



Committee of the Whole Meeting

February 16, 2016
SRCFS.16.001
Corporate and Financial Services

Office of the Clerk

Subject: 2015 Status Report of the Richmond Hill Accessibility Plan

Purpose:

The purpose of this staff report is to present the 2015 Status Report of the Richmond Hill Accessibility Plan.

Recommendation(S):

- That the 2015 Status Report of the Richmond Hill Accessibility Plan attached as Appendix A to SRCFS.16.001 be approved;
- That the 2015 Status Report of the Richmond Hill Accessibility Plan be posted on the Town's website as required by the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*.

Contacts: Lena Sampogna, Council/Committee Clerk, ext. 6402
Gloria Collier, Acting Clerk, ext. 3619

Submitted by:

"Signed version on file in the Office of the Clerk"

David Dexter
Acting Commissioner of Corporate and Financial Services

Approved by:

"Signed version on file in the Office of the Clerk"

Neil Garbe
Chief Administrative Officer

Background:

The *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (AODA) requires municipalities to create a multi-year Accessibility Plan and to prepare an annual status report on the progress of measures taken to implement the strategy outlined in its multi-year Accessibility Plan. The Town is also required to post the status report on its website.

Through its Accessibility Plan and subsequent annual status reports, the Town is required to address the identification, removal and prevention of barriers to person with disabilities in the municipality's by-laws, policies, programs, practices and services. In addition, the Accessibility Plan and annual status reports shall outline how the Town will meet the requirements of the regulations made under the AODA.

The Town of Richmond Hill has been very proactive in implementing accessible built initiatives into the design of outdoor public spaces. Even though this standard is not in effect until 2016, the Town has proactively been implementing barrier-free design and access into its parks and publicly accessible urban spaces since the development of the 2010 Richmond Hill Official Plan.

In this staff report and the attached 2015 Status Report, it addresses the legislative requirements as per the following 14 bulleted items listed below:

- Multi-Year Accessibility Plan
- Inclusion on Town Committees
- Accessibility Policies
- Accessible Procurement
- Accessibility Training
- Procurement of Goods and Services
- Accessible Feedback Process
- Alternative Formats and Communication Supports
- Emergency Procedures, Plans or Public Safety Information
- Accessible Website and Web Content
- Public Library Services
- Accessible Employment Initiatives
- Accessible Transportation Initiatives
- Built Environment Initiatives

Financial/Staffing/Other Implications:

There are no financial, staffing or other implications associated with this report. Costs associated with the preparation and developments of the 2015 Status Report of the Richmond Hill Accessibility Plan are budgeted on an annual basis through the Corporate and Financial Services operating budget.

Relationship to the Strategic Plan:

This report relates to the Town's Strategic Plan goal of Stronger Connections in Richmond Hill by removing barriers to effective participation for all people in the community, improving access to local information and services and by increasing accessibility for those with disabilities.

Conclusion:

This staff report presents the 2015 Status Report of the 2013-2017 Richmond Hill Accessibility Plan. The Town's Accessibility Plan has been designed and built to be an accessible document for persons with disabilities. The 2015 Status Report will follow the same process in development and publication.

The Town of Richmond Hill will continue to meet and work towards compliance with the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* and will continue to strive for delivery of programs and services in an accessible manner.

Attachments:

Appendix A – 2015 Status Report of the Richmond Hill Accessibility Plan

2015 Status Report

Richmond Hill Accessibility Plan

January to December 2015

Message from the Mayor

On behalf of Council and staff, I am pleased to present Richmond Hill's 2015 Accessibility Plan Status Report.

We're working towards removing any and all barriers present that prohibit residents and visitors alike from accessing our services, so that Richmond Hill can be easily accessible. We'll continue working to create an inclusive community for all who access our programs, services and facilities by addressing physical, informational or technological barriers, or even barriers that result from policies and/or practices.

Please read through this report to learn more about our accessibility initiatives and our plans for the future. Our community is important to us. You matter. And we're working to make a difference.

