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## CAO Report on AODA Compliance

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Date: March 9, 2016  
To: Andre Morin, Acting CAO  
From: Accessibility Steering Committee  
Re: AODA Compliance and Accessibility as of December 31, 2015

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# City of Stratford 2015 Status of AODA and City Accessibility Plan Requirements: December 2015

## Executive Summary

### Compliance

As of December 31, 2015 the City of Stratford is in compliance with all currently applicable requirements of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, and has completed all of the tasks of the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation.

### Mandated Reporting

As required by regulations, the City filed its Compliance Report with Accessibility Directorate of the Province of Ontario on December 29, 2015, and received a favourable response from the Province. The next report is to be submitted at the end of 2017.

### Background

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), enacted in 2005, called for regulations to make Ontario communities fully accessible to people with disabilities by 2025. Accordingly, the Customer Service Regulation was published in 2007, and the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR) was published in 2011, which included General Requirements pertaining to all standards, as well as Standards for Information and Communications, Employment and Transportation. The Design of Public Spaces Standard is effective for the City of Stratford January 1, 2016.

The City of Stratford has an accessibility plan for 2013 to 2017, which outlines measures to make City services and facilities accessible. Using a web browser you may read the City's [Accessibility Page](#)<sup>1</sup>, the [Accessible Customer Services Policy](#)<sup>2</sup>, the [2013 to 2017 Accessibility Plan](#)<sup>3</sup>, and the [2014 Status Update](#)<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.stratfordcanada.ca/en/insidecityhall/accessibility.asp>

<sup>2</sup>

<https://www.stratfordcanada.ca/en/insidecityhall/resources/accessiblestandardsforcustomerservicepolicymanual.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> [http://www.stratfordcanada.ca/en/insidecityhall/resources/Accessibility/Updated\\_Multi-Year\\_Plan\\_July\\_2014.pdf](http://www.stratfordcanada.ca/en/insidecityhall/resources/Accessibility/Updated_Multi-Year_Plan_July_2014.pdf)

<sup>4</sup>

[http://www.stratfordcanada.ca/en/insidecityhall/resources/Accessibility/Stratford\\_2014\\_Status\\_Update\\_o](http://www.stratfordcanada.ca/en/insidecityhall/resources/Accessibility/Stratford_2014_Status_Update_o)

## **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 (AAC)**

The Accessibility Advisory Committee advises Stratford City Council about the accessibility of City services, programs, and facilities. Council appoints consumers, people with disabilities, and a City Councillor to this committee. AAC members are trained on all standards under the AODA and the Ontario Human Rights Code.

### **The Accessibility Steering Committee (ASC)**

The Accessibility Steering Committee (ASC) represents all City departments and manages the City's AODA compliance process. The Committee met 7 times in 2015. The ASC maintains the AODA Compliance Master List that outlines 170 measures the City is committed to meeting in a timely manner. Each entry has a summary of the applicable regulation, implementation deadlines, the department(s) most directly concerned, and the current compliance status. The list is updated quarterly.

# Compliance Overview for 2015

## 1. Customer Service Standard

- All City staff and volunteers have received training on the Customer Service Standard
- All newly hired employees and volunteers are trained on the Customer Service Standard using a self-study training module on the City website.
- The City of Stratford will continue to ensure that all agents and contractors hired by the city have received the required Customer Service Standard training.
- The City of Stratford will continue to gather feedback on the goods and services it provides and will act on that feedback to improve services to persons with disabilities.
- Notices regarding service disruptions will continue to be posted.
- The City of Stratford will review and amend the Accessible Customer Service Policy as required, taking into account the principles of dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity for all persons.

NOTE: The Accessibility Directorate of Ontario is planning on incorporating the Customer Service Standard into the Integrated Accessibility Standards regulation, which will clear up discrepancies with regards to organization size and reporting schedules. This merging is expected to occur in 2016.

## 2. Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR)

### General Requirements

The City of Stratford has met and continues to meet the General Requirements of the IASR:

- Annual Status Update to the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan created and posted. The multi-year accessibility plan will be updated every five years.
- Bi-annual Compliance Report filed with the Accessibility Directorate of the Province of Ontario December 31, 2015.
- Corporate accessibility policies updated, as required.
- Procurement requirements implemented, including the consideration of accessibility features when procuring goods and services.

