



2012 ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

Background

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) came into effect in June of 2005. The Integrated Accessibility Standard was then passed in June of 2011. However, until the Ontario Disabilities Act 2001 (ODA) is repealed, the accessibility planning requirements of the 2001 Act provide the framework for accessibility planning activities.

Further, the Collingwood Accessibility Advisory Committee (CAAC) Terms of Reference (s. 3.1) requires it to “participate in the annual development and refinement of the Annual Accessibility Plan” This plan will consider barriers faced by people with varying levels of ability and ways to prevent and remove those barriers.¹

The purpose of the Ontario Disabilities Act is to improve opportunities for people with disabilities in this province by identifying, preventing and removing physical and other barriers that may limit opportunities for people with disabilities to fully participate in society. Since 2004, all municipalities, as well as other organizations² in Ontario are legally obligated to prepare an annual accessibility plan.

The purpose of the Town of Collingwood Annual Accessibility Plan is to highlight the initiatives that have been or will be implemented to ensure the community remains accessible to both residents and visitors.

The Town of Collingwood

Collingwood is located on Nottawasaga Bay at the southern point of Georgian Bay. The municipality was incorporated as a Town in 1858. The Town was named after Lord Admiral Cuthbert Collingwood who served in the Battle of Trafalgar and who was later commander of the British fleet.³

¹ By-law No. 02-110 Terms of the Corporation of the Town of Collingwood

² Organizations include school boards, colleges and universities, hospitals, public transportation providers

³ Wikipedia

With the arrival of a rail line in 1855, the harbor developed into a shipping point for upper Great Lakes ports. Subsequently, the ship building industry was established. Shipbuilding remained a principal industry in the Town until the mid-1980s.

New industries have been established in Collingwood while the Town itself is now recognized as a four-season tourist area. It's located in close proximity to the recreation activities at Blue Mountain and Wasaga Beach. Collingwood is the home of major events throughout the year including the highly popular Elvis Festival.

While tourism remains a dominant industry in Collingwood, it also encourages growth in other sectors of the economy. Significant industries in Collingwood include accommodation, food services, manufacturing, wholesale and retail trade, and health services.⁴

Demographics

The current population of Collingwood is approximately 19,241. The Town has experienced significant development and growth over the past 10 years. The median age of residents has risen to 47, as identified in the 2011 census (up from 44.4). This means that 50% of the population is older than 47 and 50% is younger. Collingwood also has a significant permanent part-time population of an additional 5,000 residents that utilize the municipality as a base for recreational activities.⁵

People 40 to 65 – 35% of the population (6,195)

People 65 and older – 22.8% of the population (up 2.3% since 2006)

In Ontario today there are 1.85 million people with disabilities which is 1 in 20. Over the next 20 years this number is expected to increase to 1 person in 5. Collingwood already has a population base which is older than the provincial average. Therefore, the number of people with disabilities in Collingwood is anticipated to be greater than 1 in 5 within the next two decades.⁶ By year 2031, one third of Collingwood's population is anticipated to be over the age of 65.

⁴ Town of Collingwood web site; Town of Collingwood Planning Services

⁵ Statistics Canada, 2011 Census

⁶ Ontario Ministry of Community and Social Services

Accessibility Stakeholders

The Town of Collingwood is served by a number of groups and organizations which provide services for people with varying abilities as either a primary focus or in the broader scope of their responsibilities. The Collingwood Accessibility Advisory Committee (CAAC) has representatives from some of these organizations on its committee as members and resource people. In addition, representatives from these organizations are invited to deliver presentations to the committee as required. This year, a reorganization of the CAAC, as outlined in the Success section, has increased the active participation of community partners.

The CAAC also works together with other municipal Boards and Advisory Committees from the Town of Collingwood.

