

The Corporation of the Town of Espanola Accessibility Status Report 2021

An update on the actions by Espanola to prevent and remove barriers for persons with disabilities.

The Municipality is committed to remove and prevent barriers that limit individuals with disabilities accessing services and facilities. The municipality continues to identify any opportunities to enhance accessibility needs within the community and implement as permitted. We will continue to work creating an inclusive community that will allow everyone equal opportunity to access services, programs and facilities.

Accessibility Status Update for 2021

This annual report describes the progress and measures taken by the Town of Espanola in 2021 to improve accessibility and implement the requirements set out in the AODA.

Information and Communications Accomplishments

The Municipality continues to meet virtually for Council Meetings using Zoom and eScribe. This process allows residents to attend Council meetings virtually or watch a recorded version all while following along with the agenda package that is uploaded to the website in a HTML format from home on their own devices. Council has passed a resolution to have the addition of Special Meetings of Council, excluding those held in camera, to be streamed and recorded as well.

Staff has been working with Sandbox Software Solutions to create accessible documents wherever possible, such as fillable PDF forms. An accessible audit was conducted to ensure best practices are being adhered to as well as correcting potential issues.

Transportation Accomplishments

Council has amended the Traffic Bylaw to allow the Care Van to stop on highways to pick up and drop off users when there is not enough room to use their driveways to deploy the wheelchair lift. This allows the user to still be picked up and dropped off at the desired location without having to travel to an alternate area.

Design of Public Spaces

Our application to rehabilitate Pinegrove Park was successful and the Park received \$100,000 worth of accessible playground equipment, accessible picnic table and pathways. The Recreation and Cultural Advisory Committee submitted a community survey to all residents prior to the development of the park to allow feedback to help address any concerns. This survey was available in several different formats.

Funding was placed in the 2021 Municipal Budget for the development of a Splash Pad. A sub-committee of the Recreation and Cultural Advisory Committee was created to determine the best locations for this project, which includes accessibility factors.

All suggestions and comments to improve accessibility within Espanola are welcomed. By working with all stakeholders, the Town of Espanola will meet these goals by focusing on improvements that can be made within our existing services and infrastructure as well as ensuring any new facilities, programs and services are AODA compliant.

Public input may be submitted to the Municipality by contacting us by email at town@espanola.ca; by phone at 705 869 1540 or in writing using the following address: Town of Espanola; 100 Tudhope St.; Suite #2; Espanola, ON P5E 1S6.