Message from the Accessibility Advisory Committee

Richmond Hill is dedicated to being an accessible community. The Richmond Hill Accessibility Advisory Committee is committed to working with Town staff to increase awareness about the importance of accessibility in the community and to provide suggestions and opportunities to improve the accessibility of its programs and services.

We are very proud of what we've accomplished to date and the work we endeavor to complete going forward. The 2015 status report illustrates some of our achievements and further explains Richmond Hill's accessibility initiatives. We encourage you to review it to learn more.

Accessibility Advisory Committee Members

There are 11 members of the Accessibility Advisory Committee as listed below:

- Lilian Hulme-Smith, Chair
- George Tannous –Vice Chair
- Regional and Local Councillor Spatafora
- Jenny Clement
- Rosanna Giannasca
- Marion Menezes
- Marisol Pestana
- Manfred Segall
- Simon Waldman
- Gloria Collier, Staff
- Lena Sampogna, Staff

Background and Legislation

The Town of Richmond Hill continually works towards compliance with the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (AODA). The AODA consists of five standards:

- **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 will provide accessibility 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** – public spaces will be designed to make it easier for everyone (people with disabilities, seniors and families) to use public spaces. Public spaces includes; recreational trails, beach access routes, outdoor public use eating areas, outdoor play spaces, exterior paths of travel, accessible parking, service related elements and the maintenance of public spaces.

Town of Richmond Hill's Implementation of AODA

The Town of Richmond Hill is passionate about making their community accessible. Through the creation of policies, practices and procedures, we ensure that staff follow specific guidelines and remain committed to incorporating accessibility into all areas of service provided to the public.

Our five year 2013-2017 Richmond Hill Accessibility Plan show activities and initiatives that Town departments carry out in order to meet the legislated requirements of the AODA and most importantly help to provide programs and services that are more accessible to our community.

Update on 2015 Accessibility Initiatives

The Town of Richmond Hill has undertaken 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. By removing barriers for persons with disabilities, we are removing barriers for everyone. Below is a list of 14 requirements that the Town of Richmond Hill is regulated to comply with it and the Status Update for each of those deliverables.

Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

The 2013 – 2017 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan is an outline of Richmond Hill's strategy to prevent and remove barriers and meet the requirements under the AODA and our obligations under each of the standards.

Status Update - Multi-Year Accessibility Plan:

Richmond Hill continues to meet all of the deliverables outlined in the 2013-2017 Multi-Year Plan. An annually updated Status Report is developed to show the progress of the initiatives identified, and any additional removal of barriers and improved access for people with disabilities.

Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities on Town Committees

In order to include persons with disabilities on Town 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 Town Committees

The Accessibility Advisory Committee has a number of participants which include 50 % representative of people with disabilities. They offer valuable input on accessible design and development for newly constructed and or renovated facilities. They also advise Council and staff on legislated AODA requirements. We will continue to encourage people with disabilities to join other committees as well.

Accessibility Policies

Develop and maintain policies as to how the Town will achieve accessibility through meeting the requirements of the AODA including the Accessible Customer Service Regulation and the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation.

Other procedures related to various standards will also be developed, reviewed and revised as required.

Status Update - Accessibility Policies

The Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation Policy was created in 2012. In 2015 the policy was reviewed and revised to include the addition of the Public Spaces Standard. The document will be publicly available and has been designed to be accessible. Copies of both the Customer Service Standard and the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation are made available to current staff and any new staff that become of employees of the Town of Richmond Hill.

Accessible Procurement

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.

Status Update - Accessible Procurement

Richmond Hill incorporates an analysis of accessibility criteria and features in all procurement activities, where possible. Training materials were developed for project managers and those involved in the Procurement Section and the Office of the Clerk: "Guidelines: Meeting Accessibility Obligations in Procurement", "Frequently Asked Questions – Accessibility Procurement" and "Accessibility Language for Procurement Documents". The documents and other helpful resources are available in the Procurement section of Richmond Hill's Link under the "Helpful Resources" menu.