Committee Members:

Wayne Yuristy – Chair
Viivi Niitsoo – Vice Chair
Joan Leonard
Donna Filion
Sherrill Ann Monaghan
Jack Merwin
Dr. Georgina Schurman
Casey Morrison
Catherine Sholtz

Committee Resource:

Councillor Sandy Cunningham – Council Representative
Sara Almas – Clerk – Staff Resource
Monica Gal – Committee Secretary

Organization of the Town of Collingwood⁷

COUNCIL

Mayor	Sandra Cooper
Deputy Mayor	Rick Lloyd
Councillors	Mike Edwards Kevin Lloyd Ian Chadwick Keith Hull

⁷ Town of Collingwood web site

Dale West
Sandy Cunningham

Joe Gardhouse

DEPARTMENT HEADS

Acting CAO	Ed Houghton
Building Services	Bill Plewes
Clerk's Services	Sara Almas
Fire Department	Trent Elyea
Human Resources	Marianne Nero
Information	
Technology	Larry Irwin
Leisure Services	Marta Proctor
Library	Lynda Reid, Acting Director
Planning Services	Nancy Farrer
PublicWorks/Collus	Ed Houghton
Treasurer	Marjory Leonard
Police Services	Insp. John Trude, Detachment Commander OPP

CAAC and Collingwood Town Council

By-law No. 02-110 sets out the responsibility of the CAAC to:
'advise and assist Council in promoting and facilitating a barrier-free Town of Collingwood for citizens of all abilities, including persons with disabilities. This will be achieved through:

1. The review of municipal policies, programs and services; and
2. The identification, removal and prevention of barriers faced by persons with disabilities'

The CAAC is an advisory body to Council and is responsible and accountable to Council for its activities.

The CAAC reports to Council and is responsible to perform the following duties required by the Ontarians with Disabilities Act. These duties include the development and refinement of an Annual Accessibility Plan. The plan is to consider barriers to people with disabilities and ways to remove and prevent those barriers. The Annual Plan includes the following elements:

- Reporting to Council on the steps taken to identify, remove and prevent barriers to people with disabilities
- How Council assesses its by-laws, policies, programs, practices and services to identify barriers
- A list of by-laws, policies, programs, practices and services Council will review in the coming year to identify barriers.
- How Council intends to identify, remove and prevent barriers in the coming year
- All other information required by the Act and its regulations, as amended from time to time.⁸

In addition, the CAAC advises Council on the preparation, implementation and effectiveness of its Annual Accessibility Plan to ensure it addresses the identification, removal and prevention of barriers to people with disabilities in the Town of Collingwood's by-laws, and all its policies, programs, practices and services.

Additional duties of the CAAC include:

- Ability to review development site plans and drawings required in accordance to Section 41 of the *Planning Act*.
- Review and monitor existing and proposed procurement policies of Council for the purpose of providing advice with respect to accessibility for persons with disabilities to the goods and services being procured.
- Reviewing access for persons with disabilities to buildings, structures and premises (or parts thereof) that Council purchases, contracts, significantly renovates, leases or funds.⁹
- Councillor Sandy Cunningham is the Council liaison that has been appointed to represent the CAAC. Councillor Cunningham brings items of concern from the Committee to Council (and vice versa) for both information and consideration.
- A representative of CAAC presents the Accessibility Plan to Council annually at regular meeting of Council. Members of the CAAC regularly monitor Council

⁸ By-law No. 02 – 110 of the Corporation of the Town of Collingwood. 3.1 (i-iv)

⁹ By-law No. 02 – 110 of the Corporation of the Town of Collingwood. 3.4 – 3.6

agendas and meetings either in person or by electronic means in order to identify emerging issues which impact accessibility in Collingwood.

The CAAC Action Plan

The CAAC Action Plan is appended. This plan is designed to build on the Town of Collingwood Strategic Priorities¹⁰. In particular it recognizes the values outlined: integrity, excellence, respect, results and teamwork.

Within this context, the specific goals of the Accessibility Action Plan are designed to:

1. Facilitate the committee's insight into accessibility issues so it is better positioned to advise Council;
2. Provide a framework by which Council as well as the public can be made aware of accessibility issues; and
3. Identify specific strategies that the committee believes the Town of Collingwood needs to consider to improve accessibility.

