

Township of Manitouwadge



1 Mississauga Drive

Manitouwadge, Ontario P0T 2C0

2016-2021

Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

Submitted to:

Mayor and Members of Council

WORKING TOWARDS AN ACCESSIBLE COMMUNITY

Mission and Commitment

The Corporation of the Township of Manitouwadge is committed to creating an inclusive environment for persons of all ages and abilities by providing services and facilities that are accessible to everyone. The Accessibility Plan is consistent with the principles of integration, independence, dignity and equal opportunity for all persons in this community

The Accessibility Plan is available on the Manitouwadge Municipal website at www.manitouwadge.ca

Township documents are available in alternate formats upon request by calling (807)826-3227 Ext 236 or email mhartling@manitouwadge.ca

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Government of Ontario introduced the Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001 (ODA) with the purpose of improving access and opportunities to people with disabilities. The primary focus of this legislation was to identify, remove and prevent barriers so that people with disabilities can engage in full participation. Annual accessibility plans became a requirement under this legislation in order to ensure that policies, programs and services were reviewed to remove barriers and prevent new barriers from being created. The ODA legislation has been helpful with the identification and removal of barriers throughout the province. However, the government recognized that Ontario was still not fully accessible. As a result, The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) was passed in 2005. Its goal is to have an accessible Ontario by 2025. In order to achieve its objective, the AODA will establish accessibility standards in the areas of:

- Customer Service
- Transportation
- Information and Communications
- Employment
- Built Environment

The Customer Service Standard, Regulation 429/07 (CCS) mandates compliance of the public sector and private sector industries in the following areas use and treatment of support persons, service animals, assistive devices, alternative formats of materials, methods of notification of service disruption and collection of feedback, as well as development and deployment of staff training.

In June of 2011, the Ontario Government passed Regulation 191/11 – The Integrated Accessibility Standard (IASR). This regulation sets out a variety of general obligations relating to employment, communications and transportation. The regulation sets out the requirements for each of the three standards as well as general requirements with respect to developing accessibility policies and plans, training employees and volunteers, as well as considering accessibility when purchasing goods or services.

1.1 Background

The preparation of the Municipal Accessibility Plan is a requirement for local governments in Ontario under the provisions for the Ontarians with Disabilities, 2001 (ODA), and the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), 2005 of the Province of Ontario. Further, Municipalities are required to prepare annual updates to the Municipal Accessibility Plan identifying barriers and the action taken to remove those barriers. This Plan is formally adopted by Council and presented to the Public. Legislation requires that Municipalities with a population over 10,000 must establish an Accessibility Advisory Committee. The Municipality of Manitowadge has a population of less than 10,000 and is not required to establish an Accessibility Advisory Committee.

1.2 Objectives

The Objective of this Plan is to:

- Seek to identify, prevent and remove barriers to accessibility for persons with disabilities, through developing a standardized process and tools to help identify and address accessibility barriers.
- Ensure that all people will have access to accessible goods, services and facilities.
- Allow all people to have access to alternate formats and communication supports for any publically accessible information the Township produces.
- Implement and maintain a recruitment process that is free of discrimination and considers accommodations for those in need.
- To identify opportunities to improve accessibility and implement reasonable transportation solutions.

1.3 Actions and Undertakings

- Develop policies, procedures and programs
- Incorporate accessibility into project and program planning
- Develop, implement and regularly review training programs
- Consult with the public and organizations/agencies
- Implementation of feedback process
- Review and update the Accessibility Plan annually

2.0 DEFINITIONS

2.1 Definition of a Disability

The Ontarians with Disabilities Act, (“ODA”), 2001, Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (“AODA”), 2005 and the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (“IASR”) use the definition that appears in the Ontario Human Rights Code.

A disability means:

- a) Any degree of physical disability, infirmity, malformation or disfigurement that is caused by bodily injury, birth defect or illness and, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, includes diabetes mellitus, epilepsy, a brain injury, any degree of paralysis, amputation, lack of physical co-ordination, blindness or visual impediment, deafness or hearing impediment, muteness or speech impediment, or physical reliance on a guide dog or other animal or on a wheelchair or other remedial appliance or device; or
- b) A condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability; or
- c) A learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language; or
- d) A mental disorder; or
- e) An injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997; (“handicap”) 2.0

Note: For other definitions, please refer to Section 2 of the Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001.

