

Staff Report

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Report To:	General Government Committee	
Date of Meeting:	April 13, 2026	Report Number: CAO-004-26
Authored by:	Jeannette Whynot, Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility Specialist	
Submitted By:	Mary-Anne Dempster, CAO	
By-law Number:		Resolution Number:
File Number:		
Report Subject:	2025 Annual Accessibility Update	

Recommendation:

1. That Report CAO-004-26, and any related delegations or communication items, be received for information.
2. That Report CAO-004-26, be placed on the Municipality's website to meet the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)* requirements; and
3. That all interested parties listed in Report CAO-004-26 be advised of Council's decision.

Report Overview

The [Integrated Accessibility Standard Regulations](#) (IASR) requires Municipalities to prepare and publish an annual status report on their AODA Multi-Year Accessibility Plan (MYAP) progress. This annual accessibility update provides a summary of the Municipality's progress and commitment to ensure compliance with all five standards and associated requirements.

1. Background

- 1.1 The Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Office, within the Office of the CAO, oversees the Municipality's compliance with the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* (AODA) and acts as a resource for all municipal service areas. The Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility Specialist collaborates with municipal departments to address accessibility concerns and ensures that Clarington continues to make strides towards becoming a barrier-free community.
- 1.2 Under the AODA, Clarington is required to develop a [Multi-Year Accessibility Plan](#) (MYAP) that outlines how the Municipality will meet its obligations under the legislation and remove barriers for people with disabilities.
- 1.3 This Annual Accessibility Update highlights the progress of the MYAP in 2025 but is not intended to be an inventory of every accomplishment.

2. Multi-Year Accessibility Plan Progress

- 2.1 In 2025, the Municipality continued to advance actions identified in its Multi-Year Accessibility Plan through improvements to accessible customer service, employment, information and communication, transportation, the built environment, and governance. Key areas of progress are summarized below.

Governance

- 2.2 The Municipality submitted its 2025 Accessibility Compliance Report to the Ministry of Seniors and Accessibility, confirming full compliance with AODA requirements.

Accessible Customer Service

- 2.3 Adult change tables were installed at the Garnet B. Rickard Recreation Complex, Courtice Community Complex, and Alan Strike Aquatics Centre, supported in part by the Ontario Inclusive Communities Grant.
- 2.4 The Inclusive Communities Grant also helped fund the installation of a power-door operator and emergency alarm system in the universal accessible change room at Diane Hamre Recreation Centre.
- 2.5 Inclusive recreation equipment, including inclusive skating aids and ice sleds, were purchased to reduce barriers to participation in municipal recreation programs.

- 2.6 Sensory-friendly amenities continue to be incorporated into municipal events such as Canada Day.
- 2.7 Municipal staff continue to receive accessible customer service training as part of their onboarding.

Employment

- 2.8 Throughout 2025, the Municipality undertook initiatives to support neurodiversity in the workplace, including staff education and the introduction of tools and resources supported by federal funding. These efforts contributed to building awareness, reducing stigma, and fostering a more inclusive workplace culture.
- 2.9 The Municipality continues to collaborate with disability organizations when recruiting to ensure people with disabilities are aware of job openings and the corporation's commitment to being an inclusive employer.
- 2.10 Job descriptions continue to be reviewed through an inclusion lens to ensure only essential job requirements are included.
- 2.11 The Municipality participated in the Durham Region Disability Employment Conference, promoting the organization as an inclusive employer in support of National Disability Employment Month.

Information and Communication

- 2.12 The Municipality continues to monitor its website and its content to ensure that it meet or exceeds the requirements of the AODA.
- 2.13 Staff training on creating accessible documents, remediation, and incorporating accessibility into daily work practices continued throughout 2025.
- 2.14 The Municipality continues to offer alternative formats and communication supports, upon request.

Transportation

- 2.15 Updates to the Vehicle for Hire By-law were completed in collaboration with Durham Region municipalities, increasing the availability of accessible taxi services within Clarington.

Design of Public Spaces

- 2.16 Significant accessibility upgrades were completed at Tyrone Community Centre with funding from the Government of Canada's Enabling Accessibility Fund, including new accessible and universal washrooms and improved door access.
- 2.17 A new accessible ramp was installed at Waverly Place.

- 2.18 Accessible features, as required by the AODA, are incorporated into built environment capital projects and upgrades. This includes Tactile Warning Surface Indicators (TWSI), accessible parking spaces, and accessible playground features.

3. Clarington Accessibility Advisory Committee (CAAC)

- 3.1 The Clarington Accessibility Advisory Committee (CAAC) is a citizen committee legislated under Part VII of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)*. The Committee is vibrant, engaged, and extremely passionate about their work. Meetings are either virtual, or hybrid format, in support of removing barriers and ensuring flexibility for members. As required by the AODA, at least 50% of citizen members identify as a person with a disability.
- 3.2 The CAAC continued to play a key advisory role in 2025, providing legislated input on municipal projects, site plans, and policy initiatives. The Committee also supported community awareness and engagement through partnerships, regional collaboration, and participation in accessibility- focused events

4. Advancing the IDEA Strategy and Clarington's Strategic Plan

- 4.1 The accessibility function is situated within the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Office, recognizing that barriers related to disability often intersect with race, gender, culture and other aspects of identity. Over the past year, the DEI Office has been exploring ways to strengthen these intersections by assessing role developments, aligning work plans and identifying opportunities for joint initiatives that advance both accessibility and broader equity goals.
- 4.2 Accessibility initiatives undertaken in 2025 supported the Municipality's [Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Anti-Racism \(IDEA\) Strategy](#) and [Clarington's Strategic Plan](#), particularly the Connect pillar. Actions focused on reducing barriers, improving equitable access to services and facilities, and fostering an inclusive workplace and community.
- 4.3 Key contributions included improvements to accessible infrastructure, inclusive recreation opportunities, workplace accessibility initiatives, and collaboration with regional partners and community organizations

5. 2026 Initiatives

- 5.1 Throughout 2026, the Municipality will:
- Build internal capacity through Rick Hansen Foundation Accessibility Certification training.
 - Continue to train staff on accessibility, inclusion and accessible documents as part of the staff DEI training schedule highlighted in the IDEA Strategy
 - Purchase additional mobility mats for outdoor municipal events, as we continue to reduce barriers to municipal programs and improve accessibility as outlined in the Strategic Plan.

- The Municipality will undertake a review of its bylaws related to accessible on and off-street parking.
- Advance the Municipality's People Strategy by:
 - Reviewing and updating policies and procedures related to the AODA's Employment Standard and;
 - Developing inclusive hiring resources that address implicit bias and neurodiversity.
- Continue to support the Strategic Plan and IDEA Strategy by collaborating with Durham Region municipalities and strengthening partnerships with disability organizations to advance accessibility and inclusion in Clarington and Durham.

6. Financial Considerations

Not Applicable.

7. Strategic Plan

- 7.1 The 2025 Annual Status Update supports the Connect Pillar of Clarington's Strategic Plan by working to create a safe, diverse, inclusive and vibrant community.

8. Climate Change

Not Applicable.

9. Concurrence

Not Applicable.

10. Conclusion

It is respectfully recommended that the 2025 Annual Accessibility Update Report be received for information.

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Attachments:

Not Applicable

Interested Parties:

The following interested parties will be notified of Council's decision:

Clarington Accessibility Advisory Committee