

Operating Budget – Special Project

Instructions

- Complete this form for each new special project proposed within your operating budget.
- **Deadline:** Submit all budget forms by October 28, 2021 to your Divisional Director.

Project Title:	Accessibility Plan and AODA Compliance		
Division:	Legislative Services	Department:	Legislative Services
Timeline:	2022 Budget – December 2022	Submitted by:	Brent Larmer

Justification Category

☐ Council Request
 ☐ Organizational Review
 ☒ Strategic Plan
 ☒ Other

Please explain in detail:

Accessibility

The Town of Cobourg's Multi-Year Accessibility Plan will set out how the Town will continue to be an accessible organization over the next five (5) years.

The Town will continue to focus on the following six (6) areas;

1. People,
2. Policies, procedures, and best practices,
3. Communications and technology,
4. Transit and transportation,
5. Infrastructure and the built environment, and
6. Training, education, and awareness.

The standards support the principles of the AODA to ensure dignity, integration, independence, and equal opportunity and each standard has specific timelines for implementation. The AODA is in place for the purpose of ensuring that People with Disabilities are not discriminated against. Implementation for both public and private sectors is to be phased in over time to achieve the objectives of a fully accessible province by 2025.

The following recommended 2022 Budget Special Projects are in-line with the Town approved Multi-Year Accessibility Plan 2020-2024. All projects will be referenced with a page number of the plan and objectives that are outlined within the plan to be achieved.

[Town of Cobourg Multi-Year Accessibility Plan](#)

Closed Captioning of Council Meetings

This is a requirement under the AODA for website compliance. It has worked really well this year with a few bumps that have been smoothed out and is provided by eSCRIBE who hosts our agendas, minutes, videos, etc. This will be a yearly budget requirement to meet the requirements of Provincial Legislation.

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LanguageLine

This is a continuation of the project under the Inclusive Communities Grant (ICG). The request is for an additional \$2,500 to top up the \$2,000 that will be provided by the grant. This will allow all of By-Law and Fire to have access to LanguageLine on their phone to assist anyone in need right away without having to carry a bulky iPad. Language Line provides on-demand and onsite language interpretation and document translation services worldwide for law enforcement, healthcare organizations, legal courts, schools, and businesses in over 240 languages. This will allow the Town to be able to fully support customers, residents and visitors that would need ALS interpretation at the front lines or those in which English is not their first language. The Town already has four (4) sites utilizing the system.

Page 38 – MYAP – Accessible Customer Service Standard:

- *Explore possibilities for implementing video remote interpreting system – AODA S. 7.*

Rick Hansen Training and Certification

This was requested through the Inclusive Communities Grant Survey that was sent out about suggestions for other ways that we could be more accessible in our built environment. It is recommended that at least one person, particularly in the Planning or Building Department or the Accessibility and EDI Coordinator if approved, take the course and become certified to then assess all the buildings.

In addition, this could be adjusted to be more to pay and fund one (1) of the Rick Hansen certified persons to come and do the assessment for us, but that would probably cost more money. This cannot be funded through the Inclusive Communities Grant.

The audits of the beach, Marina, campground, Victoria Hall etc. have been completed and to make them accessible by 2025, priorities areas have been suggested to be addressed next year and in 2023. Other areas of the Town should be audited on an ongoing basis with the Accessibility Upgrade fund being a capital budget to draw from when these issues arise or based on need. With only three (3) more years until we need to be compliant with the AODA's Build Environment Standards, there is a lot of work to be done so this is to try to mitigate a lot of that in the interim.

Page 35 – MYAP – Design of Public Spaces Standard / Design and Development

- *Continue to provide appropriate staff members the Design of Public Spaces Standard training – AODA s.80*
- *Consider the need for the Town of Cobourg to create Facility Accessibility Design Standards.*
- *Improve accessibility in the Downtown core – AODA s.80*
- *Improve brickwork in various areas to allow for access to Persons with Disabilities within Cobourg. - AODA s.80*
- *Improve the accessibility of the boardwalk and beach access. - AODA s.80.12*

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Education and Awareness Campaigns

As we have seen throughout this year, it's always beneficial if any surveys, information, etc. have a paid or promoted post behind them to reach all persons effectively. There is currently funds available in the Inclusive Communities Grant to do this as well, but since that funding has to be used by the end of March, this is to assist with anything that occurs from April to December, especially around National Accessibility Awareness Week and the Accessible Beach mat.

