



City of Stratford Multi-Year Accessibility Plan Status Update - 2013



A summary of progress in 2013 on the City's Multi-Year Accessibility Plan for 2013 to 2017



Table of Contents

Introduction	3
Stratford's Accessibility Commitment	3
The Accessibility Advisory Committee	4
The Accessibility Steering Committee	4
Compliance Overview for 2103.....	5
1. General Requirements	5
1.1 Training for Employees, Volunteers, and Service Providers.....	5
1.2 Procurement	6
1.3 Compliance Reporting	6
2. Information and Communication Standard	7
2.1 City web site compliance	7
2.2 Availability of Accessible Formats	7
3. Employment Standard	7
Accommodating the needs of people with disabilities throughout the employment cycle	7
4. Transportation Standard.....	8
4.1 Public Consultations	8
Accessible Taxis	8
Transit Accessibility	8
4.2 Transit and Parallel Transit	8
5. Design of Public Spaces Standard.....	8

City of Stratford

Multi-Year Accessibility Plan Status Update - 2013

Introduction

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) called for the development of standards and regulations to make Ontario fully accessible to people with disabilities by the year 2025. In 2007 the Customer Service regulation was published as Ontario Regulation 429/07. In 2011 the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR) was published as Ontario Regulation 191/11.

The IASR requires a multi-year accessibility plan. The City of Stratford approved its Multi-Year Accessibility Plan 2013 – 2017 in 2012. The plan outlines the City's strategy over the next five years to identify, prevent, and remove access barriers for people with disabilities in City programs, services and facilities.

Using a web browser you may follow these links to the City of Stratford accessibility policy documents published on its web site [Accessibility Page](#). The [Accessible Standards for Customer Services Policy](#), [Multi-year Accessibility Plan 2013 to 2017](#), the [2012 Accessibility Plan](#) and the [Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation Policy](#) outline how the City will meet or exceed the regulations set by the Province of Ontario in the [Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act 2005](#).

This first status update on the Multi-Year Accessibility plan summarizes actions taken in 2013 to address the various requirements of AODA regulations.

Perhaps more importantly, it documents the City's ongoing progress on its commitment to an accessible Stratford, in which people with disabilities have equal opportunity to obtain, use or benefit from the City's goods and services.

Stratford's Accessibility Commitment

The City of Stratford will make reasonable efforts to ensure that its policies and practices are consistent with the following principles:

- People with disabilities must have equal opportunity to obtain, use or benefit from the City's goods and services, which will be provided in a manner that respects their dignity and independence and is integrated with non-disabled people unless an alternative accommodation measure is necessary.
- The City will prevent and remove barriers that impede access by people with disabilities.

- The City will communicate with a person with a disability in a manner that takes into account his or her needs and abilities.
- People with disabilities may make use of an assistive device and/or a support person to access information, goods and services.

The Accessibility Advisory Committee

The City of Stratford receives advice on the accessibility of City services, programs, and facilities from the Accessibility Advisory Committee. Members of the AAC, who are consumers and people with disabilities, are appointed by City Council, and include a Stratford City Council member. In 2013 Committee received training from the City on the requirements of the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation and the Ontario Human Rights Code.

The Accessibility Steering Committee

In 2012 the City appointed an Accessibility Steering Committee, which has representation from all City departments, to manage the City's AODA compliance process. Since July 2013 a consultant advises and assists the Committee.

To assist in managing the City's AODA compliance, the Accessibility Steering Committee maintains the AODA Compliance Master List. This ongoing reference document is updated monthly. It lists more than 170 specific requirements of the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation, and details for each item the applicable standard and clause, a description of the requirements, the implementation date, the City responsible departments, and current status.

Compliance Overview for 2103

1. General Requirements

1.1 Training for Employees, Volunteers, and Service Providers

Introductory IASR Training

- More than 95% of City staff, including Library Board employees and volunteers, and school crossing guards, the Mayor and members of Council completed introductory training on Integrated Accessibility Standard requirements, the Ontario Human Rights Code, and the City of Stratford Multi-year Accessibility plan. The City provided three-hour, small group live introductory training sessions to more than 400 employees and volunteers.
- Newly hired employees must complete the on-line version of this training, which is posted on the City web site Accessibility page.
- Providers of services to the City are required to certify that their employees have taken this training or an equivalent course.

