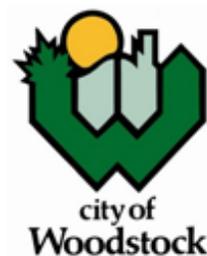


The City of Woodstock's Annual Status Report of the Multi- Year Accessibility Plan



2016

A summary of Woodstock's accomplishments towards inclusion in 2016, and looking ahead to 2017. In compliance with Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005.

Accessible formats and communication supports are available, upon request.

Background and Purpose

The purpose of this status report is to make the public aware of the City of Woodstock's progress with regards to our 2013-2017 Accessibility Plan to prevent and remove barriers and meet requirements under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA). An open public meeting was held on November 30, 2016 to allow the public to have the opportunity to participate in a review and to provide feedback regarding the accessibility plan. The City of Woodstock's 2013-2017 Municipal Accessibility Plan can be found on our [website](http://www.cityofwoodstock.ca) (www.cityofwoodstock.ca). We have been investing resources to remove barriers, and will continue to build on this momentum to improve accessibility.

The City's vision on accessibility:

- To promote public awareness and sensitivity to all persons with disabilities;
- To encourage co-operation between all service and interest groups;
- To identify and document relevant matters and concerns;
- To create a community that provides opportunities for barrier-free access to housing, transportation, education, recreation, health care and employment;
- To embrace the concept of universal design to include both persons with disabilities and the increasing aging population;
- To ensure that policies and practices are maintained in relation to the development and redevelopment of services and facilities that have regard to persons with disabilities and aging population statistics;
- To ensure that the City receives the maximum economic benefits from building an accessible City;
- To encourage public participation and civic engagement in community accessibility matters.

The City of Woodstock is dedicated to promoting a barrier-free City for employees, citizens and all who live, work, visit, and invest in Woodstock. With this plan, the City is proud to present its findings and report on the development of strategies to remove and prevent future barriers for people with disabilities and the aging population.

The Legislation

In 2005, the Government of Ontario committed to the development of five accessibility standards under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act. The purpose of AODA is to develop, implement and enforce accessibility standards in order to achieve accessibility for Ontarians with disabilities by the year 2025. These standards outline the identification, removal, and prevention of barriers so that people with disabilities will have more opportunities to participate in everyday life.

The Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation is comprised of five (5) standards. This is now law and requirements are being phased in each year.

- The *Information and Communications* Standard will help Ontario businesses and organizations make their information accessible for people with disabilities.
- The *Employment* Standard will help Ontario businesses and organizations make accessibility a regular part of their recruitment, hiring and supporting employees with disabilities.
- The *Transportation* Standard will make it easier for everyone to travel in Ontario.
- The *Design of Public Spaces* Standard will make it easier for persons with disabilities to move through, use and enjoy our community public spaces.
- The *Customer Service* Standard will make it easier for persons with disabilities to obtain services.

Update on the Design of Public Spaces

Effective 2016, the City of Woodstock is now required to meet accessibility requirements when constructing and maintaining new or redeveloped elements of public spaces including:

- Recreational trails and beach access routes
- Outdoor eating areas and play spaces (such as playgrounds)
- Exterior paths of travel (such as walkways across parks or between buildings)
- Accessible on- and off-street parking
- Service counters and waiting areas

For more information please visit the Province of Ontario's Website.

City of Woodstock Updates

Highlights of 2016

The below list highlights the planned accessibility action items for 2016 that were outlined in the 2013-2017 Multi-Year Plan. These items are a representation of the City's commitment in striving towards a barrier-free city. If a requirement has been completed in a previous year, it has not been listed here.