2.2 Definition of a Barrier

A “barrier” is anything that stops a person with a disability from fully taking part in society because of that disability. Some barriers include:

- Physical barriers – e.g., a step at the entrance to a store;
- Architectural barriers – e.g., no elevators in a building of more than one floor;
- Information or communications barriers – e.g., a publication that is not available in large print;
- Attitudinal barriers – e.g., assuming people with a disability cannot perform a certain task when in fact they can;
- Technological barriers such as traffic lights that change too quickly before a person with a disability has time to get through the intersection; and,
- Barriers created by policies or practices – e.g., not offering different ways to complete a test as part of job hiring.

3 CORPORATE ACTION PLAN

3.1 Customer Service

3.1.1 Requirements

- Review and update policies to ensure high quality of customer service.
- Provide training for all staff, volunteers, those involved in developing customer service policies and third (3rd) parties as soon as practicable upon an individual being assigned the applicable duties as well as on an on-going basis as changes occur to the Municipality's policies, procedures and practices governing the provision of goods or services to persons of disabilities.
- Review customer feedback and take appropriate action

3.1.2 Progress

Customer Service Accessibility Policy has been developed and approved by Council with related procedures and practices developed in the following areas and are available on the Township's website:

Accessibility to Goods & Services

Service Animals

Support Persons

Alternate Format for Materials

Documents and Communication

Assistive Devices

Customer Service Feedback Process, including Feedback Form

Notice of Service Disruption, including Notice Form

All Town employees and volunteers who deal with members of the public or other third parties on behalf of the Town, and those involved in the developing customer service policies, practices and procedures have received training on the Accessibility Standard for Customer Service on the provision of its goods or services to persons with disabilities.

3.1.3 Continued Initiatives

- On-going employee, volunteer and third party training of new employees, volunteers and third(3rd) parties as well as when changes occur to the Municipality's policies, procedures and practices governing the provision of goods or services to persons of disabilities.
- Keeping an updated record of the training, including the date to which training is provided and the number of individuals to whom it is provided. The names of individuals trained will be recorded for training administration purposes, subject to the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Privacy Act (MFIPPA)*

3.2 Integrated Accessibility Standards

3.2.2 Requirements

- Develop and implement policies, procedures and practices governing how the Municipality will achieve accessibility through meeting its requirements of the Integrated Accessibility Standard (IAS)
- Provide duty specific training on the IAS and Human Rights Code to all Employees, Volunteers, those involved in developing Integrated Accessibility Standards policies and any third (3rd) parties.

3.2.3 The Township shall incorporate accessibility criteria and features into procuring or acquiring goods, services or facilities.

3.2.3 Progress

Integrated Accessibility Standards Policy (Appendix A) has been developed and approved by Council with related procedures and practices developed in the following areas and are available on the Township's website:

- Information and Communication
- Employment
- Transportation and
- The design of public space

Training has been provided to all Town employees and volunteers who deal with members of the public or other third (3rd) parties on behalf of the Town, and those involved in the developing Integrated Accessibility Standards policies, practices and procedures received training on Integrated Accessibility Standards and Human Rights Code as it pertains to persons with disabilities.

Training has been provided as soon as practicable upon an individual being assigned the applicable duties.

3.2.4 Continuing Initiatives

- On-going employee, volunteer and third (3rd) party training of new employees, volunteers and third parties as well as when changes occur to the Municipality's policies, procedures and practices governing the provision of goods or services to persons of disabilities.
- Keeping an updated record of the training, including the date to which training is provided and the number of individuals to whom it is provided. The names of individuals trained will be recorded for training administration purposes, subject to the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Privacy Act* (MFIPPA)

3.3 Information and Communication Requirements

3.3.1 Accessible Formats

1. Upon request provide or arrange for the provision of accessible formats and communication supports for persons with disabilities,
 - (a) in a timely manner that takes into account the person's accessibility need due to disability; and
 - (b) at a cost that is no more than the regular cost charged to other persons.
2. Consult with the person making the request in determining the suitability of an accessible format or communication support.
3. Notify the public about the availability of accessible formats and communication supports.
4. Internet and intranet websites and web content conform with the World Wide Web Consortium Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0, at Level AA.

