



TOWNSHIP OF ZORRA
2014-2019 MULTI-YEAR ACCESSIBILITY PLAN
December 2013

ACCESSIBLE FORMAT

If you require this document to be in an accessible format, please contact the Clerk at kmartin@zorra.on.ca or 519-485-2490 ext. 228

BACKGROUND AND LEGISLATION

In December 2001, the Ontarians with Disabilities Act (ODA) was passed by the provincial government to improve access and opportunities for persons with disabilities. The ODA stipulates the following municipal obligations to the Act:

- Municipalities are required to prepare annual accessibility plans;
- Municipalities shall have regard to the accessibility of persons with disabilities when purchasing goods and services;
- Municipalities will improve access to municipal elections by giving greater consideration to accessible voting locations;
- Municipalities will increase the minimum penalty for misuse of designated parking, under municipal by laws, to \$300.
- Municipalities, with a population greater than 10,000 are required to establish accessibility advisory committees. In addition, the legislation stipulated that the majority of committee members must self-identify as a person with a disability. Based on the population of Zorra, we were exempt from this legislation.

Based on public consultation, new legislation was developed. In June 2005, the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act 2005 (AODA) was enacted into law with the vision of creating a fully accessible Ontario by 2005. The Act is more comprehensive and prescriptive than the ODA and its requirements now apply to the public, private, and not-for-profit sectors. Under the AODA the Province has committed to developing and implementing standards in:

- Customer Service (Ontario Regulation 429/07)
- Information and Communication
- Employment
- Transportation
- Design of Public Spaces (Built Environment)

The first standard, the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service (Ontario Regulation 429/07) was passed in January, 2008. The Township of Zorra has been required to comply with the Standards for Customer Service since January 1, 2010.

The next three standards, Information and Communication, Employment and Transportation (Ontario Regulation 191/11), have been combined into the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR). The IASR came into effect July 1, 2011, which requirements that are to be phased in over time, which, for the Township of Zorra, means implementing standards from 2011 to 2021. However, the Transportation Standard does not apply to the Township of Zorra since Public Transportation and Taxi Cabs are not a service delivered.

The last accessibility standard identified under the AODA, Design of Public Spaces Standards (Built Environment) (Ontario Regulation 191/11), was most recently enacted. This standard is intended to help remove barriers in buildings and outdoor spaces for persons with disabilities.

Although the AODA is in place, until all accessibility standards have been enacted into law, the ODA will remain in force. Therefore, municipalities will be obligated to comply with two pieces of legislation.

The Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR), created under the AODA, came into effect July 1, 2011. It requires organizations to develop a multi-year accessibility plan which outlines an organization's strategy to prevent and remove barriers and meet its requirements under the IASR. This plan establishes goals and objectives for the next five (5) years, beginning January 1st, 2014 to December 31st, 2019. The plan will be reviewed annually and as progress is made with the removal of barriers to people with disabilities, revisions will be made accordingly. Annual updates of the Multi-Year Plan will also be considered to fulfill the requirement of an Annual Plan under the ODA.

COMMITMENT STATEMENT

The Township of Zorra is committed to ensuring that people with disabilities enjoy the same opportunities as all others who live, work, visit and invest in the Township of Zorra.

ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

An Accessibility Advisory Committee is not required when a Municipality has a population of less than 10,00.

However, it is recognized that input from agencies and associations supportive of persons with disabilities needs to be obtained. The Township circulated this plan to various associations throughout Ontario. (Listed in Appendix A).

Furthermore, Township of Zorra's Multi-Year Accessibility Plan was distributed for comment to the Citizens with Disabilities of Ontario (CWDO) Organization. CWDO reviewed this plan and provided the Township with the following feedback:

"Citizens With Disabilities Ontario (CWDO) is extremely pleased to have helped to look over the Zorra accessibility plan. Very impressive is the amount of detail in the Zorra Accessibility plan, as well as how specific to the standards the detail and

comments in the document. Much has been accomplished during the past year. The forward looking of the Township of Zorra to future years is, indeed, impressive. All of the five standards were touched in the Zorra plan, and the work done on processes and procedures for customer service is highly commendable. It is so encouraging, that, even though it is not obligatory that the Township of Zorra consult with Persons with disabilities, that this has been done. CWDO encourages that this process be continued. CWDO honestly hopes that other Townships follow the Zorra lead in making Accessibility a Reality.”

