



MUNICIPALITY OF THAMES CENTRE

REPORT NO. AIAC-001-25

TO: Accessibility & Inclusivity Advisory Committee
FROM: Director of Community Services and Facilities & Director of Legislative Services/Clerk
MEETING DATE: January 7, 2025

SUBJECT: 2024 Accessibility and Inclusivity Accomplishments

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT Report No. AIAC-001-25, 2024 Accessibility and Inclusivity Accomplishments, **BE RECEIVED** for information.

BACKGROUND & COMMENTS:

As part of the Middlesex County Joint Annual Accessibility Report, the Municipality of Thames Centre reported the following:

- Renovation and expansion at FlightExec Centre – doubling the space we rent to Victoria Order of Nurses (VON) for them to run their day program and allow them to add 2 respite rooms, along with more than doubling our Active Living Centre (previously called the Senior Centre), which offers numerous programs and events for those 50 and older.
- The walking trail at Thorndale Community Park, which is approx. 1.5 km long and was previously crushed limestone, was upgraded to a paved path, with the main section also widened beyond the 6' standard we have for the balance of this path.
- Community Garden was created in Dorchester (and support added to existing community garden in Thorndale), with both locations having raised vegetable gardens (roughly 3') for accessibility.
- Developing a new Website which will launch in the new year, with updated accessibility including html forms, e-commerce and more
- Refresher training for staff on AODA requirements including accessible documents and Notice of Service Disruptions.
- Accessible Customer Service training for new hires as part of onboarding and refreshers for all staff are ongoing
- Review of Evacuation Plans for all municipal buildings including accessibility requirements for staff and the public is taking place
- Review underway of all Human Resources policies

- Updated AV equipment in Council Chambers to provide better online access to Council meetings
- Opened Phase II of the inclusive park in Dorchester in June 2024

Staff Training

In 2024 Municipal Staff undertook a number of training initiatives:

- Indigenous Cultural Competency Training (2 cycles) provided by Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centres (OFIFC) – April 2024
- Thames Centre Fire Department underwent training with Alzheimer’s Association on interacting with Alzheimer patients in emergencies in November 2024
- The Clerk lead a training session for staff on Accessibility of Documents in October 2024

As recommended by the Accessibility and Inclusivity Advisory Committee and as approved by Council, in May 2024 Mayor McMillan signed the agreement to join the UNESCO Coalition of Inclusive Municipalities.

Prepared by: Jana Nethercott, Director of Legislative Services/Clerk in consultation with Steve MacDonald, Director of Community Services and Facilities.