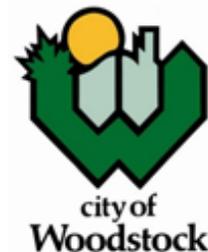


The City of Woodstock's Annual Status Report of the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan



2017

A summary of Woodstock's accomplishments towards inclusion in 2017, and looking ahead to 2018. 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, 2017 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 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 2017

The below list highlights the planned accessibility action items for 2017 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 elevator renovations in the Community Complex	Completed
Create accessible walkway to the Boathouse	Completed

Accessibility Improvements Above and Beyond the Original Plan

Engineering Department

Tactile surfaces were installed on several sidewalk intersections throughout the City of Woodstock.

Parks and Recreation Department

Cowan Fields Park

The accessibility of the East Diamond was further increased. New fencing was installed to divide the space from the rest of the park. Backstop and concrete pads were added allowing complete inclusivity of the Diamond for all individuals. Additionally, six accessible picnic tables were purchased and installed in the Pavilion. Accessible pathways and trails were created throughout the new complex as well as a fully accessible pavilion, washroom, playground and spray pad.

Play Structure Improvements

Edgewood Park- Accessibility improvements were installed at Edgewood Park. These improvements consist of bump ups, ground level sensory play features and an accessible swing.

Vansittart Avenue Park- The spray pad at Vansittart Avenue Park was revitalized in order to level out irregular slopes to enhance accessibility.

Halifax Park- The Halifax park development incorporated bumps ups, ground level sensory play features, an accessible swing and future phases will include paved walkways.

Shanna Larsen Park- A pavilion with accessible pathways were installed. The new accessible pathways connect to the accessible playgrounds and pathways that were installed in 2016.

Eastdale and Cottle Park- Asphalt pathways were installed at both parks which increased access to both playgrounds.

Southside Aquatic Centre

An additional parking space was designated as accessible in the main lot, in proximity to the main entrance of Southside Aquatic Centre.

Doors for accessible change stalls were modified at Southside Aquatic Centre, allowing access for wheelchairs with different dimensions (including water wheelchairs).

City Events

The City's special events team has taken significant strides in ensuring that accessibility considerations are incorporated when planning and executing special events in the City. These accessibility considerations include but are not limited to: accessible parking, public transportation, paths of travel, staging, seating, food services, public eating areas, washrooms and temporary toilets, rest areas, shelters, signs, service animals, training staff and volunteers, maps and information, and communication.

For example- When preparing for the CP Holiday Train Event, Staff provided exclusive accessible parking, ensured that half of the portable washrooms were accessible, provided a dedicated accessible viewing area and ensured that the accessible features were promoted on social media and on signs at the event.

Audit: Intersections

An audit was conducted by the Accessibility Advisory Committee's Accessibility Researcher who used her modernized power wheelchair to evaluate various intersections within the City. These intersections included: Delatre and Dundas, Dundas and Delatre, Dundas and Wellington, Juliana and Lindsay, Lansdowne and Devonshire. During the audit certain barriers were encountered which has prompted further exploration. The audit was submitted to the Accessibility Advisory Committee and was reviewed during their September 13th meeting. City staff are currently

working on addressing the issues that were identified through the audit and will provide solutions in the near future.

Technical Standards

In 2006 the City of Woodstock designed and implemented a comprehensive Accessibility Technical Guidelines document as a means to fill the accessibility gap that was present in the Building Code Act. Since that time the Building Code has seen various amendments that have incorporated accessibility requirements and features.

On January 1, 2016 the Accessibility Standard for the Design of Public Spaces became effective. The Design of Public Spaces standard sets out requirements for public spaces that are not covered by Ontario's Building Code. As a result the overall goal of the above noted standard was to further close the accessibility gap within the Building Code Act.

Considering the significant changes, City staff have revamped and updated the Technical Guidelines document. The proposed Technical Guidelines document acknowledges the increased role that the Building Code has taken in terms of accessibility and aims to further close the accessibility gap by addressing areas that are not covered by the Building Code. The proposed Technical Guidelines document is attached to this report. The Technical Standards document was presented and approved by the Woodstock Accessibility Advisory Committee on February 8, 2017.

Looking Ahead to 2018

As the current Multi-Year Accessibility Plan concludes at the end of this year, the City of Woodstock is diligently preparing for the next five years. All City departments have developed accessibility projects that will be compiled in the 2018-2022 Accessibility Plan. These various endeavors will ensure that the City of Woodstock remains in compliance with the regulations stated in The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005. As per the AODA, the City will conduct a public consultation session for the new multi-year plan in the year 2018.

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 2017 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