



**CORPORATION OF THE  
TOWNSHIP OF NORTH DUMFRIES**

**MULTI-YEAR ACCESSIBILITY PLAN  
2014 - 2019**

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## **Executive Summary**

This report has been prepared in order to meet the obligations of the Provincial accessibility legislation. It is the 2014-2019 Multi-year Accessibility Plan for the Township of North Dumfries and will be referred to as the NDAP (North Dumfries Accessibility Plan) throughout this document.

## **Introduction**

The NDAP highlights accessibility initiatives that were undertaken in the past year, 2013, as well as proposed initiatives for 2014 through to the end of 2019. The goal of the NDAP is to identify practices, procedures, policies, by-laws and other services that were or are to be reviewed for compliance with required Provincial legislation.

## **Provincial Legislation**

### **Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 , S.O. 2005, c. 11**

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act is known as the “AODA”. It received Royal Assent in the Ontario Legislature in June 2005. The AODA focuses on improving accessibility in five key areas known as standards. These include customer service, communication, transportation, employment, and built environment. These standards affect the private, government and broader public sector equally.

The goal of the AODA is:

- To achieve an accessible Ontario on or before January 1, 2025;
- To establish and implement mandatory and enforceable accessibility standards to be achieved within five years or less; and
- To maintain municipal accessibility advisory committees.

The AODA requires municipalities to create and update a multi-year accessibility plan outlining the practices and procedures to implement accessibility throughout the municipality in a number of areas.

More information on the standards can be found on the Ministry of Community and Social Services website at [www.mcscs.gov.on.ca](http://www.mcscs.gov.on.ca).

## **Boundaries of the Township of North Dumfries**

The Township of North Dumfries consists of primarily rural areas plus a variety of small villages including Ayr, Clyde, Branchton, Reidsville, and Roseville. The municipal office is located just south of Cambridge as the Township horseshoes around the south end of Cambridge and Kitchener. The population of the Township of North Dumfries is approximately 9,500. The Council of the Township of North Dumfries is governed by a Mayor and 4 Ward Councilors.

## **Joint Effort with other Municipalities**

Starting with the 2008-2009 Plan, the Township of North Dumfries has prepared an independent

accessibility plan but continues to work co-operatively on accessibility initiatives with the other municipalities. This provides more flexibility in the timing of the development of the NDAP and its review by GRAAC.

### **Grand River Accessibility Advisory Committee (GRAAC)**

The Grand River Accessibility Advisory Committee (GRAAC) is an advisory committee serving the Region of Waterloo and the respective Councils of the Cities of Kitchener and Waterloo and the Townships of North Dumfries, Wellesley and Woolwich. Staff representatives of each municipality participate in a joint recruitment process annually to fill GRAAC vacancies and each Council passes a resolution to appoint new members. GRAAC is made up of between 11 and 15 volunteers and advises the councils on accessibility issues including their annual accessibility plans. GRAAC members review the draft NDAP and provide input into its development before the plan is presented to Council for final adoption.

### **Public Access to the NDAP**

Legislation requires that accessibility plans be made available to the public. The 2014-2019 Multi-year Accessibility Plan will be made available on the Township's website at [www.northdumfries.ca](http://www.northdumfries.ca). It will also be provided to anyone upon request, and copies will be set out at the front counter for the Council and the general public at the North Dumfries municipal office. Copies can also be requested in accessible formats and will be delivered in a timely manner.

## **Staff Contacts**

The following Township of North Dumfries staff members co-ordinate and oversee the Township's accessibility efforts and may be contacted for additional information relating to the NDAP, the Grand River Accessibility Advisory Committee and accessibility in general.

### **Accessibility Co-coordinator:**

Julia Sippel, Administrative Assistant  
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### **Department Heads:**

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# **Report on 2013 Activities**

## **Corporate Communications - Alternate Formats**

As required by the AODA emergency information is provided in alternative formats upon request. A list of companies available to convert documents into alternate formats has been compiled for easy access and is available to quickly respond to these requests. Other corporate documents may be requested in alternate formats and will be produced within a timely manner. In 2013, a formal process for all employees was created and the process was provided via a corporate memo to ensure everyone understands how to handle accessible requests.

In 2012 the Township made available the Council recordings at request. However, to ensure a fluency in provided information via the Council minutes, the recordings are no longer available. Instead the minutes produced will be converted into alternate formats such as braille or audio files upon request.

## **Emergency Workplace Response Plan**

Workplace Emergency Response process was created in 2011 and went through a review mid-2013 to ensure accuracy and integrity of the process. Formal documentation and review process developed for use upon request.

