

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



2020

A summary of Woodstock's accomplishments towards inclusion in 2020, and looking ahead to 2021. In compliance with the 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 2018-2022 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan to prevent and remove barriers and meet requirements under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (AODA). Consultation with the public was held through a virtual meeting that took place on November 4th, 2020 to allow the public to have the opportunity to participate in a review and to provide feedback regarding this Status Report in accordance with Section 4(2) of *O. REG 191/11 (The Integrated Accessibility Standards)*. The City of Woodstock's 2018-2022 Municipal Accessibility Plan can be found online at:

<https://www.cityofwoodstock.ca/en/resourcesGeneral/PDFs/Clerks/Accessibility/2018-2022-Multi-Year-Accessibility-Plan-Final-accessible.pdf>

The City's Vision and Commitment to Accessibility:

- To promote public awareness and sensitivity towards 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 incorporates 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 committed to promoting a barrier-free City for employees, citizens and all who live, work, visit, and invest in Woodstock. With regards to the Multi-Year Accessibility plan, the City is proud to present its findings and report on the development of strategies to remove and prevent any and all future barriers for people with disabilities and the aging population.

The Legislation

The Government of Ontario created the *Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001*, with the aims to ensure accessibility practices were implemented in order to fully allow individuals to participate in their communities. It required all municipalities to produce an annual accessibility plan, to consult with people with disabilities on the planning, make the plan available publicly, and create an Accessibility Advisory Committee.

In 2005, the Government of Ontario committed to the development of five accessibility standards under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)*. 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 *O.REG 191/11: 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 more accessible.
- ◆ The Employment Standard will help Ontario businesses and organizations make accessibility a regular part of their recruitment, hiring and supporting of employees with disabilities.
- ◆ The Transportation Standard will make travel more accessible 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, and have their needs met accordingly.

For more information on this legislation, please visit aoda.ca

Highlights of 2020

The below list highlights the planned accessibility action items for 2020 that were outlined in the 2018-2022 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
Edgewood Park and Park Row Park <ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Create 6-foot-wide pathways from the city sidewalks to play feature to Edgewood Park and to Park Row Park tennis courts	Not completed. Due to be completed in 2021.
Cree Park <ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Remove old play equipment and design new equipment with accessible features	Complete
Lions Trail <ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Installation of walking bridge to join Lions Trail to Burgess Trail network	Not completed. Due to be completed by 2023.

Accessibility Improvements Above and Beyond the Original Plan

All City Facilities

- ◆ Accessibility taken into consideration when installing permanent glass barriers at customer contact points as a response to COVID-19.

Art Gallery

- ◆ Installed touchless automatic door openers on the 1st and 2nd floor entries to the Galleries.
- ◆ Installed automatic door openers and emergency call buttons on single occupancy washrooms.

- ◆ Installed touchless faucets in all public sinks and a touchless toilet flush in the washroom on 3rd floor.
- ◆ Published a practical accessibility guide for all exhibitions and education programs (found on the [Gallery's website](#)).
- ◆ Performed an accessibility audit of the website and ensured all documents were accessible.
- ◆ Transitioned many in-person/paper-based forms to online submissions.
- ◆ Made the Art Gallery a Scent-free facility.

Clerks Department

- ◆ Electronic participation now permitted for committee meetings.
- ◆ Conducted a scan/audit of documents on the City's website to identify documents that do not meet upcoming accessibility requirements as outlined in AODA.
- ◆ Worked with a contractor to remediate numerous documents on the City's website to make them accessible.

Engineering

- ◆ Front counter was remodeled and expanded at 944 James Street location resulting in the installation of an AODA compliant service desk.
- ◆ Automatic power doors were installed at 944 James Street.
- ◆ A universal washroom was installed at 944 James Street.

