



Where Town and Country Meet

## **Multi-Year Accessibility Plan 2019-2024**

Accessible formats of this document are available upon request by contacting the Deputy Clerk at (705) 424-9770 ext. 116, or by writing our office at:

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 MUNICIPAL PROFILE

The Township of Essa is a mixed rural/urban area, located in the heart of Simcoe County. It lies directly southwest of the City of Barrie and is roughly 100 kilometers north of the City of Toronto. Essa Township is bordered by County Road 90 to the north, County Road 27 to the east, Highway 89 to the south and County Road 15 to the west.

The Township of Essa consists of three major communities (Angus, Baxter and Thornton) as well as smaller hamlets (Colwell, Egbert, Ivy and Utopia). Canada's largest Canadian Forces training base, CFB Borden, is located inside Essa Township, just west of Angus, and impacts the economy of Essa Township positively.

Primarily an agricultural area, Essa Township also has a bustling service industry as well as some industrial manufacturing plants within its boundaries. With many beautiful rivers, picturesque landscapes and convenient access to major cities, Essa Township provides a great place to live and work for its 21,083 residents (\*Population based on Statistics Canada 2016 Census).

A true sense of pride is felt by all who live in Essa Township. This is reflected in the many volunteer projects taken on by members of Essa communities. Sustaining pristine river conditions is a common focal point, highlighted by the annual Community Tree Plant. Annual festivals such as the Angus Salmon Derby draw in visitors from across the County to take part in the wonderful fishing conditions and enjoy the friendly atmosphere that Essa Township is known for. Our great scenery mixed with excellent business opportunities truly makes Essa Township a place "*Where Town and Country Meet.*"

### 1.2 AODA ACCESSIBILITY PLAN OBJECTIVES

The purpose of the *Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001* (ODA) is to improve opportunities for people with disabilities and to provide for their involvement in the identification, removal and prevention of barriers.

Council of the Corporation of the Township of Essa has authorized its Accessibility Advisory Committee to assist with fulfilling the requirements and intent of the Act by performing the following duties:

- Work with staff in the preparation of the Township's multi-year "Accessibility Plan";
- Advise Council on accessibility issues related to the operation, purchase or lease of buildings or structures or parts of buildings or structures used as Township buildings with special attention to those that the public are encouraged to visit or use as a place of employment;
- Identify any potential funding that could be available to assist with the removal of barriers for persons with disabilities;
- Research and report on specific matters referred to it by Council ; and
- Perform other functions that are specified in the Regulations of the "*Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act*"

It is estimated that by the year 2020, the number of persons living in Simcoe County with disabilities will comprise roughly 20% of the population. In an effort to provide a proactive and

planned approach to this significant sociological change, the Township of Essa will strive toward:

- The continual improvement of access to Township owned facilities and services for citizens and staff with disabilities;
- The participation of people with disabilities in the development and review of its Annual Accessibility Plans;
- The provision of quality services to members of the community with disabilities;
- Seeking and responding to the input and suggestions made by members of the disabled community;
- Encouraging the local business sector to provide accessible services;
- Providing equal access for all citizens to maintain a high quality of life; and
- Providing public education and awareness of the benefits of inclusion for all people.

The Township of Essa Accessibility Plan was prepared by Township staff with input from members of the Accessibility Advisory Committee. The plan describes measures currently in place, and measures that will be taken over the next five years to comply with new and emerging legislation. It will assist Council with the identification of barriers, helping Council prioritize for their removal, as the budget permits. This Plan will be a communication tool for residents, informing them of strides taken in the removal and prevention of barriers with the Township of Essa, thus creating a community inclusive and accessible to all.

The Township is committed to the continual improvement of barrier free access to municipal facilities and services.

### **1.3 ACCESSIBILITY LEGISLATION**

#### **Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001 (ODA)**

The purpose of the *Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001 (ODA)* is to improve opportunities for persons with disabilities and to provide for their involvement in the identification, removal and prevention of barriers to their full participation in the life of the province (2001, c. 32, s. 1.). The ODA requires municipalities with a population over 10,000 people to:

- Prepare an annual accessibility plan; and
- Establish and seek advice from an Accessibility Advisory Committee, whose membership must include people with disabilities.