## **Website Accessibility**

The Municipal website has been completely overhauled and incorporates W3C compliance which has been included throughout the website.

## **Accessibility Policy**

Every obligated organization shall develop, implement and maintain policies governing how the organization achieves or will achieve accessibility through meeting its requirements under the accessibility standards. The Township of North Dumfries is finalizing the policy and it will be going to Council in December 2013.

## **Accessible Parking**

The Township of North Dumfries maintains accessible parking spaces at all of its facilities. In an effort to ensure fewer violations of use of these spots the Township passed a by-law in 2013 to increase the fine for parking in an accessible spot without transporting or permit to \$350 per fine. The Township also increased its enforcement through permitting select

staff to ticket for the Township of North Dumfries in hopes to ensure these spots are not used improperly.

## **Procurement Policy**

In accordance with the AODA the procurement policy is under review with updates to be passed through Council in December of 2013. Staff will be updated on the changes and enforce the need to consider accessibility throughout procurement.

## **Special Events**

Parking and Barrier Free washrooms continue to be made available during the Fresh Ayr Festival and any other special events that may arise through the course of the year.

## **Staff Awareness Training**

All new staff members continue to complete the Guidelines for Delivering Accessible Customer Service manual and sign off accordingly. Several seasonal staff as well as five new staff members completed the manual training document.

## **Staff Dedication**

- Staff monitored the progress of the draft Built Environment Standard.
- Staff continues to attend the Grand River Accessibility Advisory Committee meetings. Staff assists in recruitment and agenda planning and attended 10 of the 11 monthly meetings in 2013.

## **Identification of Barriers of Facilities**

- The Queen Elizabeth Arena located at 7 Church Street in Ayr was renovated in the summer of 2013. Improvements to the facility included automatic sliding doors at the entrance as well as a single wheelchair lift making the second floor accessible to all. The washrooms were also renovated for accessibility and a viewing area provided on the second floor for persons in wheelchairs watching the rink.
- The Roseville Community Centre located at 3195 Roseville Road in Roseville was renovated as well in the summer of 2013. Improvements to this facility included accessible washroom updates as well as general aesthetic improvements.
- The Grand River Accessibility Advisory Committee reviewed the plans for both of these building prior to renovations and approved the updates.

# **Current List of Accessible Services of The Township of North Dumfries**

## **Policies, Procedures, and Services**

- An Accessible Customer Service Policy, training materials, and feedback form was adopted by Council and remains in use.
- The Township maintains an annual budget of \$250 to accommodate requests for alternate formats.
- Employees receive a manual on accessible customer service and information regarding accessibility upon hiring. This information is updated as required.
- Employees have received in-depth awareness training and are scheduled for an update of the training to be offered in 2014.
- The Township receives and responds to accessibility feedback through its website. As well as through forms made available at both the North Dumfries Community Complex and the Township Office.
- The Township maintains its dedication to the Grand River Accessibility Advisory Committee. This includes staff dedicated to support the committee as well as a financial contribution up to \$500 per year.
- The procurement policy held by the Township now incorporates accessibility criteria and features for procuring or acquiring goods, services, or facilities as per IAR 191/11 Section 5.
- An extensive accessibility policy is to be passed with all associated processes available in order to recognize, understand, and remove accessibility barriers. This policy will be going to Council in December this year.
- This document represents the multi-year accessibility plan for the Township. This plan is required as per IAR 191/11 Section 4.

## **Alternate Formats/American Sign Language Interpreter Services**

- A list of companies providing alternate formats is available at the Township office. It is updated yearly to ensure accuracy and ease of use.
- When requested the Township will provide an American Sign Language (ASL) Interpreter for Council and Committee meetings. All requests are subject to the availability of an interpreter however resources to book this interpreter are made available to staff to ensure this can occur promptly.
- Any cost for alternate formats comes from the allocated budget for alternate format requests.

## **Township Owned Facilities**

Any updates to Township owned facilities are reviewed by the Grand River Accessibility Advisory



Committee. Site plans are forwarded to GRAAC when the review is needed.

### **Snow clearing**

The Township contracts sidewalk clearing, salting, and sanding to an independent contractor. The only area of North Dumfries with sidewalks is Ayr and all sidewalks are under the responsibility of the Township of North Dumfries. Thus we do not maintain a snow-clearing by-law for residents. Any issues with snow clearing are directed to our Director of Public Works by contacting the office.

### **Township Emergency Plan**

The Township Emergency Plan is available in alternate formats upon request and is available for download on the Township website. It is updated yearly by the Emergency Plan Control Group for the Township of North Dumfries.