Accessibility Training

Develop, deliver and coordinate mandatory accessibility training applicable to all employees, volunteers and those that make decisions on behalf of the Town. Also to ensure that third party service providers have had training on the AODA.

Status Update - Accessibility Training

The Town of Richmond Hill has training in place for both full time and part time employees. Staff were trained on the Customer Service Standard in 2012. With the release of the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation in 2011, and its mandatory training component by 2014, an on-line training program was created for staff.



The training is interactive and engaging and covers the following ten main topics:

- Statistics related to people with disabilities
- Understanding disabilities
- Barriers to accessibility
 - Attitudinal
 - Information or communications
 - Technology
 - Organizational barriers (policies, practices or procedures)
 - Architectural and physical
- Working tips for communication (TALK)
- Five standards
 - Customer Service
 - Employment
 - Information and Communications
 - Transportation
 - Design of Public Spaces
- Town of Richmond Hill's Policies
- Human Rights Code
- Interactive question and answers
- Certificate

- Reference Documents
 - Accessible Customer Service Guide
 - Individual Accommodation Request Form
 - Individual Accommodation Plan Form
 - Employment Accommodation Feedback Form
 - Procedure Employment Accommodation

The training includes the Customer Service Standard which serves as part of a review for current staff and assists in training new staff as part of their orientation.

The training also covers the Human Rights Code including; Duty to Accommodate, Duties of the Employee and Duties of the Employer.

Procurement of Goods and Services

When purchasing goods, services or facilities, organizations must incorporate accessibility.

Status Update - Procurement of Goods and Services

The Town's Accessibility Policy states that "when procuring goods, services, self-service kiosks or facilities, the Town shall incorporate accessibility criteria and features, unless it is not feasible (practicable). If not practicable, the Town shall provide an explanation, upon request."

To support this approach, Richmond Hill Procurement Staff were briefed in September 2012 and major purchasers within Town business units were made aware of the requirements for accessible procurement under the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR.)

To support the work of staff, the Town created a document entitled "Guidelines: Meeting Accessibility Obligations in Procurement." This documentation is supported by similar checklists, frequently asked questions (FAQ) and sample accessibility language to use in procurement documents.

Accessible Feedback Process

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

Status Update - Accessible Feedback Process

The Town of Richmond Hill has an accessible **feedback form** on its website which has fillable form fields. A person also has the option of emailing, calling, visiting in person, or faxing their comments or suggestions. To access the link to the feedback section, on the website go to:

http://www.richmondhill.ca/subpage.asp?pageid=accessibility_feedback

Accessibility Feedback

- » [Accessibility Home](#)
- » [Annual Accessibility Plan](#)
- » [Accessibility Standards](#)
- » [Accessibility Advisory Committee](#)
- » [Accessible Customer Service Compliance](#)
- » [Accessibility Policy](#)
- » [Training Required for Town Suppliers of Goods and Services](#)
- » [Feedback](#)
- » [Notice of Service Disruption](#)
- » [Accessible Town Services/Programs](#)

The Town of Richmond Hill welcomes public input. It helps identify areas where changes need to be considered and ways in which we can improve the delivery of accessible goods and services. Feedback may be provided by telephone, in person, in writing or by e-mail or other electronic format. If a complaint is received concerning the accessibility of the Town's goods and services, the appropriate Department or Division will review the information and provide a response.

You may access the Town's Accessible Customer Feedback Form by clicking on the link below.

[Accessible Customer Service Feedback Form \[PDF\]](#)

Visit Us

Town Hall
225 East Beaver Creek Road
Richmond Hill, Ontario

Office hours: Monday – Friday 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Mail Us

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Town of Richmond Hill
225 East Beaver Creek Road
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L4B 3P4

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access@richmondhill.ca

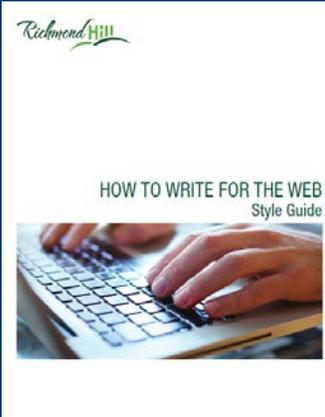
Fax Us

Alternative Formats and Communication Supports

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 Update - Accessible Formats and Communication Supports

The Town of Richmond Hill continues to provide staff training and develop guidelines for the provision of alternative formats and communication supports. Staff were recently trained on accessible documents and accessible web content. A new guide called “How to Write for the Web Style Guide” was developed and a list of “Alternative Format Providers.”



