tyler McGregor, a two-time Paralympic Medalist and member of the Canadian Para Hockey Team, led the events that were attended by 45 children and youth.
- A **"Try a Bike"** event occurred in the spring in partnership with Children's Treatment Network. This event provided an opportunity for 41 children and youth with disabilities to learn how to ride a bike independently.
- **Inclusive Santa Photos** for children with disabilities and their families. For many children with disabilities, participating in mall-led Santa photos can be extremely challenging due to their sensory needs.

In addition to these Richmond Hill led inclusion events, Inclusion Services also participated in the Children's Treatment Network Inclusive Halloween event. All these events were very popular with families asking for them to take place again.

In addition to the increase in adapted programming and inclusive events, Inclusion Services trained over 175 Summer Camp staff on Adapted Programming and ways to integrate children and youth into general camp programs. The group also hosted the Region of York Recreationists training for 120 Inclusion summer camp staff from the nine lower tier Municipalities. Additionally, Inclusion Services accommodated 171 registrations during summer camp, which was an increase from 2018.

Lastly, the Inclusion Services section received a grant from Richmond Hill Mobility to purchase 10 sledges to pursue Sledge Hockey programs.

By-law Enforcement and the Disability Parking Reserve

The By-law and Licensing Enforcement Services Division continued to enforce accessible parking. In 2019, Council approved a $50,000 grant for the Richmond Hill Mobility Accessibility Foundation funded by the Disabled Parking Reserve. This funding supports mobility initiatives in Richmond Hill, including recreation programs and assistive devices. With grant funding from Richmond Hill, the Foundation has been able to improve accessibility within Richmond Hill, its facilities and programs, helping individuals increase the quality of their daily lives. In 2019, Council approved that future Mobility Grant requests be awarded by the Treasurer consistent with approved budgets.

In 2018, the City initiated online screen reviews as part of the Administrative Monetary Penalty System (AMPS). People wishing to contest a parking ticket can do so from home and no longer need to visit the Main Municipal Offices in-person.

Also in 2018, the online purchase of dog licenses became available. Residents can purchase a dog license from home and no longer need to visit a City facility or partner veterinary/pet store locations.

Conclusion

Richmond Hill is committed to ensuring City programs and services are fully accessible to everyone. We had a very productive year and are proud to share our 2019 accomplishments. Our staff and new Accessibility Advisory Committee will continue to build an inclusive community by identifying barriers and incorporating accessible practices into our goods and services provided to the public.

Feedback

Please let us know if you have any questions about this 2019 Status Report and/or any accessibility matters in general. If you require this document in an alternative format, please contact us. Previous Status Reports and Accessibility Plans are available online at **richmondhill.ca/accessibility.**

Contact Us

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