

THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWN OF TILLSONBURG

BY-LAW NO. 3583

A bylaw to adopt an Accessibility Plan for the Town of Tillsonburg.

WHEREAS The Town is desirous of adopting an Accessibility Plan for the year 2012;

AND WHEREAS the Ontarians Disabilities Act, 2001 requires municipalities to establish an Accessibility Advisory Committee, adopt an Annual Accessibility Plan, and ensure implementation of the Plan;

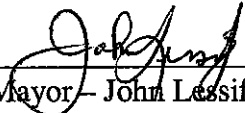
AND WHEREAS the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 has the purpose of developing, implementing and enforcing accessibility standards in order to achieve accessibility for persons with disabilities with respect to goods, services, facilities, accommodation, employment, buildings, structures and premises;

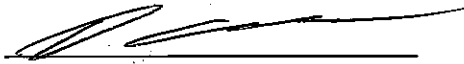
THEREFORE the Council of the Town of Tillsonburg enacts as follows:

1. THAT Schedule A attached hereto forms part of this by-law.
2. THAT the Mayor and Clerk be and are hereby authorized to execute the attached policy marked as "Schedule A" on behalf of the Corporation of the Town of Tillsonburg.

READ A FIRST AND SECOND TIME THIS 9th DAY OF January, 2012.

READ A THIRD AND FINAL TIME AND PASSED THIS 23<sup>rd</sup> DAY OF January 2012.

  
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Mayor - John Lessif

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Clerk - Donna Wilson



## **ACCESSIBILITY PLAN** **TOWN OF TILLSONBURG**

January 3, 2012

### **I. BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

The Town of Tillsonburg is committed to promoting a barrier-free Town for employees, citizens and all who live, work, visit, and invest in Tillsonburg. With this report, the Town of Tillsonburg is proud to present its findings and report on the development of innovative strategies to remove and prevent future barriers for people with disabilities and our significantly maturing population.

In keeping with this vision, the Town of Tillsonburg understands that people with disabilities:

- Represent a growing and diverse community that is dramatically increasing due to the demographic trends of a maturing population.
- Form part of the work force, and include our families, our friends, our customers and members of the community at large.
- Purchase goods and services and make important financial decisions on where they do business, enjoy recreation or choose to live.
- Understand that accessible features can be of benefit to others, such as automatic doors that assist parents with children in strollers.
- Understand that inclusion and full participation of people with disabilities requires well-considered commitment from all levels of government.

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

### **2. LEGISLATION**

***Ontarians with Disabilities Act, S.O. 2001, C.32***

Five sets of standards are being issued under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) to achieve the vision of a barrier-free Ontario by 2025. At the time of writing, four of the five standards have been approved. The Customer Service Standard was the first to be approved on July 25, 2007 by Ontario Regulation 429/07. The bulk of this standard required training of employees, development of policies and procedures, and the implementation of feedback mechanisms.

On June 3rd 2011, Ontario Regulation 191/11-Integrated Accessibility Standards was approved by the Lieutenant Governor in Council. This regulation integrated three of the five standards: transportation, communication and information, and employment. To date, the integrated standards represent the most comprehensive set of accessibility requirements mandated by the Province.

The Accessible Built Environment Standard will be the fifth and final standard. This standard has been released in draft form and there is no set date as to when it may be approved by the Lieutenant Governor in Council. This standard is intended to help remove barriers in buildings and outdoor spaces for persons with disabilities. The standard will only apply to new construction and extensive renovation, with the expectation that buildings would be retrofitted to meet the standard within 5 to 13 years after it becomes law.

### **3. Obligations of the Town of Tillsonburg:**

Besides simply requiring the Town to have regard to the accessibility of persons with disabilities when purchasing goods and services, the Act requires that the Town establish an accessibility advisory committee, which must have a majority of members who are persons with disabilities, to advise Council on accessibility issues and work toward the removal of barriers within the community.

The annual accessibility plan is a public document approved by Council, which must address the identification, removal and prevention of barriers to persons with disabilities in policies, by-laws, programs, practices, and services. An updated Plan must be published annually and must be made readily available to the public.

### **5. ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE (AAC)**

Town of Tillsonburg Council renewed the mandate of the Accessibility Advisory Committee in 2011, as part of the Council committee restructuring. The Committee's responsibilities include raising issues and concerns and providing advice and guidance to Tillsonburg Town Council on matters related to policies, practices and programs in the Town relating to accessibility issues.

