



## **2016 Status Update: City of Stratford Multi-Year Accessibility Plan**

**A summary of progress achieved in 2016 on the City's  
Multi-Year Accessibility Plan (2013 – 2017)**

People who require this document in an alternative format such as large print or computer file may request it from the City Hall by calling 519-271-0250 extension 237, by TTY at 519-271-5241 or by e-mailing the Clerk's Division.

# Table of Contents

<b>Introduction</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Stratford's Accessibility Commitment</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>The Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC)</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>The Accessibility Steering Committee (ASC)</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Compliance Status</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Compliance Overview for 2016</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>1. Customer Service Standard</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>2. Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR)</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>General Requirements</b>	<b>6</b>
Training on the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR)	7
<b>Information and Communications Standard</b>	<b>7</b>
City Web Site Compliance	7
Availability of Accessible Formats	8
<b>Employment Standard</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Transportation Standard</b>	<b>9</b>
Public Consultations	9
a) Accessible Taxis	9
b) Transit Accessibility	9
<b>Design of Public Spaces Standard / Built Environment</b>	<b>10</b>

# City of Stratford

## Multi-Year Accessibility Plan Status Update - 2016

### Introduction

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) was passed by the Ontario government in 2005. It called for the development of standards and regulations to make Ontario fully accessible to people with disabilities by the year 2025. The first standard to be published was the Customer Service Standard (Ontario Regulation 429/07) in 2007. In 2011, the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR) was published as Ontario Regulation 191/11, and introduced four other standards with staggered timelines for compliance, including standards for Information and Communication, Employment and Transportation. The last standard to be introduced, the Design of Public Spaces Standard, had a compliance date of January 1, 2016 for municipalities. Also in 2016, an update to the Customer Service Standard was released.

The IASR requires a multi-year accessibility plan, as well as annual status updates to the 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. Work will begin in 2017 on developing a new multi-year accessibility plan for 2018 -2022.

Using a web browser you will find accessibility policy and plan documents on the [Accessibility Page](#)<sup>1</sup> of the City of Stratford website. These documents outline how the City will meet or exceed the regulations set by the Province of Ontario in the AODA.

This fourth status update on the Multi-Year Accessibility plan summarizes actions taken in 2016 to address the various requirements of AODA regulations. Furthermore, it documents the City's ongoing progress on its commitment to a barrier-free Stratford, in which all people, including people with disabilities, have equal opportunity to obtain, use or benefit from the City's goods and services.

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

## **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, service animal and/or a support person to access information, goods and services.
- The City will continue to meet the requirements for consultation with persons with disabilities and the Accessibility Advisory Committee as established under various sections of the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation.

## **The Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC)**

The Accessibility Advisory Committee advises Stratford City Council about the accessibility of City services, programs, and facilities, including:

- Accessibility plans
- Bus stops and shelters
- Accessible taxicabs
- Recreational trails
- Outdoor play spaces
- Exterior paths of travel
- On-street parking spaces
- Site plan reviews

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 2016.

The ASC maintains the AODA Compliance Master List of the 170 AODA requirements 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.

## **Compliance Status**

In order to comply with the updates to the Customer Service Standard, released July 1, 2016, the City will be working in 2017 to implement the changes, train all people who work in any capacity for the city on the updates, and update the appropriate documents.

As at December 31, 2016 the Master List shows that the City of Stratford is in compliance with all currently applicable requirements of the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation.

## **Compliance Overview for 2016**

### **1. Customer Service Standard**

- An update to the Customer Service Standard was released 1 July 2016. One of the changes included integrating this standard into the IASR with all of the other standards. There were also a number of changes to the requirements for municipalities in the Customer Service Standard, including the requirements for:
  - Training
  - Service Animals
  - Support Persons
  - Accessible Feedback
- In response to the update to the Customer Service Standard, the Accessible Standards for Customer Service Policy will be merged with the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation Policy to create one corporate accessibility policy. Changes made to the requirements in the standard will also be updated in the new policy.

- All people who work for the City of Stratford in any capacity (employee, councillor, volunteer, or contractor) will be trained on the changes to the Customer Service Standard as well as the updated policy, and all new people will be trained on the updated standard. Staff will be reviewing the training delivery strategy in 2017.
- 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. The City of Stratford will ensure that the feedback process is accessible by providing or arranging for accessible formats and communication supports, on request.
- Notices regarding service disruptions will continue to be posted.
- Any new policies that are created with regards to customer service will take into account the principles of dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity for all persons.

