Committee of the Whole

Meeting Date:	**September 27, 2022**
Submitted by:	**Sarah Savoie, County Accessibility Coordinator**
Subject:	**Middlesex County Accessibility Content Style and Design Guide and Middlesex County Creating Accessible Documents Guide**

Background:

The Accessibility Content Style and Design Guide and the Creating Accessible Documents Guide were created to ensure that all of the County's online documents and social media posts are compliant with the *Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulations* (IASR) WCAG 2.0 Level AA requirements.

Note: the guides are working documents as training may identify other document accessibility gaps that should be addressed further within the guides. Once the website is redeveloped the guides will be expanded to include web accessibility information.

The guides will be presented to the Middlesex Accessibility Advisory Committee as an information item at the final meeting in October 2022. Further, the two guides have been circulated and training has begun for Communications staff. The feedback that has been provided was incorporated. Training will also be provided for each department and interested Local Municipal Partners. Training instructions will be provided and the training is customized based on accessibility issues identified within the documents collected.

Analysis:

The **Accessibility Content Style and Design Guide** provides information on accessible fonts, font colours, colour contrast requirements, headings and styles, accessible format and communication supports, accessible web content, image and video accessibility, and resources. The Guide incorporates corporate branding requirements in line with the County's Communications Strategy.

It provides information on accessibility content style and design rules that must be applied to all County correspondence, documents and social media postings. Documents can include but are not limited to the following:

- Reports to Council
- Minutes
- Agendas
- Policies
- Procedures
- Terms of Reference
- Plans
- Guides
- Social Media Posts (text and images)

The **Creating Accessible Documents Guide** provides detail on how to convert different documents or social media posts into an accessible format. The documents and posts must comply with the W3C (World Wide Web Consortium) Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0 Level A and AA.

Per the legislation, all documents created after January 1, 2012 that are posted online for the public to access must be in accessible format.

The guide provides information on:

- Web accessibility resources
- How to make Word documents accessible and how to use the Word accessibility checker
- How to make accessible PowerPoints and Excel documents
- How to create accessible PDFs by using the Adobe Accessibility Checker
- Creating Accessible InDesign and Canva documents
- How to ensure Social Media posts are accessible for:
    - Facebook
    - Instagram
    - LinkedIn
    - Twitter
    - YouTube
- Information on the WCAG 2.0 Level A and AA Checklist

There are step-by-step details on how to implement the changes necessary to make the various document and social media posts accessible. Training will also be provided to staff members regarding the guides and document accessibility.

Alignment with Strategic Focus:

This report aligns with the following Strategic Focus and Objectives:

Strategic Focus	Objectives
Cultivating Community Vitality	• Innovate social and community services by implementing guides that ensure all documents and social media posts are accessible to everyone
Connecting Through Infrastructure	• Encourage and advocate through partnerships, the construction of scalable, equitable broadband infrastructure, recognizing our unserved and underserved areas by making changes to existing documents and ensuring all future documents are fully accessible, thereby removing barriers for people with disabilities when accessing information and services
Strengthening Our Economy	• Create an environment that enables the attraction and retention of businesses, talent, and investments by ensuring the recruitment documentation is accessible to all job applicants
Promoting Service Excellence	• Anticipate and align municipal service delivery to emerging needs and expectations by considering the increased populations of seniors and people with disabilities and introducing strategic initiatives • Engage, educate and inform residents, businesses, and visitors of county services and community activities and bring awareness to document accessibility and the benefits it brings to ensuring everyone has equal access to information and County services