Access Richmond Hill Advisors have 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 that has been designed to serve persons with a disability.

Alternative formats are provided upon request, in a timely manner and at a cost no more than the regular cost charged to others. Staff are also working on converting documents on their website to be accessible so that when the new Richmond Hill website is in compliance with the World Wide Web Consortium Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG.)

Emergency Procedures, Plans or Public Safety Information

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

Status Update - Emergency Procedures, Plans or Public Safety Information

The Town has numerous documents and information that are to be considered under this section of the IASR. Upon request, the Town will provide any emergency procedure, plan or public safety information in an accessible format.

Despite being an “upon request” requirement, the Town has proactively produced select documents in accessible formats including the Town’s 72-Hour Emergency Kit material.

A pager to “Notify of an Emergency” is available from the Front Reception desk of Access Richmond Hill for any person with a hearing impairment that requires to be informed of an emergency while attending at the Town offices.

Accessible Website and Web Content

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

Status Update - Accessible Website and Web Content

Richmond Hill is in the process of creating a new website that will be compliant with WCAG 2.0, Level A initially and works towards Level AA. The website will be released in 2016. Staff have been working hard to develop the content and ensure compliance with WCAG. Some of the accessibility features it will include will be

- Distinguishable content: there will be minimum standards for contrast and the ability to resize text.
- Predictable Web Pages: all pages will have consistent top and left navigation. Contact information will also be presented in a consistent fashion at the bottom of pages.
- Navigation: content can be accessed through both mouse and keyboard.
- Input Assistance: for forms, errors will be identified when fields are not correctly completed.

All documents on the website will also be accessible. Staff have been undergoing training on accessible documents and website design. They continue to work on formatting all existing documents on the website so that they are accessible. As we move forward, the Web and Social Media Coordinator will be reviewing all content before it is published on the new website. Documents that are not accessible will be returned to the originating Division.

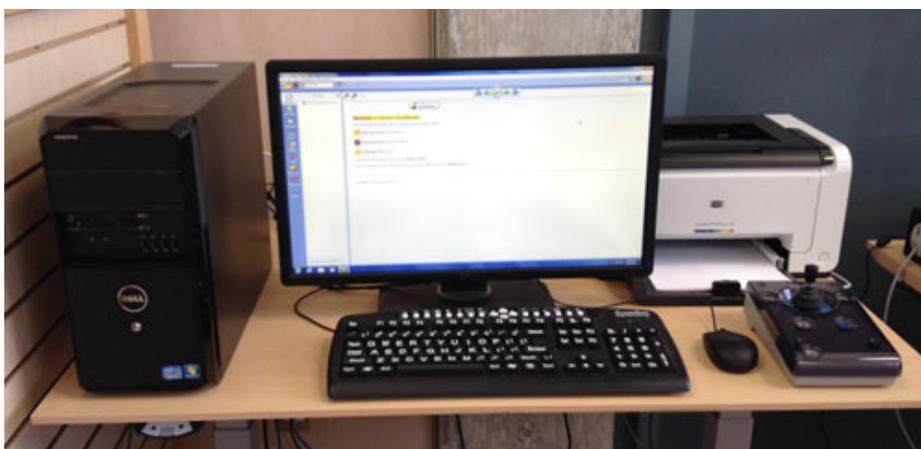
Public Library Services

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 - Public Library Services

The Richmond Hill Public Library (RHPL) maintains accessible collections (ex. large print format books). Where these collections are located, there is large signage to direct patrons to these offerings. Furthermore, staff are able to direct and assist individuals.