## **2. Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR)**

### **General Requirements**

The City of Stratford will continue to:

- Produce and post an annual status report update on the multi-year accessibility plan, and revise the multi-year accessibility plan every five years.
- File a bi-annual Compliance Report with the Accessibility Directorate of the Province of Ontario. A report was submitted by December 31, 2015. The next report must be completed by December 31, 2017.
- Update all corporate accessibility policies, as required. The IASR policy will be updated in 2017 to incorporate the Customer Service Standard.
- Comply with the procurement requirements, including the consideration of accessibility features when procuring goods and services.
- 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/Adobe Accessibility Checker with no errors.

- Train all employees, volunteers and all others who participate in developing the organization's policies, and all others who provide goods and services on behalf of the organization, about the requirements of the Integrated Accessibility Standards regulation as well as the Ontario Human Rights Code as it pertains to persons with disabilities.
- The City maintains a master list of all AODA training, such as Introductory IASR Training, and Transit Operator Training, as required in the legislation.

### **Training on the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR)**

- All people who work in any capacity for the City of Stratford receive training on specific standards within the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation as they pertain to their duties, the Ontario Human Rights Code, and the City of Stratford IASR Policy.
- 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.
- All Stratford Transit and Stratford Parallel Transit operators will continue to receive the training required by the Transportation Standard which covers accessibility features, procedures when accessibility features fail, and emergency procedures.
- Newly hired transit staff must complete the on-line version of this training, which is posted on the City web site Accessibility page.
- Newly hired staff for Stratford Transit and Parallel Transit must also complete hands-on training 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.
- City and Library staff have completed specialized training on creating and testing accessible documents.

## **Information and Communications Standard**

### **City Web Site Compliance**

- The City of Stratford web site and the Stratford Public Library web site are compliant with Level AA of the WCAG 2.0 Web Content Accessibility Guidelines, which meets the requirements in the AODA.

- Because the City web sites are compliant with Level AA of the WCAG 2.0, all documents added to these web sites must also meet this standard and comply with City style guidelines.

### **Availability of Accessible Formats**

- The City provides documents in accessible formats 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 stating that persons who request a document that cannot be converted to an accessible format will receive an explanation as to why the document is unconvertible, and will receive a description of the document's content from the appropriate City department.

### **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, including:
  - Notifying job applicants that accommodations are available upon request during the recruitment and selection process.
  - Informing employees of supports available.
  - Consulting with employees with disabilities to provide or arrange for the provision of accessible formats and communication supports.
  - Working with employees who may need individualized workplace emergency response assistance.
  - Working with City employees with a disability in developing and documenting an individual accommodation plan that takes into account his or her needs.
  - Implementing and documenting a return to work process for supporting employees who have been absent due to reasons related to their disabilities.



- Applying processes for performance management, career development and redeployment as required, considering the needs of employees with disabilities.

## **Transportation Standard**

### **Public Consultations**

#### **a) Accessible Taxis**

- In 2012 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. The Police Services Board completes AODA compliance reports separately from the City of Stratford.

#### **b) Transit Accessibility**

- The City Community Services Department holds an annual public consultation on transit accessibility. The most recent session was held on September 27, 2016. Seven citizens, two employees, and two representatives of the Community Services Department, which is responsible for transit, attended. 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.
- As of June 1, 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 the older buses. This promotes independence for those customers with different needs.
- Two new Nova buses are to be ordered in 2017, with an expected delivery in early 2018. They will have rear facing seats for persons with disabilities.
- Parallel Transit added one van to the fleet in 2016 to help meet the increased demand for Mobility buses.

- All Stratford Transit and Stratford Parallel Transit operators must complete training required by the Transportation Standard.
- 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 Standard / Built Environment**

The City of Stratford is meeting the requirements for the Design of Public Spaces Standard. This standard 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
- In 2012 the City developed a list of 177 street intersections that, as recommended by the City's Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC), should have priority to be retrofitted with curb ramps. Also known as curb cuts, these modifications enable people with mobility impairments and/or a wheeled mobility device to move more easily between the street and the sidewalk. The majority of these Accessibility Priority Projects are now completed, with only two (2) projects remaining on the list. The AAC and City staff will continue to identify new projects as they are identified over time.
- The Community Services Department replaced existing playground equipment with accessible playground equipment and accessible flooring at Greenwood Park. As well, new ramps were designed with input from the Stratford Accessibility Advisory Committee, for arena access during events at the Rotary Complex. The new ramps are to be built in 2017 and 2018.
- An automatic door opener to the Clerk's office was installed December 2016.
- Amendments to the Ontario Building Code were effective January 1, 2015. The City Infrastructure and Development Services department will continue to ensure that staff meet the new requirements.

- The City of Stratford Accessibility Guidelines for Barrier Free Design is to be updated in 2017.
- [Accessibility Resources for Designers, Builders, Architects and Engineers](#)<sup>2</sup> are available on the City of Stratford website, Accessibility page.

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