

Accessibility Consultation Policy

Presented To:	City Council
Meeting Date:	October 22, 2024
Type:	Managers' Reports
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Recommended by:	General Manager of Corporate Services

Report Summary

This report provides a recommendation regarding the Accessibility Consultation Policy.

Resolution

THAT the City of Greater Sudbury directs staff to prepare a by-law for the adoption of the Accessibility Consultation Policy as outlined in the report entitled "Accessibility Consultation Policy" from the General Manager of Corporate Services, presented at the City Council meeting on October 22, 2024.

Relationship to the Strategic Plan, Health Impact Assessment and Climate Action Plans

This report refers to operational matters.

Financial Implications

There are no financial implications related to this report.

Background

The Clerk's Services Section is responsible for providing enterprise supports to enhance the accessibility of municipal services and supports the City's Accessibility Advisory Panel which is required for all Ontario municipalities with a population of over 10,000.

Most Accessibility Advisory Panel members must be persons with disabilities and the legislation mandates consultation on the accessibility for persons with disabilities to a building, structure, or premises, or part of a building, structure, or premises:

- (a) that the council purchases, constructs, or significantly renovates;
- (b) for which the council enters a new lease; or
- (c) that a person provides as municipal capital facilities under an agreement entered with the council per section 110 of the *Municipal Act, 2001*.

Staff were directed on May 28, 2024 to prepare an Accessibility Consultation Policy (ACP) for City Council's consideration. A draft of the policy is attached as Appendix "A".

Staff consulted with relevant City staff and the Accessibility Advisory Panel regarding the content of the policy and suggested changes have been reflected. The proposed Policy is designed to better incorporate accessibility planning into city initiatives and foster a more inclusive process by actively involving the panel wherever possible. The draft policy goes beyond the minimum requirements for new or redeveloped buildings, structures or premises outlined in the legislation by requiring staff to consult the AAP on:

- construction, renovation, or replacement of bus stops and shelters;
- new or redeveloped recreational trails, paths of travel, outdoor play, and park spaces;
- when establishing, reviewing, or updating its multi-year accessibility plan;
- when providing new or redeveloping existing recreational programs;
- conduct assessments on a regular basis to enhance and ensure a barrier-free environment for all persons at special events; and
- on any other matter Council considers necessary or desirable to seek advice from the AAP.

Additional consultation ensures that needs are considered from the outset, leading to more equitable access to public facilities and programs. When community spaces are designed with accessibility in mind, they become more welcoming to everyone, reducing barriers and promoting equal participation within the community. By involving the panel in the project process, communities gain valuable insights into specific needs and preferences leading to more effective and relevant solutions for accessibility. For instance, feedback on how to improve public transportation can result in more efficient and user-friendly services for all.

As the City of Greater Sudbury strives to be more inclusive and equitable, ensuring that public services and facilities are accessible to all individuals, including those with disabilities, is paramount. The draft policy is a strategic framework that guides staff to integrate accessibility needs into their operations.

To support this policy and ensure its effective implementation, the Clerk's Services Section will provide ongoing training to keep City staff well-informed about current accessibility standards and best practices.

To implement the proposed policy, staff will collaborate with other departments and the AAP. Over time, communication and collaborative efforts will improve resulting in a more efficient approach to addressing accessibility needs. Ultimately, the goal is to improve overall project outcomes and service delivery.

Resources Cited

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act - [The Act \(AODA\)](#)