

Committee of the Whole (2) Report

DATE: Tuesday, June 21, 2022

WARD(S): ALL

TITLE: UPDATED ACCESSIBILITY POLICY

FROM:

Michael Coroneos, Deputy City Manager, Corporate Services, City Treasurer and Chief Financial Officer

ACTION: DECISION

Purpose

To seek approval for the updates to the City Vaughan's Accessibility Policy.

Report Highlights

- The City is committed to ensuring equal access to City goods, services and facilities for people with disabilities. This includes ensuring an accessible environment for City buildings, spaces, and communications.
- The policy update is part of regular review to identify and remove accessibility barriers, including attitudinal, systemic, and physical barriers.
- The updates to the policy includes regrouping of the information, reformatting to meet the current format and style for City of Vaughan policies and updates to reflect changes to the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* (2005).

Recommendations

1. It is recommended that Council approve the updated Accessibility Policy as contained in Attachment 1 to this report.
2. It is recommended that updates to the Accessibility Policy are communicated to all staff.
3. It is recommended that the updated Accessibility Policy is posted to the City's external website and made available in accessible formats upon request.

Background

The *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (AODA) is the law that sets out a process for developing, implementing and enforcing accessibility standards that government, businesses, non-profits and public sector organizations must follow to become more accessible. These laws and standards are intended to make Ontario open to everyone by helping to reduce and remove barriers.

The City of Vaughan is a designated public sector organization and is required to comply with the following:

- File an accessibility compliance report every two years to confirm that the City has met its current accessibility requirements under the AODA.
- Develop accessibility policies and, in doing so, must
 - tell staff and customers about the policies
 - notify the public about the availability of the policies (for example, a notice on the website, at reception, etc.)
 - provide policies in an accessible format upon request
- Develop a multi-year plan to help set and reach accessibility goals and, in doing so, must
 - consult with people with disabilities and with the accessibility advisory committee while establishing, reviewing and updating the plan
 - post the plan on the City's website
 - provide it in an accessible format upon request
 - review and update the plan at least once every five years
- Prepare an annual status report on progress in implementing the multi-year plan and the steps taken to comply with Ontario Regulation 191/11 and post the annual status report on the City's website

Previous Reports/Authority

- City of Vaughan Accessibility Policy, Committee of the Whole, January 15, 2013
- Accessibility Plan 2013-2018, Committee of the Whole, December 1, 2015
- Accessibility Initiatives Update, Committee of the Whole, December 6, 2016
- [Multi-Year Accessibility Plan Update, Committee of the Whole \(2\) February 9, 2021](#)
- [Inclusive Design Standards, Committee of the Whole \(2\), February 9, 2021](#)
- [City of Vaughan's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Plan And Multi-Year Action Plan, Committee of the Whole \(1\) Report, April 5, 2022](#)

Analysis and Options

The Policy has been migrated to fit the current style and format of the City's policies. Where possible, language has been updated to be concise, condensed to reflect shortened title for the AODA, easy to read and match the City of Vaughan's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Plan. The following are key changes made to update the Accessibility Policy:

- Scope of the Policy has condensed to City Employees (with updated definition) and Council.
- The following definitions have been added to the Policy:
 - Accessible or Accessibility
 - Accommodations
 - Assistive Devices
 - Barriers and examples of barriers
 - Goods, Services and Facilities
 - Information
- The definition of 'Employee' has been modified to City employee, student, intern or volunteer.
- Section on "Roles and Responsibilities" has been updated to provide explicit instructions on the City's expectations of all employees as it concerns Accessibility. The section now includes the role of
 - Council
 - City Manager, Deputy City Managers, and Directors
 - Managers and Supervisors
 - Contractors and Vendors
 - Accessibility Advisory Committee
- General Requirements, Customer Service Standards, Information and Communication Standards, Built Environment and Public Spaces Requirements and AODA Design of Public Spaces and Additional Requirements have been numerated and organized to match the sections of the AODA.
- Under the 'Customer Service Standards' section, information on notice of disruption has been added, stipulating that during temporary service disruption in the availability of facilities, services or goods used by persons with disabilities, the City of Vaughan provides appropriate notice to the public.

The Office of the Chief Human Resources Officer will develop a guide and a procedure to accompany the Policy, and develop an Accommodation Policy and guide to support the Accessibility Policy.

The existing the feedback process received at the City Clerk's Office will move to be received at Access Vaughan.

Financial Impact

There is no financial impact associated with the approval and implementation of the policies outside the existing approved operating budget.

Broader Regional Impacts/Considerations

There are no regional impacts associated with the Policy.

Conclusion

Updates to the attached Accessibility Policy were developed by Staff to ensure ongoing compliance with the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*.

It is recommended that Council approve the updated Policy and direct the Office of the Chief Human Resources Officer and appropriate staff to take the necessary steps to implement the Policy effective immediately.

For more information, please contact:

Mark Bond, Acting Chief Human Resources Officer, Ext. # 8327

Zincia Francis, Diversity and Inclusion Officer, Ext. 8159

Meghan Ferguson, Legal Counsel, Labour, Employment & Human Rights, Ext. 8125

Attachments

1. 13.C.01 ACCESSIBILITY POLICY June 21 2022

Prepared by

Zincia Francis, Diversity and Inclusion Officer, Ext. 8159

Approved by

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Michael Coroneos'.

Michael Coroneos , Deputy City
Manager and Chief Financial Officer

Reviewed by

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nick Spensieri'.

Nick Spensieri, City Manager