The Committee consists of three members of the public, one Councillor, and the Town Clerk, who chairs the committee. The current members of the committee

## 5. ACCOMPLISHMENTS TO DATE

The Town of Tillsonburg has been actively developing innovative approaches to addressing accessibility issues, some of these recent initiatives are as follows:

- 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. The Town also offered roving polls.
- The AAC undertook an initiative in the second half of 2011 to tour Town-owned facilities and identify where barriers exist. At current, the following facilities have been toured: Station Arts Centre, Tillsonburg Community Centre, Town of Tillsonburg Corporate Offices, Tillsonburg Public Library, and the Annandale House National Historic Site. A number of barriers have been identified and documented, and solutions are being explored in 2012.
- The AAC has also identified and documented a number of outdoor locations in town which are unfriendly to persons with disabilities, most of which can be addressed by cutting curbs or fixing sidewalks. These issues have been notified to the roads department, and will be addressed in Spring 2012.
- A new Town website has been developed, in consultation with the AAC, which prioritized accessibility issues during its design phase. The new site considered things such as ease of navigation, device independence, and text readability, from an accessibility standpoint when developing the website. The new site also features Browsealoud, a tool which reads text out loud to individuals with vision impairments, or users who have difficulty reading.
- An improved feedback mechanism has been incorporated into the new website so that members of the public can bring accessibility issues and concerns to the Town's attention via a webform, telephone, email, or fax.
- The Customer Service Centre now allows for more ways for people with mobility disabilities to obtain municipal services 24 hours a day e.g. phone, fax, email, web-site, automatic bill payment, internet banking bill payment etc.
- The Town has invited a member of the AAC to sit on the steering committee for the Central Business District Urban Design Guidelines Study. The study will address the character of buildings, streetscaping and landscaping, open space and pedestrian movement, the scale and continuity of development, heritage elements, the use of materials and signage, land features and vehicle accommodation in the downtown and surrounding areas.
- The Clerk's Office has recently acquired new videos to assist with accessibility training, which will be used in 2012.

- Consultation with community organizations and the Accessibility Advisory Committee

## **8. MONITORING PROGRESS**

The listing of 2012 Goals were established based on what is achievable within a 12 month period. Since a Municipal Accessibility Plan is required on an annual basis, reviews will occur during mid-year. The Town of Tillsonburg will develop a monitoring process to evaluate if targets are being met and/or are being adapted to changing circumstances.

## **9. COMMUNICATION OF THE PLAN**

The availability of the Town of Tillsonburg's Accessibility Plan will be announced publicly by way of:

- a notice in the local newspaper in the biweekly "Focus on Tillsonburg" ad
- Distribution of the plan to the Tillsonburg Library, Customer Service Centre, Tillsonburg Community Centre and Corporate Offices, as well as all Town staff.
- Posting of the plan on the Town's website [www.tillsonburg.ca](http://www.tillsonburg.ca).
- A member of the AAC will be invited to appear on the Rogers TV show, 'Inside Tillsonburg', to speak to the 2012 Accessibility Plan as well as other initiatives being taken on by the committee in 2012.

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

Donna Wilson  
Clerk  
Town of Tillsonburg  
200 Broadway, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
N4G 5A7  
dewilson@tillsonburg.ca

## **10. RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE PROVINCE OF ONTARIO**

The Town of Tillsonburg applauds the enactment of legislation to improve the living and working conditions of persons with disabilities. However, as the financial impact of this legislation on municipal taxpayers is significant, the Town also recommends that the province assume some financial responsibility for the requirements of the AODA with the provision of funds for additional municipal resources, operational expenses and capital works.

## **APPENDIX 1**

### **TOWN OF TILLSONBURG ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE 2011-2014**

#### **Members**

- 1) Mike Cerna
- 2) Michael Kadey
- 3) Helen Lamos-Parker
- 4) Donna Wilson
- 5) Councillor Mel Getty

#### **Staff Resources**

- 1) Donna Wilson, Clerk. Email: [dewilson@tillsonburg.ca](mailto:dewilson@tillsonburg.ca) Phone: 519-688-3009 ext. 3224.
- 2) Committee secretary

There shall be chosen a Vice-Chair who shall assume the duties of the Chair when the latter is not in attendance. The recording secretary shall record the minutes of each meeting should the staff support person be unavailable to take the minutes.

#### QUORUM

A quorum shall consist of 50 % plus one of the voting members of the Committee at any of its meetings for the conducting of business.

#### PROCEDURES

The following procedures will be followed:

1. The Accessibility Committee will be a Committee of Council.
2. The Committee will meet quarterly, and may call additional meetings as required.
3. The minutes of Committee meetings will be received by Open Council during the second meeting of each month.
4. Recommendations to Council shall be formally submitted to Clerk, Donna Hemeryck, in the form of a letter.
5. The AAC shall generally operate according to the Town of Tillsonburg's Procedural Bylaws 3416 and 3485, but may on occasion opt for less formal meeting procedures as determined appropriate by the Committee Chair.