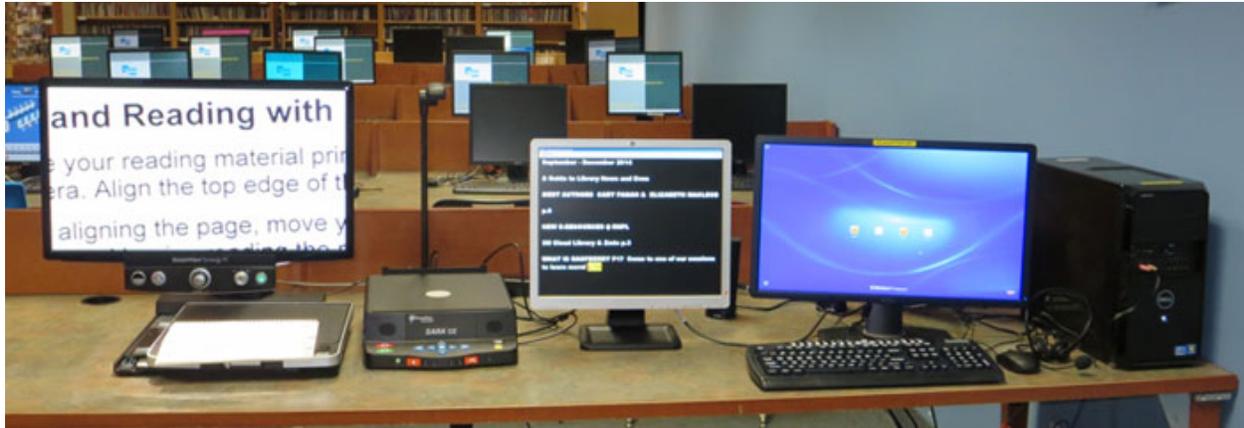
In addition, the RHPL Central location has an accessible workstation complete with large keyboard, joystick and software (ex. zoom text and JAWS) to allow for work to be completed by patrons who require such services.



The other accessible station has a SARA reader and SmartView Synergy CCTV unit and is on a table that can be raised and lowered. 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 designed 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.)



Accessible Employment Initiatives

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

Status Update - Accessible Employment Initiatives

An Employment Accommodation Procedure has been written. It outlines procedures that are to be followed during the recruitment process, and throughout the employment cycle. The following eight areas are included in the procedures:

- Recruitment, selection and assessment stages of employment
- Informing employees of supports
- Accessible formats and communication supports
- Workplace emergency response information
- Workplace accommodations; medical and non-medical accommodation requests
- Return to work
- Performance management, career development and redeployment
- Feedback

Once an individual discloses that they have a disability, the Employment Accommodation Procedures are followed and implemented ensuring all efforts are made to support employees in need of accommodation. Accessible formats and communication supports to perform job duties are provided and workplace emergency response information is gathered to accommodate individuals during an emergency. During Performance Management, Career Development and Advancement an individual's accessibility needs are considered. There is also a Return to Work process and an opportunity for employees to provide feedback if an individual does not feel their need for accommodation was addressed.

Current employees are encouraged to disclose if they have a disability so that appropriate accommodations are provided for that individual to perform their job in the most effective manner possible.

Accessible Transportation Initiatives

Consult with Richmond Hill Accessibility Advisory Committee, the public and persons with disabilities to determine the proportion of accessible taxicabs required in the community.

Status Update - Accessible Transportation Initiatives

The Town of Richmond Hill is proposing that three accessible taxi license plates be put into circulation in the future. Royal Taxi is the current taxi service provider for York Region Transit Mobility Plus.

All taxicabs have the Town of Richmond Hill Taxi Plate number affixed to the back portion of the taxicab and decals are placed on the front drivers side and passenger side fenders of the taxi. This is in accordance with Section 80 of the Integrated Accessibility Standard Regulation, whereby Municipalities that license taxicabs, must ensure vehicle registration and identification information is on taxicabs.