Parks & Recreation Department

- ◆ Accessibility improvements made to the front service counter.
- ◆ Installed an adult change table at the washrooms at Cowan fields.
- ◆ Installed new rubber and mulch surfacing at Southside main park.
- ◆ Upgraded the playground equipment and installed an accessible walkway and bench at Cree Park.
- ◆ Installed a paved walkway to the basketball court at Victoria Park.
- ◆ Installed a walkway and bleachers at the multi-use field in Cowan Park.
- ◆ Installed an accessible walkway to the pavilion and the washroom at Roth Park.
- ◆ Paved the parking lot and created accessible parking spaces at Roth Park.
- ◆ Installed a concrete boat ramp at Roth Park.
- ◆ Created accessible walkways at the gazebo in Southside Park.
- ◆ Extended the trail at Shanna Larsen Park.
- ◆ Completed the pathways and a basketball court at Ludington Park.
- ◆ Made the FAIR and camp volunteer application AODA compliant.

Reeves Community Complex

- ◆ Added 10 additional accessible parking spaces to the parking lot.

Woodstock Public Library

- ◆ Finalizing plans to install an adult change table.
- ◆ Installation of two raising/ lowering self-checkout terminals.

Looking Ahead to 2021

Information Technology

- ◆ Corporate wide audit and remediation of the City's website to ensure that all sites and documents conform to the World Wide Web Consortium Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0, Level AA.

Clerks

- ◆ Swing gate to be remodeled into full glass doors with an automatic door opener.

Parks & Recreation

- ◆ Planned installation of accessible washrooms at Roth Park.
- ◆ Installation of a 6-foot-wide pathway from the city sidewalk to play feature at Hunting Estates and Springbank Park.
- ◆ Remove old play equipment and design and install new equipment with accessible features at Homer Brown Park.

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 519-539-2382 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 has an Accessibility Advisory Committee (WAAC) that provides insight on matters regarding the identification, removal, and prevention of barriers.
- ◆ All departments inform the Clerk's Department of changes to facilities or services which increase accessibility so that the annual update reports can remain current documents.
- ◆ Evacuation procedures are in place for persons with disabilities at municipal facilities.

Employment, Training, and 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 Accessibility Standards, O.REG 191/11* and the *Customer Service Regulation, 429/07*.
- ◆ 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 as per the City's approved Accessibility Technical Guidelines.
- ◆ Designated accessible parking spaces are created at municipal facilities.

Transportation:

- ◆ 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:
 - ◆ There is never a charge for storing mobility aids.
 - ◆ Support Persons for persons with disabilities are not charged a fare.

Communication:

- ◆ The City can be contacted for access to accessible formats or communication supports.
- ◆ The City provides resources and education to the general public on accessibility issues faced by persons with disabilities.

Customer Service:

- ◆ The City offers customer service to accommodate persons with disabilities.
- ◆ The City documents all accessibility related policies and makes them available to the public.
- ◆ The City provides proper training/orientation for all persons on the best practices to use when serving persons with disabilities.

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, as well as viewing the identified ones as opportunities for improvement. Barriers will be addressed on an ongoing basis and public feedback is encouraged.

Monitoring Progress and Audit Function

The status report of the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan is required on an annual basis and reviewed by the Staff Accessibility Advisory Team prior to the budget preparation cycle each year. The purpose of an annual review of the Multi-Year 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's Accessibility Plan and to consider the upcoming year's accessibility capital budget. An annual public meeting must be held involving persons with disabilities to review and collect feedback on the Plan and the annual status report. This includes consultation on services provided by conventional and specialized transit along with Parks & Recreation.

Modifications were made to the processes in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic which impeded the City's ability to hold both internal and public meetings.

Communication of Plan

The availability of the Multi-Year Municipal Accessibility Plan and any Status Reports are approved by City Council. 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 provides Accessibility Funding to assist municipalities in the implementation of barrier-free services and facilities.

For more information on the City of Woodstock's 2020 Status Report contact the City Clerk or Deputy City Clerk:

- ◆ By phone 519-539-2382
- ◆ Via email at accessibility@cityofwoodstock.ca