## **Initiatives Planned for 2014**

- Formal awareness training is to be completed by all staff members. This training will cover the Human Rights Act, Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act and the Ontario Disabilities Act. This training is to ensure all areas of accessibility are covered in an effort to ensure employees recognize accessibility throughout their daily activities at the Township of North Dumfries. This will also include a full review and adjustment of the Customer Service Training Package for employees moving forwards. Any updates to policies, processes, and legislation will be provided every two years and as needed. Records will be kept of all training provided, including the dates on which the training is provided and the number of individuals to whom it is provided.
- The process for receiving and responding to feedback shall be made accessible to persons with disabilities by providing or arranging for accessible formats and communications supports, upon request.
- A formal process for recruitment shall be developed that ensures the availability of accommodation for applicants with disabilities. The recruitment process will outline the notification process to inform applicants that accommodations are available upon request as well as the process for accommodation when the request is made. The recruitment process will further outline how the Township will inform the successful applicant regarding our policies for accommodating employees with disabilities.
- The Township will create an accommodation policy to ensure any requests by employees with disabilities are accommodated. This includes alternate formats of all information that the employee requires to complete their duties and information available to the public as well as accessible work spaces, and other accommodations.
- The Township will develop and have in place a return to work process for its employees who have been absent from work due to a disability and require disability-related accommodations in order to return to work.
- The Township shall take into account the accessibility needs of employees with disabilities when using its performance management process in respect of employees with disabilities. The Township will take into account the accessibility needs of its employees with disabilities when providing career development and advancement to its employees with disabilities.
- The Township will continue to ensure a financial contribution to the operation of the Grand River Accessibility Advisory Committee of up to \$500 per year based on the committee's expenses. The Township will also ensure staff commitment to attending GRAAC meetings.

- Attend a demonstration of voting equipment that included accessible voting units. Training for voting poll staff in accessible customer service and polling machine.
- Review of this multi-year accessibility plan with status update to be provided to GRAAC and posted for the public.
- Inglis Street in Ayr will begin a multi-year plan to provide sidewalks to the street. This will be implemented over a number of years and was originally requested for safety and accessibility.
- Wilma's Walk in Ayr will be extended in 2014. The pathway is currently accessible and the extension will also be made accessible.

### **Initiatives Planned for 2015**

- The Township of North Dumfries will be re-tendering and assigning a sidewalk snow clearing contract for another 3 year term. Ensuring continued snow clearance of all municipally owned sidewalks. The Township of North Dumfries will be updating the snow clearing tender to include a required timeline of completion. Currently the municipality does not outline a preferred deadline of completion after snowfall and clearing is done within 24 hours. However, the Township would like to ensure this service continues as an obligation to the citizens moving forwards by including it as part of the tendering process.
- Proposal to acquire the 'Total Validator' program from the website provider eSolutions. This program will run regular checks and verify all web content is consistently compliant with the standard.
- The Township of North Dumfries will be considering the use of two modules to update the website accessibility. This includes use of the Events Module and Enews Module provided by Eolutions. In doing so, the Township will further ensure that calendar events and information are provided in an accessible format for citizens.
- Consider the purchase of the BrowseAloud software to improve the Accessibility of the Township of North Dumfries website.
- Review of this multi-year accessibility plan with status update to be provided to GRAAC and posted for the public.

### **Initiative Planned for 2016**

- Review of this multi-year accessibility plan with status update to be provided to GRAAC and

posted for the public.

- Review of training for accessibility as well as a retraining for all front line staff for refreshment of updated policies as well as updates to changes processes and policies.

### **Initiatives Planned for 2017**

- Review of this multi-year accessibility plan with status update to be provided to GRAAC and posted for the public.
- As part of an overall review of the 'Township Design Standards and Engineering Submission Requirements' details concerning barrier free paths of travel are to be reviewed and included. This might pertain to the cutting of curbs as well as sidewalk design at intersections and so on.
- A review the Townships Zoning By-Law and all other policies regarding the requirements for the number as well as the required size of barrier free parking spots.

### **Initiatives Planned for 2018**

- Review of this multi-year accessibility plan with status update to be provided to GRAAC and posted for the public.
- The building of a new township office building or renovation of the current building. This will include the inclusion of accessible built environment standards and plans will be brought forward to GRAAC for review.

### **Initiatives Planned for 2019**

- Review of this multi-year accessibility plan, extending the plan for a further 5 years and providing it to GRAAC for feedback.
- Website initiatives to bring website to AA compliance.