Planned Action Item	Status
Complete the Community Complex elevator renovation	Projected to be completed in the early new year
Create an accessible walkway to the Boathouse	Postponed
Install an accessible gate at Southside Park	Complete
Continue the installation of indoor paddle doors at South Gate Centre	Complete

Accessibility Improvements Above and Beyond the Original Plan

Transit and Para-transit

Transit staff provided travel training sessions to approximately 150 people. These training sessions were conducted through collaboration with community groups. One-on-one training sessions were also provided to persons requesting additional support. Travel training will be continued to be provided in 2017 in an effort to increase ridership. The travel training has been well received and feedback has been positive. Para-transit and dispatch service hours were also extended.

Parks

East Recreational Complex

New accessible washrooms were built at the east recreational complex. Asphalt pathways and concrete pads were also created to join all baseball diamonds together increasing accessibility to the baseball diamonds.

Cottle Park – 664 Parkinson Road

A new playground was built at Cottle Park which includes various accessibility features such as an accessible swing, ground sensory features and dual slides for caretakers.

Victoria Park – 413 Buller Street

A new walkway to the Afghanistan Memorial at the Cenotaph in Victoria Park was constructed. The newly constructed walkway allows for greater access to and from the Afghanistan Memorial.

Southside Aquatic Centre

Accessible Pool Ramp

Southside Aquatic Centre recently underwent an extensive renovation to the pool and pool deck area. These renovations created the installation of a built-in accessible ramp allowing for greater independence and accessibility for persons with disabilities when entering and exiting the pool.

Pool Access Chair

The aquatic centre also purchased a specially designed wheelchair that can be used in and around water. The pool access chair or aquatic wheelchair is intended to be used as a means to provide persons with disabilities with a secure and safe way into and out of the pool.

Dedicated Accessible Change Rooms

Dedicated accessible change rooms were also created as a means to further enhance the accessibility of services for persons with disabilities.

Lions Pool

Accessible Pool Lift

The Lions pool received an accessible wheelchair lift from the Southside Aquatic Centre. The wheelchair lift provides persons with disabilities the opportunity to fully participate in pool activities during the summer months.

Portable Accessible Washroom

A portable accessible washroom was also installed at the Lions pool which provides persons with disabilities greater independence.

Entranceways

Barriers to the facility were removed as ramps were added to the building and pool entranceways.

Parks Department Community Service Office

The parks department Community Services office located on 192 Old Wellington Street installed a new accessible service counter. The service counter at the Community Services office is now fully accessible and was installed in accordance to the City's Accessible Technical Guidelines.

Recreational Programming

Summer Camp Programs

This past summer City camp staff received extensive accessibility training for various forms of disabilities. These types of training sessions included behavior management, autism, inclusion training and confidence building. In addition, staff members obtained specialized training in order to accommodate individuals with specific needs. The summer camp programs also hired Inclusion Facilitators to ensure that all camp participants were able to partake in the regular programming.

Snow Buddies Program

The City of Woodstock has introduced the Snow Buddies program which aims to match adults 55 and older and adults with special needs, who need their driveways shoveled, with youth looking to earn a bit of cash or community volunteer hours for school. This program was developed as a means to provide individual assistance with snow shoveling activities during the winter time.

South Gate Centre

Automatic door openers were installed throughout the building.

Market Centre Theatre

After receiving public feedback City staff created an additional accessible seat in the Market Centre Theatre that is able to accommodate larger wheelchairs.

Online Payment of Dog Tags

Members of the public are now able to purchase dog tags online. The online payment option increases accessibility as individuals have the option to purchase dog tags online as opposed to physically purchasing tags at City Hall. The online payment process is also fully accessible and compliant to website accessibility standards.

AODA Website Compliance

The City's Web Developer/ AODA specialist is continuing to ensure that all web content conforms to the World Wide Web Consortium Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 Level AA by the year 2021. The City is on track to completing this goal.

Looking Ahead to 2017

This section outlines goals that the City of Woodstock plans to work toward in order to continue to improve accessibility for the year 2017.