#### **Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA)**

The purpose of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA)* is to develop, implement and enforce accessibility standards in order to achieve a fully accessible Ontario by 2025, with respect to goods, services, facilities, accommodation, employment, buildings, structures and premises; and, to provide for the involvement of persons with disabilities in the development of the accessibility standards. The AODA contains five key standards in the areas of daily living, including:

1. Customer Service
2. Information and Communication
3. Employment
4. Transportation
5. Built Environment

The AODA also mandates that Council shall seek advice from the Committee on the accessibility for persons with disabilities to a building, structure or premises, or part of a building, structure or premises:

- that the council purchases, constructs or significantly renovates;
- for which the council enters into a new lease; or
- that a person provides as municipal capital facilities under an agreement entered into with the council in accordance with section 110 of the *Municipal Act, 2001*

### **Accessibility Standards for Customer Service**

The Accessible Customer Service Standard was the first accessibility standard to become law (2008). The Township of Essa was required to comply with this standard prior to January 1, 2010. As such, the Township of Essa implemented its “Accessible Customer Service Policy” as well as a “Best Practices and Tips” in January, 2010.

### **Integrated Accessibility Standard (IAS)**

The IAS came into effect on July 1, 2011, and brought forth standards to be implemented in the following areas:

1. Information and Communications;
2. Employment; and
3. Transportation.

The requirements put forth in the Regulation are to be phased in over time between 2011 and 2021.

### **Accessible Built Environment Standard**

The Accessible Built Environment Standard came into effect on January 1, 2013. The recommendations contained in the standard were submitted by the Accessible Built Environment Standards Development Committee. The recommendations in the Accessible Built Environment Standard prescribe requirements for the following areas:

1. Recreational trails and beach access routes
2. Outdoor public use eating areas
3. Outdoor play spaces
4. Exterior paths of travel (e.g. sidewalks, walkways, ramps, stairs etc.)
5. Accessible parking spaces
6. Obtaining services - service counters, queuing guides, waiting areas
7. Maintenance

The purpose of the Accessible Built Environment Standard is to assist in further removing barriers for people with disabilities from the built up environment (ie: buildings and outdoor spaces). The standard applies to new construction and extensive renovations, not requiring retrofitting, as the focus is on a go-forward basis. Changes are reflected in two pieces of legislative components including the 2012 Ontario Building Code (amended via Ontario Regulation 368/13) and the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (amended via Ontario Regulation 413/12 – Design for Public Spaces).

## **2.0 TOWNSHIP OF ESSA ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE (AAC)**

The AODA mandates that municipalities with populations greater than 10,000 form an Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC). The AAC must be comprised of at least 51% of persons with disabilities. The Committee's role is to develop, prepare and review the Township of Essa's multi-year accessibility plans. These plans must be made available to the public. Accessibility Plans help to identify which actions the Township used in the past, as well as future plans to identify, remove and prevent barriers confronting people with disabilities.

Additionally, the Accessibility Advisory Committee must:

- Advise Council about the requirements and implementation of accessibility standards and the preparation of accessibility reports and such other matters for which Council may seek its advice;
- Review (in a timely manner) the site plans and drawings described in Section 41 of the Planning Act; and
- Perform all other functions that are specified in the regulations. 2005, c. 11, s. 29(4). (Source: *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act*, 2005, S.O. 2005, c. 11, s. 28)

The AODA defines the role of the Accessibility Advisory Committee as one to advise Township Council on the requirements and the implementation of the AODA standards, as well as the preparation of the AODA Standards Reports.

### **2.1 Accessibility Advisory Committee Composition**

The Township of Essa Accessibility Advisory Committee is comprised of members of the Essa community who: have disabilities; are caregivers to persons with disabilities; or, have knowledge of issues faced by persons with disabilities. At least one member of Township staff will be in attendance at each meeting. Meetings will occur on a quarterly basis.

The Essa Accessibility Advisory Committee consists of the following composition:

One Council Representative

One Staff Representative

Up to six members from the community (consisting of Chair and Vice Chair)

### **2.2 Accessibility Advisory Committee Mandate**

The Essa Accessibility Advisory Committee is dedicated to improving the quality of life for all persons with disabilities by promoting equal opportunity and a barrier free community. The Essa Accessibility Plan will encourage and facilitate accessibility on behalf of all persons by:

- promoting public awareness and sensitivity to accessibility issues;
- encouraging cooperation among all service and interest groups to ensure a better community for all persons;
- identifying and documenting relevant accessibility issues and concerns with respect to all municipal property and buildings;
- liaising with Township staff and local organizations in addressing accessibility issues that are related to municipal properties and buildings;
- recognizing that the needs of all persons are constantly changing.