The storage of mobility aids or mobility assisted devices are free of charge this is clearly specified in the Taxi By-law 133-04 and is also specified on the Tariff Card that is permanently displayed inside of each taxi, within the Town of Richmond Hill.

Accessible Built Environment Initiatives

In 2012 the IASR was amended to include accessibility standards for the built environment in relation to Public Spaces. This standard applies to new construction and major renovations. Municipalities must comply with this standard as of 2016. Accessible public spaces include specific features that make it easier for everyone – people with disabilities, seniors and families, to use public spaces. There are seven areas covered by this standard:

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

Status Update - Built Environment Initiatives

The Town of Richmond Hill has been very proactive in implementing accessible built initiatives into the design of outdoor public spaces. Even though this standard is not in effect until 2016, the Town has proactively been implementing barrier-free design and access into its parks and publicly accessible urban spaces since the development of the 2010 Richmond Hill Official Plan.

The Town's Official Plan states that it is the policy of Council that:

- A barrier-free environment shall be promoted throughout the Town which facilities access for persons with disabilities and special needs.
- Development shall be designed in accordance with the Ontarians with Disabilities Act and other applicable Provincial legislation.
- The modification of existing buildings and facilities shall be encouraged to improve the level of accessibility.
- The Town shall ensure that its parks and recreation facilities are accessible and safe.
- Barrier-free access to Town-owned parks and publicly accessible urban open spaces shall be incorporated.

Accessibility Features in New Parks

The Town of Richmond Hill prides itself in designing accessibility features in new parks, trails and plays spaces. Some of the features in our parks, trails and play areas include: gently sloped ramps with railings, rubberized play surfaces, accessible swings seats, elevated sandboxes, double width slides that can accommodate a child and caregiver, rest areas for parents and caregivers, sensory gardens, accessible board game tables, special drum tables, wayfinding signage, extra-wide and gently sloped trails, many seating and lookout areas for bird-watching new entranceway, colourful birdhouses and various artwork throughout parks and drop-off areas to improve access to parks.



The following **two trails** were **designed** in 2015 to meet the AODA legislation:

- Saigon Trail Extension 700 m
- TransRichmond Hill (Gamble Glen Connection) 300 m

The following **seven parks** were **built** in 2015 that incorporate accessibility features:

- Meander Park
- Oak Ridges Meadows Parkette Revitalization
- Philips Ridge Park
- Rocking Horse Ranch Park
- Rouge Crest Park
- Snakes & Ladders Parkette
- Terry Fox Tribute at Ransom Parkette

The following **four parks and dome** were **designed** in 2015 to meet the AODA legislation;

- Hidden Springs Parkette
- Hughey Parkette Revitalization
- Lake Wilcox Youth Area
- Little Don Park Revitalization
- Richmond Green Sports Dome

Oak Ridges Library

A 19,000 square foot library is being built in 2016 that includes many accessibility features. 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 Ontario Building Code, the Design of Public Spaces Standard and overall accessibility. The incorporated accessibility features include the following ten items:

- Universal washroom
- Barrier-free washrooms in both male and female washrooms
- Accessible employee washroom
- All ramps leading into the building are 1:15
- Minimum corridor width are 1500 mm
- Door operators are used for majority 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

Accessibility Advisory Committee

When new buildings, trails or policies are designed related to the AODA, the Accessibility Advisory Committee provides advice and guidance to the Town of Richmond Hill in the following five areas:

- Review of site plans for new and existing municipal buildings
- Review of plans for parks and trail ways
- Review of significant renovations in municipal buildings
- Review of accessibility policies and procedures including those required by the standards made under the AODA
- Review of work relating to AODA standards compliance

Planning and Regulatory Service Department

The Planning and Regulatory Service Department incorporates the newly amended Ontario Building Code and Public Spaces Standard into their building permit requirements.

Feedback

We welcome your feedback. Let us know what you think about the 2015 Status Report of Richmond Hill Accessibility Plan and any other accessibility matters in general.

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If you require this document in an alternative format please let us know.