- Complete the Community Complex elevator renovation by early Spring
- Create an accessible walkway to the Boathouse

Accessibility Feedback Policy

The City has in place a system for managing, evaluating and taking action on customer feedback regarding the City's delivery of accessible goods or services. Feedback may be provided either:

- In person at any City of Woodstock facility
- Via email to accessibility@cityofwoodstock.ca
- Via telephone at 519-539-1291 or TTY 519-539-7268

All feedback will be investigated, forwarded to the appropriate personnel, responded to, documented and tracked within seven (7) days. Feedback will be accepted in accessible formats and with other communication supports as required.

Continuous Achievement in Accessibility

In General...

- The City offers customer service to accommodate persons with disabilities;
- All departments must make the Clerk's Department aware of changes to facilities or services which increase accessibility so that the *Access Guide* remains a current document available to the public;
- The Accessibility Committee develops key messages to communicate with and educate the general public and staff;
- Evacuation procedures are in place for persons with disabilities at municipal facilities;
- The City provides education to the general public on accessibility issues faced by persons with disabilities;

Human Resources

- The City continues to train all new staff, volunteers, contractors and any other third parties who interact with the public on the City's behalf about the requirements of the Integrated Standards, 191/11 and the Customer Service Regulation, 429/07; and
- We continue to uphold employment equity policies and procedures;

Engineering

- An Accessibility Advisory Committee member is designated as the site plan reviewer to ensure accessibility is considered when reviewing site plan approvals;

- When planning sidewalks and walkways, the City implements accessibility features such as curb cuts, ramps, grate design, and location and grade elevations;
- Create designated accessible parking spaces at municipal facilities; and
- Where feasible, all steps at municipal facilities will be maintained so that they are cane detectable with contrasted nosings and treads;

Transit

- The City continues to provide a transit system that respects people's dignity and offers equal service to everyone, including those with a disability;
- Fare and hours of service parity between the conventional and specialized transit services exists:
 - The same fare is charged for persons with disabilities as passengers without disabilities, and there is never a charge for storing mobility aids.
 - Support Persons for persons with disabilities are not charged a fare.

Methodologies

Review of Current Activities to Identify Barriers

A review of current activities to identify barriers is ongoing with the goal of creating policies and procedures to prevent future barriers from being created and viewing the identified ones as opportunities for improvement. Barriers will be addressed on an ongoing basis.

Monitoring Progress and Audit Function

The status report of the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan is required on an annual basis and reviews by the Staff Accessibility Advisory Team will occur prior to the budget preparation cycle each year. The purpose of an annual review of the Multi-Year Municipal Accessibility Plan is to evaluate whether or not targets are being met and to adopt a plan to meet current expectations. The Staff Accessibility Advisory Team and the Accessibility Advisory Committee meet in May of each year to discuss the current year Accessibility Plan and to consider the upcoming year's accessibility capital budget. An annual public meeting shall be held involving persons with disabilities to review and collect feedback on the Plan, including conventional and specialized transit, as well as the annual Status Report.

Communication of Plan

The availability of the Multi-Year Municipal Accessibility Plan and any Status Reports are announced publicly at the televised City Council meeting. Additionally, plans and reports are posted on the City's [website](#).

Conclusion

The City of Woodstock is committed to continuously addressing accessibility barriers and to being progressive in developing innovative solutions to accessibility matters. We believe in integration and equal opportunity and are committed to treating all people in a way that allows them to maintain their dignity and independence. The City recommends that the Province coordinate the preparation of uniform Municipal Accessibility Guidelines so that the guidelines can be implemented in a consistent manner and that the Province provides Accessibility Funding to assist municipalities in the implementation of barrier-free services and facilities.

For more information on the City of Woodstock's 2016 Status Report contact Chris Gauthier or Amy Humphries:

- In person at City Hall, 500 Dundas St Woodstock
- By phone 519-539-1291 (TTY: 519-539-7268)
- Via email at cgauthier@cityofwoodstock.ca or ahumphries@cityofwoodstock.ca