## 2.3 Terms of Reference

The Essa Accessibility Advisory Committee will:

- Advocate on behalf of persons with disabilities through the promotion of public awareness and understanding the needs of disabled persons;
- Support the development and implementation of programs, policies and by-laws which promote and create a barrier free community;
- Make recommendations to Council on strategies and policies to ensure that existing barriers are eliminated, and that no new barriers will be created;
- Identify any potential funding opportunities to assist Essa in becoming barrier free;
- Monitor the status of municipally owned and/or operated buildings, facilities and public areas to ensure that they meet the needs of disabled persons;
- Work with Township staff in the maintenance of Essa's Accessibility Plan in accordance with the *Ontarians with Disabilities Act*;
- Respond to relevant accessibility issues as raised by individuals or community groups;
- Provide a forum for discussion and coordination of accessibility issues with other community groups and agencies.

## 3.0 ACCESSIBILITY PLANNING

People with disabilities represent a significant and growing part of our population. According to Statistics Canada, 1.85 million people in Ontario have disabilities – that's currently 15.5% of Ontario's population. This number is expected to increase significantly, as disabilities tend to develop as people age. It is expected that the population for people with disabilities will increase to 20% by the year 2025.

As a result of the expected increase to the number of people living with disabilities, improving accessibility is now a shared responsibility. The *Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001* and the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* require that the provincial government, municipal governments and key public sector organizations review their policies, programs and services through the development of multi-year accessibility plans.

Municipal government plays a crucial role in the planning and development of our communities. Responsibilities, which include enforcing the barrier-free access requirements of the *Ontario Building Code*, as well as implementing key accessibility considerations under the ODA and the AODA, are crucial to realizing a vision of local communities that improve accessibility and mobility for their residents. New legislation (Ontario Regulation 429/07 – Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 191/11 – Integrated Accessibility Standards; Ontario Regulation 413/12 – Design for Public Spaces) provides standards that all organizations in the private and public sector must follow to ensure that barriers for people with disabilities are identified and removed over time in the areas of Customer Service, Information and Communication, Employment, Transportation, and Public Spaces, and that no new barriers are created.

## 4.0 TOWNSHIP OF ESSA ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

The 2019-2024 Accessibility Plan outlines the policies and actions that the Corporation of the Township of Essa will put in place to improve opportunities for people with disabilities. This Plan will be reviewed by the Accessibility Advisory Committee and municipal staff at a minimum every five years or sooner if deemed necessary. Progress reports will be updated annually so as to inform the public of steps taken to remove existing barriers identified.

### 4.1 Organizational Commitment to Accessibility Planning

The Township of Essa is committed to treating all people in a way that allows them to maintain their dignity and independence. We believe in integration and equal opportunity. We are committed to meeting the needs of people with disabilities in a timely manner, and will do so by preventing and removing barriers to accessibility and meeting accessibility requirements under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*.

### 4.2 Customer Service Standard (Ontario Regulation 429/07\* This Regulation was revoked/spent effective July 1, 2016) Effective July 1, 2016 - The Customer Service Standard was included in O. Reg. 191/11, and amendments were introduced to the Customer Service Standard by O. Reg. 165/16.

The Township of Essa is committed to providing its residents with goods and services in a way that respects the dignity and independence of people with disabilities. The Township is committed to giving people with disabilities the same opportunity to access our goods and services and allowing them to benefit from the same services, in the same place and in a similar way as other customers. As such, the Township of Essa developed an Accessible Customer Services Policy that was implemented January 1, 2010, which can be viewed on the municipal website at [www.essatownship.on.ca](http://www.essatownship.on.ca) by clicking on "Accessibility". A copy of this policy can also be requested in an accessible format by contacting the Clerk's Office.

