

Accessibility in Community Gardens

Hamilton Community Garden Network, Knowledge Swap, March 25, 2015 by Clare Wagner

Sustain Ontario Webinar

'The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) is one of the world's most progressive legislation on accessibility and is part of the Ontario Government's goal to make the province accessible by 2025 through the development of accessibility standards. Particular to community gardens is the Design of Public Spaces Standard that ensures public spaces are accessible to everyone. Accessible public spaces include specific features that make it easier for everyone – people with disabilities, seniors and families – to use public spaces. <http://sustainontario.com/2015/02/25/25991/news/food-access-community-garden-accessibility/>

When recording is available, will be shared through HCGN.

Key Notes and Resources

- Focus currently on accessible interactions, customer service and public engagement
 - Accessible Public Engagement, OMSSA: <http://www.omssa.com/accessible-community-engagement/>
- What is legislated for your group?
 - AODA Wizard: Ontario.ca/accessON
- Accessibility in Gardens
 - Design of public space – does NOT require retrofitting unless renovations occurring
Renovations must consider accessibility but the requirement only applies to new areas/area being renovated
 - Definitely costly \$20,000-30,000 to get 2-3 raised beds and paved paths
 - Waterloo barrier free guide:
http://www.together4health.ca/files/BarrierFreeGardens_Guide.pdf
 - Pathways to Recreation: http://www.prontario.org/index.php?ci_id=9181
- Who is Responsible?
 - If leasing land where does responsibility that fall? Look at lease agreement and have discussions for legal responsibility. Who has what responsibility for aspects like accessibility and related training? Consider paths, parking, etc.
- Other guides and sites
 - Design of Public Spaces (DOPS) Standards
 - Global Alliance on Accessible Technologies and Environments (GAATES) Technical Guide
 - Ontario Building Code
 - Accessforward.ca
 - Guide to Integrated Accessibility Standards and Regulations:
<http://www.mcass.gov.on.ca/documents/en/mcass/accessibility/CombinedEnglishDocumentsIASR-02%20FINAL-s.pdf>