Employment Standard Training

- Thirty members of the City's Corporate Leadership Team participated in a live training session on the requirements of the Employment Standard. This comprises most staff who require this training.
- Other staff and new hires who require Employment Standard training will take the on-line version of the training course, which is posted on the City web site Accessibility page.

Transit-specific Training

- All Stratford Transit and Stratford Parallel Transit operators have completed the training required by the Transportation Standard which covers accessibility features, procedures when accessibility features fail, and emergency procedures.
- Newly hired transit staff will take the on-line version of this training, which is posted on the City web site Accessibility page.

Accessible Documents Training

- Because the City web site is compliant with Level A of the WCAG 2.0 web site accessibility standard, as required by the IASR, all documents added to the web site must also meet this standard and comply with City style guidelines.
- More than 30 City, Library and Police Service staff have taken specialized training on creating and testing accessible documents.
- All new contracts with service providers now require that documents submitted to the City for web or other publication be error-free when tested using the Microsoft Office 2010/2013 Accessibility Checker feature.

Customer Service Training

- In 2011 all City staff received AODA Customer Service Training.
- A self-study training module on the AODA Customer Service Standard continued to be available on the City web site, and is required to be taken by all newly hire employees.

Training Records

- The City maintains a master list of all AODA required training, such as Introductory IASR Training, and Transit Operator Training, as well as AODA-related recommended training. This list currently documents more than 550 completed training sessions by City staff, Council members, and volunteers.

1.2 Procurement

- City tenders and Requests for proposals now set requirements that personnel providing goods and/or services to the City have received all legally required accessibility training, including Introductory IASR and Customer Service Training.
- Firms providing documents to the City that may be published on the web or distributed to the general public are required to ensure that they pass the Microsoft Word Accessibility Checker with no errors.

1.3 Compliance Reporting

As required by regulations, the City filed its AODA Accessibility Report with Accessibility Directorate of the Province of Ontario on December 17, 2013, and received a favourable preliminary review on its compliance from the Province.

2. Information and Communication Standard

2.1 City web site compliance

- The City of Stratford web site, the Stratford Public Library web site and the Stratford Police Services web site are compliant with Level A of the WCAG 2.0 web site accessibility standard.

2.2 Availability of Accessible Formats

- The City provides documents in accessible format upon request, and has notifications to this effect on the City web site.
- The City solicits feedback and undertakes to facilitate feedback from people with disabilities in an accessible format upon request.
- The City has adopted a policy that persons requesting a document which cannot be converted to an accessible format will receive an explanation as to why the document is unconvertible, and will receive an description of the document's content from the appropriate City department

3. Employment Standard

Accommodating the needs of people with disabilities throughout the employment cycle

- The City of Stratford is committed to making reasonable efforts to accommodate the needs of people with disabilities throughout the employment cycle.
- City job postings now state that the City will make reasonable efforts to accommodate the needs of applicants with a disability upon request.
- A City employee with a disability participates in developing an individual accommodation plan that takes into account his or her needs.

4. Transportation Standard

4.1 Public Consultations

Accessible Taxis

- The Police Services Board completed the required consultations with people with disabilities, the general public and members of the taxi sector on the number and availability of accessible taxis in the City, and other accessible taxi requirements.

Transit Accessibility

- The City Community Services Department has instituted an annual public consultation on transit accessibility. The most recent session was held on October 17, 2013. This consultation was the opportunity to report and seek feedback on Stratford Transit and Stratford Parallel Transit's accessibility objectives plans for the current year and the coming year.

4.2 Transit and Parallel Transit

- As mentioned elsewhere, all transit operators completed AODA Introductory training, and all completed specific transit-related accessibility training
- The Community Services Department held the required public consultation on transit accessibility in October 2013.
- Transit and Parallel Transit made substantial progress on the IASR requirements for parity in fares and hours of service.

5. Design of Public Spaces Standard

- Although requirements of the Design of Public Spaces Standard are not due until 2016, the City has been an early adopter of accessibility improvements to sidewalks, which are important exterior paths of travel
- In 2012 the City developed a list of some 177 street intersections which merited priority for the installation of retrofitted curb ramps. Also known as curb cuts, these modifications enable people with mobility-related disabilities, those who use a wheeled mobility device, to pass more easily between the street and the sidewalk. As of December 2013, nearly 100 of these 117 priority curb ramps had been installed.