Page 21 - 22 -MYAP: Information and Communication Standard:

- *Use Accessibility Awareness Week to encourage learning and education.*
- *Enhance external communication to increase awareness of programs and services*

National Accessibility Awareness Week

In 2021 there was such a success with this National Week, and it is noted in our Multi-Year Accessibility Plan to proclaim and host events for NAAW. There are already options for in-person events with the help of the Accessibility Advisory Committee but this funding should be used for a keynote address or other large scale items that would require payment. This budget would be reviewed and worked on with the assistance of the Accessibility Advisory Committee for 2022.

Page 21 -MYAP: Information and Communication Standard:

- *Continue to proclaim Accessibility Awareness Week on an annual basis;*
- *Begin to promote International Day of Persons with Disabilities.*

Signage and Wayfinding Upgrades

Many of the items that have been discussed to help with finding different areas of downtown, the Beach, etc. especially accessible facilities such as parking and washrooms. There is \$2,500 in the Inclusive Communities Grant allocated to this, but this additional funding will help with any projects after March and/or to make sure the project is able to be successful. The Accessibility Advisory Committee will be engaged with the project, including accessing physical areas and best practices for those with accessible needs trying to navigate the downtown and the waterfront.

Page 25 – MYAP: Information and Communication Standard:

- *Review and refine the signage at public facilities to assist Persons with Disabilities – AODA s.12*
- *Review and refine the signage for public areas, especially in the downtown core, the Marina, and Parks in Cobourg. – AODA s.12*
- *Continue to communicate about Accessible Parking and Washroom locations in Cobourg. - AODA s.12.*

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BrowseAloud (ReachDeck)

ReachDeck, which used to be known as BrowseAloud, is an all-encompassing tool that will make it easier for all persons to navigate our website. It adds an extra level of compliance to our requirements under the AODA to make our website accessible. Communications has tested it and approves the introduction of this software to the Town's corporate site. This application is an innovative support software that adds speech, reading, and translation to all of our websites facilitating access and participation for people with dyslexia, low literacy, English as a second language, and those with mild visual impairments.

Browsealoud features:

- Text-to-speech with choice of reading speeds and highlighters to enhance reading comprehension.
- Translate web pages into 99 languages; speak translated text aloud in 40 languages.
- On-screen text magnifier helps users with visual impairments.
- MP3 generator converts text to audio files for offline listening.
- Screen mask blocks on-screen clutter, letting readers focus on text being read.
- Web page simplifier removes ads and other distracting content for easier reading; and
- Custom settings built in to suit individual user needs and preferences.

Page 22 - MYAP: Information and Communication Standard:

- *Continue to monitor and audit the website to ensure compliance. AODA s.14*

Blue Toad Accessible Newsletters

This will allow Communications and Community Services to put out accessible content, such as newsletters, recreation guides, strategic plans, etc. that typically are PDFs. It includes two branding options and up to 300 pages of content published. More may be required depending on user feedback in the future. This application will help address some ongoing concerns from residents that some print and digital content is not accessible to all.

Page 22 - MYAP: Information and Communication Standard:

- *Raise awareness of the ability to produce key documents in accessible formats, upon request and proactively available for important documents. – AODA s.12(1)(3)(4)*
- *Ensure existing and new information available to the public is up to date, in plain language, and in an accessible format. – AODA s.14(2).*

Budget Implications

Budget Required:	\$35,850.00		
Funding Available:	\$4,500 and \$12,000 remaining ICG Grant funding		
Total Project Cost (\$):			\$40,350.00
Total Budget Required (\$):			35,850.00

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Commitments:

Please describe any commitments that have already been made for this special project.

The current commitments that are in place are the agreement with eSCRIBE for the Closed Captioning which is five (5) years.

Effects on Future Operating Budgets:

Please describe any impacts on future operating budgets (ie. maintenance costs, etc.)

- Closed Captioning of Council and Public Meetings is a continuous budget item to remain compliant with the AODA.
- Language Line is also a yearly subscription from each budget year at a cost of \$30.00.
- BrowseAloud and BlueToad Accessible Newsletters are also a yearly budget item.

Pictures:

Please include any pictures or concept images for the special project, if available.