CAAC Successes

Over the past year (2011) the CAAC has achieved many of the goals outlined in the 2011 Action Plan. These include:

- ✓ Publishing an edition of the Collingwood Accessibility Advisory Committee newsletter which highlighted the accessibility features of the downtown revitalization project.
- ✓ Participating in the Collingwood Municipal Days event held at the curling rink. The CAAC was the only town committee at the event.
- ✓ Developing new signage for public events to reflect accessibility in the Town of Collingwood.
- ✓ Celebrating National Access Awareness Week with a presentation of the CAAC Annual Plan to Town Council.
- ✓ Completing an audit of the Station Museum Building and submitting accessibility recommendations to the Town.

¹⁰ Town of Collingwood Strategic Priorities. Web site.

- ✓ Attending the Simcoe County Accessibility Network meetings and delivering a presentation on the downtown revitalization.
- ✓ Providing input into applications for accessibility funding from provincial and federal sources.
- ✓ Streamlining the structure of the CAAC by reducing the number of members to that of other Town committees.
- ✓ Instituting a voting committee seat for Breaking Down Barriers (BDB). BDB is also responsible for carrying out Site Plan reviews under the Planning Act, for the Town of Collingwood.
- ✓ Providing feedback and advice for the Town of Collingwood on the Integrated Accessibility Standard which was introduced in June of 2011. Specifically, CAAC members put forward recommendations regarding accessible transit; accessible parks; safety and accessibility on streets, sidewalks and trails; and accessible parking.
- ✓ Participating in two radio chat shows to promote accessibility in Collingwood.

The CAAC also continues in its advisory capacity in a variety of areas:

- ✓ Contributing suggestions and assistance to enhance the accessibility of the web site of the Town of Collingwood and the weekly newspaper announcements for those who with visual disabilities.
- ✓ Developing and maintaining a procedure for citizens to raise accessibility concerns in the Town of Collingwood.
- ✓ Participating in planning of renovations carried out in municipal buildings to make them more accessible.
- ✓ Providing advice to Town officials for concerns received from citizens regarding barriers
- ✓ Continuing to conduct municipal building audits as required.
- ✓ Supporting grant applications for provincial and federal accessibility funding

The Town of Collingwood has carried out the following accessible upgrades during the past year:

- ✓ The Town is compliant with Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation Emergency and public Safety Information Section 13 and Workplace Emergency Information Section 27;
- ✓ Tax Department has been retrofitted to become more accessible;
- ✓ 3 Accessible door openers were installed at the Collingwood Regional Airport;
- ✓ Supported the new transit service between the Town of Collingwood and Wasaga Beach.

CAAC Planning Objectives 2012

The CAAC is looking at the following objectives as part of the 2012 Accessibility Plan:

1. Developing an accessibility checklist for the Town of Collingwood based on the Integrated Accessibility Standard. Checklist will include appropriate time lines and activities to ensure all regulations are met in a timely manner.
2. Creating a public awareness campaign of the Customer Service Standard and the Integrated Accessibility Standard (impact of these standards for citizens and business community in Collingwood).
3. Offering specific recommendations for accessible transportation in Collingwood and ensuring promotion of the availability of this transportation.
4. Initiating a pilot program to encourage business renovations to include an accessibility review.
5. Promoting and celebrating accessibility in Collingwood through public events including participation in the 2012 Municipal Days..
6. Providing input into parks and recreation planning especially in the area of accessible playground equipment.
7. Networking with community partners such as Breaking Down Barriers, Business Improvement Association, Chamber of Commerce, and others to promote accessibility issues.
8. Completing all remaining audits of Town of Collingwood public facilities.
9. Launching training for CAAC members on Site Plan review process.

10. Requesting departmental representatives to attend meetings with the CAAC as necessary to provide opportunities for information exchanges.
11. Producing a new edition of the CAAC newsletter for distribution.
12. Investigating possible initiatives to promote accessible parking in areas developed before legislation was introduced.
13. Providing input into accessible parking issues as required.
14. Preparing an annual accessibility plan for 2013.
15. Monitoring provincial government legislation especially the possible passing the legislation regarding the built environment.
16. Participating in future Simcoe County Accessibility Network activities.
17. Participating in Simcoe County Accessibility Advisory Committee activities as necessary (this could include a county-wide accessibility event)