3.3.2 Progress

A Statement has been created on this document and on the Municipality's Website of the provision of accessible formats and communication supports for persons with disabilities.

3.3.3 Continued Initiatives

To create and provide alternative accessible formats and communication supports below:

- Internet content conformity to the (WCAG) 2.0 at Level AA., is ongoing.
- Reading written information to a person directly
- Large print
- Text transcripts of audio or visual information
- Handwritten notes instead of spoken word
- Information written in plain language

3.4 Employment Requirements

3.4.1 Recruitment and Selection

1. Notify employees and the public about the availability of accommodation for applicants with disabilities in its recruitment processes with disabilities.
2. During the selection and recruitment process, job applicants will be notified that accommodations are available and consultation provided with the applicant regarding the provision of a suitable accommodation.
3. Successful applicants will be notified as soon as practical of the policy or updated policy to accommodate employees with disabilities.
4. Employees will be provided with accessible formats and communication supports for,
 - (a) information that is needed in order to perform the employee's job; and
 - (b) information that is generally available to employees in the workplace.

3.4.2 Progress

The statement *"The Township of Manitowadge is committed to achieving full accessibility for persons with disabilities and accommodations are available for individuals with disabilities for all parts of the recruitment process"* will be incorporating into all job posting and the Townships Website.

3.4.3 Continued Initiatives

The new employee orientation process will implement the requirements of this regulation.

3.5.1 Workplace Emergency Response Information

Workplace emergency response information will be provided and a designated assistant will be assigned with the consent of the employee who receives individualized workplace emergency response.

Information will be provided as soon as practicable after the need for accommodation has been requested.

A review of the individualized workplace emergency response information will be made;

- (a) when the employee moves to a different location in the organization;
- (b) when the employee's accommodation needs or plans are reviewed; and the general response polices are reviewed.

3.5.2 Progress

An Individual Accommodation Plan will be assessed by filling out an “Employee Emergency Response Plan Information Worksheet” See Appendix B

3.5.3 Continued Initiatives

Ongoing review.

3.6.1 Individual Accommodation Plan

There are 8 elements in the process:

- 1. Manner in which employee requesting accommodation can participate in development of plan**
- 2. Means by which employee assessed on individual basis**
- 3. Manner in which employer can request evaluation by outside medical or other expert, at its expense, to assist determining if accommodation can be achieved and, if so, how**
- 4. Manner in which employee can request participation of representative from bargaining agent, where employee is represented by bargaining agent, or other representative from workplace, where employee is not represented by bargaining agent, in development of plan**
- 5. Steps taken to protect privacy of employee’s personal information**
- 6. Frequency with which plan will be reviewed and updated and manner in which it will be done**
- 7. If plan denied, manner in which reasons for denial provided to employee**
- 8. Means of providing plan in format that takes into account employee’s accessibility needs due to disability**

Plans shall include, as required:

- Information on Accessible format**
- Workplace emergency response information**
- Other accommodation**

3.6.2 Progress

The process to document an Individual Accommodation Plan has been put into place for employees in need of accommodation due to disabilities.

An independent Medical Assessment may be requested for the purposes of assisting in the providing an individualized accommodations and to determined how plan may be achieved. This request will be at no cost to the employee.

3.6.3 Continues Initiatives

Monitor, Review and update the plan.

3.7.1 Return to Work Process

1. Develop and document a return to work process for employees absent from work due to a disability and require an accommodation in order to return to work. The process will:
2. Outline the steps taken to facilitate the return to work and use documented individual accommodation plans.

3.7.2 Progress

A written return to work process is in place for employees absent due to disability who require disability related accommodation for returning to work. Included in the process is the possible request for an IME and a functional abilities form to assess any accommodations needed in the process.

3.7.3 Continued Initiatives

Monitor, Review and update the plan.

3.8.1 The accessibility needs and individual accommodation plans of employees with disabilities will be taken into account when using;

- Performance Management
- Career Development and Advancement
- Redeployment