ACCOMPLISHMENTS TO DATE

The Township of Zorra has been pro-actively developing innovative approaches to addressing accessibility issues, including:

2003-2013

- The construction of the barrier-free library in Thamesford. This library is renowned for its state of the art barrier-free technology.
- A curb-cutting program to ensure easier accessibility for those persons utilizing a wheel chair
- A pro-active approach in designating handicapped parking spaces by signage and painted surface logos.
- The construction of a barrier-free heated viewing area in the Embro West Zorra Community Centre, allowing persons with disabilities to the opportunity of enjoying sports and events at this Centre.
- Several measures were taken by municipal staff to ensure increased accessibility during the 2010 municipal election. These included accessibility audits of all polling locations, and allowing staff to assist persons with disabilities who required assistance filling out forms, filling out a ballot, or accessing a voting location.
- All sidewalks throughout the Township were designed to be barrier free when constructed.
- Barrier free entrance at the Embro West Zorra Community Centre during the addition.
- Accessibility standards considered during Urban Design discussions/meetings.
- In considering an upgrade to the Administration Office and Council Chambers construction of automatic doors and accessible washroom facilities were all included in the design for the purpose of increasing the level of accessibility to the building for those with disabilities.
- The Township of Zorra is committed to consulting with persons with disabilities and others regarding Accessibility Plans, since an Accessibility Advisory Committee is not required when a Municipality has a population of less than 10,000. – *Ontarians with Disabilities Act, S.O. 2001, C.32, Section 11.(1)(b)(ii)*
- The Thamesford Pool renovation plans were completed and a barrier free washroom and barrier free entrance to the pool were installed in Spring 2012.
- The Township has applied for funding under the Community Infrastructure Investment Fund for a wheelchair accessibility ramp and chair lift as the Harrington Hall.

- The Township of Zorra has adopted the Township's Accessibility Customer Service Policy Manual, dated December 15, 2009, as being the guidelines for delivering accessible customer service for the municipality. (*429/07 – Accessibility Standards for Customer Service*).
- The Township of Zorra has Feedback Complaint forms and Alternate Format Request forms to improve accessible customer service.
- The Township of Zorra staff and Council have completed the required training (through the use of a self-study package) in order to successfully assist individuals with disabilities. (*429/07 – Accessibility Standards for Customer Service*).
- The Township of Zorra is committed to make emergency procedures, plans or public safety information available to the public in an accessible format or with appropriate communication supports. (*191/11 – Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation*).
- The Township of Zorra will provide workplace emergency response information for municipal employees with disabilities. (*191/11 – Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation*).
- The new Township of Zorra's website is in the process of adhering to the WCAG 2.0 Level AA – web content accessibility guidelines. (*191/11 – Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation*).
- The Township of Zorra has completed the online 2013 AODA Accessibility Compliance Reporting.

Goals for 2014-2018:

Customer Service:

- The Township's Accessible Customer Service Policy Manual will continue to be complied with, and reviewed by staff to ensure the Township is providing an adequate level of Accessible Customer Service to the public.

Design & Public Spaces – Built Environment

- The Township will continue committing to encouraging the private sector, when undergoing material alterations, to retrofit existing buildings for accessibility and developing suitable policies and procedures.
- Site tours of buildings will be completed to determine how accessibility can be incorporated into certain Township facilities.
- Construction to the North park booth in Thamesford will include a compacted path to and from the booth area and an accessible washroom. (2014)
- Harrington Hall will install a chair lift (Harrington Community Group).

Employment

- All Township staff will continue to be made aware of the Township's Accessibility Plan, and Township's Accessibility Policies.
- Notify new employees of existing policies for accommodating persons with disabilities.

- Existing employees have been notified of existing policies for accommodating persons with disabilities.
- Should existing employees express an interest in obtaining an accessible format or communication support in order to perform their job, the request will be handled by the Clerk.