- Personnel providing goods and/or services to the City have received accessibility training, including Introductory IASR and Customer Service Training.
- Employees, volunteers and all others who participate in developing the organization's policies, or who provide goods and services on behalf of the organization, are trained on the requirements of the IASR, as well as the Ontario Human Rights Code as it pertains to persons with disabilities, and as it pertains to their duties.
- Training records are maintained

## **Information and Communications Standard**

The City of Stratford has met and continues to meet the requirements of the Information and Communications Standard:

- The City of Stratford, the Stratford Public Library and Police Service web sites meet AODA standards for accessibility at this time. New requirements will apply in 2021.
- All documents added to the web site must meet Level A of WCAG 2.0 Web Accessibility Standard, and comply with City style guidelines.
- The City provides documents in accessible formats upon request, and informs the public of this on the City web site. If a document cannot be converted to an accessible format, the person requesting will receive an explanation and a description of the document's content.
- Firms providing documents to the City that may be published on the web or distributed to the general public use the Microsoft Word Accessibility Checker to create accessible documents.
- 30 City, Library and Police Service staff completed specialized training on creating and testing accessible documents. More training is scheduled for 2016.
- The City solicits feedback on its accessibility measures from people with disabilities.

## **Employment Standard**

The City of Stratford has met and continues to meet the requirements of the Employment Standard:

- 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.

- City employees are informed of supports available for those with disabilities.
- A City employee with a disability may request accessible formats and communication supports, may participate in developing an individual accommodation plan that takes into account his or her needs, and are offered individualized workplace emergency response assistance, if required.
- Processes are applied, if necessary, for performance management, career development and redeployment, considering the needs of employees with disabilities.
- The 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 take the on-line version of the training course.

## **Transportation Standard**

The City of Stratford has met, and continues to meet the requirements of the Transportation Standard:

- The City Community Services Department holds an annual public consultation on transit accessibility. The most recent session was held on September 29, 2015. This consultation was the opportunity to report and seek feedback on Stratford Transit and Stratford Parallel Transit's accessibility objectives and plans for the current year and the coming year.
- In June 2015, Stratford Parallel Transit was available at all hours when Stratford Transit is available, completing the one outstanding Transportation Standard compliance requirement.
- The City of Stratford now has eight Nova buses (conventional) with rear facing seats available for persons with disabilities. They have one belt, instead of the four strap harness used in older buses. This promotes independence for those customers with different needs.
- Parallel Transit will be adding one van to the fleet in 2016 to help meet the increased demand for Mobility buses.
- All Stratford Transit and Stratford Parallel Transit operators have completed the training required by the Transportation Standard. Newly hired transit staff take the on-line version of this training.

- Newly hired staff for Stratford transit and parallel Transit must also complete hand-on training on tie-down operation, loading and unloading of customers, the use of the lift and how to position the bus for pick up and drop off.

## **Design of Public Spaces / Built Environment**

The compliance date that applies to the City of Stratford for the Design of Public Spaces Standard is January 1, 2016, and consists of the following Public Spaces:

- Recreational trails and beach access routes
  - Outdoor public use eating areas
  - Outdoor play spaces
  - Exterior paths of travel
  - Accessible parking
  - Obtaining services
  - Maintenance planning for above public spaces
- Although requirements of the Design of Public Spaces Standard were not applicable to the City 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 that, as recommended by the City's Accessibility Advisory Committee, should have priority to be retrofitted with curb ramps. In 2015, thirteen (13) Accessibility Priority Projects (low, medium and high priority) were completed, leaving twelve (12) projects remaining on the list, six of which are slated for 2016.
  - City employees and volunteers, to which the Design of Public Spaces Standard applies, have been trained on the standard in preparation for a compliance date of January 1, 2016.
  - Reference information for architects, designers, engineers and builders is available through a [link](#)<sup>5</sup> on the Accessibility page of the City web site.

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[http://www.stratfordcanada.ca/en/insidecityhall/resources/Accessibility/Accessibility\\_Resources\\_for\\_Designers\\_Builders\\_Architects\\_and\\_Engineers\\_V3.pdf](http://www.stratfordcanada.ca/en/insidecityhall/resources/Accessibility/Accessibility_Resources_for_Designers_Builders_Architects_and_Engineers_V3.pdf)