Information and Communication

- Multiple formats for policies and procedures will be made available.
- WCAG 2.0A Standards will be met on the Township website by January 1, 2014.
- Provide opportunities for the public to provide feedback through accessible formats as well as notifying the public of the availability of accessible formats which are available upon request.
- Provide accessible formats or communication supports in a timely fashion and at no additional charge to the user.
- Implementation and training of Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation policies.
- Integrate accessibility into procurement policies and procedures.

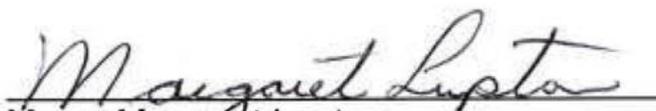
CONCLUSION

The Township of Zorra is committed to addressing existing barriers and preventing future barriers to allow people with disabilities full participation in our communities. The Township encourages input from all Township of Zorra residents. The Township of Zorra is of the opinion that this legislation should improve accessibility in workplaces and public spaces and improve access to employment, customer service, communication and transportation. However, as the financial impact of this legislation on municipal taxpayers is significant, the Township also recommends that the province assume some financial responsibility for these requirements.

Approved by the Council of the Corporation of the Township of Zorra this 17th day of Dec., 2013 by Resolution #: 36-12-13.

The key contact for inquiries regarding the Municipal Accessibility Plan is:

Karen Martin
 Clerk
 Township of Zorra
 274620 27th Line, PO Box 306,
 Ingersoll, ON N5C 3K5
 519-485-2490
kmartin@zorra.on.ca


 Mayor Margaret Lupton

APPENDIX A

ORGANIZATIONS TO BE NOTIFIED OF TOWNSHIP OF ZORRA ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

Canadian Mental Health Association

Oxford County Branch
522 Peel Street
Woodstock, ON N4S 1K3
Contact: Joe Penton, joepenton@cmhaoxford.on.ca

Canadian National Institute for the Blind

749 Baseline Road East
London, ON N6C 2R6

Children's Aid Society of Oxford County

92 Light Street
Woodstock, ON N4S 6H1

Canadian Red Cross Society

77 Finkle St.
Woodstock, ON N4S 3C9

Community Care Access Centre

1147 Dundas Street
Woodstock, ON N4S 8W5

Multiple Sclerosis Society

635 Devonshire St
Woodstock, ON
N4S 5P9

Oxford County Self-Help Centre

554 Princess Street
Woodstock, ON N4S 4H1

The Salvation Army & Emergency Housing Advocacy Centre

906 James St.
Woodstock, ON N4S 1S4

Citizens with Disabilities – Ontario (CWDO)

1201 Jasper Drive, Box 103,
Thunder Bay, Ontario P7B 6R2
Contact: Terrance Green, tjgreen@bellnet.ca

APPENDIX B

OVERVIEW OF AODA REQUIREMENTS

Timeline for compliance with Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act – Small Designated Public Section Organization

STANDARDS CURRENTLY IN PLACE

Customer Service Standard

- ✓ All requirement under the Customer Service Standard

Employment Standard

- ✓ Workplace emergency response information

Information and Communication Standard

- ✓ Emergency Information

Transportation Standard

- ✓ N/A

BY JANUARY 1, 2014

General Requirements

- ✓ Accessibility Policies (In progress)
- ✓ Multi-Year Accessibility Plan
- ✓ Procuring or acquiring goods, services of facilities

Information and Communication Standards

- Accessible website and web content (in progress)

BY JANUARY 1, 2015

General Requirements

- Training

Employment Standard

- Recruitment
- Information for employees
- Processes to accommodate employees

Information and Communication Standard

- Feedback

BY JANUARY 1, 2016

Information and Communication Standard

- Accessible formats and communication supports

BY JANUARY 1, 2018

Design of Public Spaces Standards (Built Environment)

- Recreational Trails, Outdoor public use eating areas, Outdoor play spaces, Outdoor sidewalks, stairs, curbs and ramps, off-street parking and service counters.

BY JANUARY 1, 2021

Information and Communication Standard

- Accessible websites and web content

The above information was acquired using the Accessibility Directorate of Ontario Compliance Wizard.