This policy was developed and implemented by the Township of Essa as a result of Ontario Regulation 429/07, and includes information on the following:

- Providing goods, services and facilities to people with disabilities
- Communication
- Use of service animals, support persons and assistive devices
- Notice of temporary disruptions
- Staff training on customer services
- Accessibility of meetings
- Feedback process
- Notice of availability of documents

### 4.3 Integrated Accessibility Standard (Ontario Regulation 191/11) \*\*O. Reg. 191/11 was amended to include the Customer Service Standard eff. July 1, 2016

In an effort to comply with the Integrated Accessibility Standard Regulation regarding accessibility, the Township of Essa will be developing and implementing a series of policies (or amending existing policies) so as to comply with all sections as laid out in the Regulation. The following is a listing of commitments that the Township will take to ensure compliance prior to the phased-in compliance dates as specified in the standard:

i. **General Requirements**

**Establishment of Policies, Procedures and Best Practices**

The Township of Essa is committed to achieving accessibility by meeting its requirements under the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation through the development, implementation and maintenance of policies. It will do so by developing an Accessibility Program which will be comprised of policies, procedures and best practices specific to accessibility, and will be reviewed with all staff.

**Accessibility Plans**

The Township shall develop, implement and document a multi-year accessibility plan outlining a corporate strategy for identifying, removing, and preventing barriers, and meeting the requirements set out in the Regulation. The Plan will be updated at least once every five years.

An annual status report will be prepared on the progress of measures taken to implement the strategy referenced in the Plan.

These documents will be posted on the Township's website and provided upon request in an accessible format.

**Procuring or Acquiring Goods, Services, or Facilities**

When procuring or acquiring goods, services, or facilities, the Township shall incorporate accessibility guidelines or standards into relevant policies, procedures, by-laws, and/or specifications. Where it is not practicable to incorporate accessibility guidelines or standards into purchasing, an explanation shall be provided in order to comply with Ontario Regulation 191/11.

**Training**

The Township shall provide training to all employees, volunteers, elected officials, all persons who participate in developing the Township's policies, and provide goods, services or facilities on behalf of the Township, on the requirements of the accessibility standards within the Regulation, and the *Ontario Human Rights Code*, as they pertain to persons with disabilities. Furthermore, training shall be appropriate to the duties of employees and volunteers. The Township shall keep a record of all training provided, including the dates on which the training was provided and the individuals to whom it was provided.

**Accessible Emergency Information**

The Township of Essa is committed to providing customers and clients with publicly available emergency information in an accessible format upon request. We will also provide employees with disabilities individualized emergency response information when necessary.

ii. **Information and Communications Standard**

The Township of Essa is committed to meeting the communication needs of people with disabilities. We will consult with people with disabilities to determine their information and communication needs in the following manner(s):

### **Feedback**

The Township shall ensure its process for receiving and addressing feedback is accessible for persons with disabilities by providing, or arranging for, the provision of any document, related to this service, in an accessible format or communication support, upon request. We will notify the public about the availability of accessible formats and communication supports.

### **Accessible Formats and Communication Supports**

The Township shall, upon request, provide, or arrange for the provision of any of its documents in an accessible format or communication support in a timely manner. When providing accessible formats the Township shall take into account the person's disability and individual communication needs by consulting the person directly.

The Township shall not charge a cost that is more than the regular cost charged to other persons.

The Township shall notify the public about the availability of accessible formats and communication supports, e.g. "Documents are available in an accessible format, upon request."

### **Emergency Procedure, Plans or Public Safety Information**

The Township shall provide its emergency procedures, plans, and public safety information to the public, upon request, in an accessible format or communication support, and shall do so in a timely manner that takes into account the person's disability and communication needs.

### **Accessible Websites and Web Content**

The Township shall make its website and web content conform to the *Worldwide Web Consortium's Web Content Accessibility Guidelines*, initially at level A and increasing to level AA. All new websites, and web content, shall conform to level A by January 1, 2014, and level AA by January 1, 2021.

### **Public Libraries**

The Chief Executive Officer for the Township of Essa Public Library shall provide or arrange for the provision of access to accessible materials where they exist. Further to which, library staff shall inform the public of the availability of accessible materials, and provide these materials in an accessible format or appropriate communication support upon request. This may include accessible formats for archival materials, special collections, rare books and donations.

### **iii. Employment Standard**

The Township of Essa is committed to fair and accessible employment practices. It will develop and/or amend existing policies so as to reflect the legislative requirements with respect to those outlined in the employment standard. Training of existing staff (and new staff) will be a continual process that the Township provides, as in accordance with Ontario Regulation 191/11. It will take the following steps to notify the public and staff about the following:

### **Availability of Accommodations**

The Township shall provide written notification to the public of the availability of accommodations for persons with disabilities, upon request, throughout the hiring process, including:

- All employment postings
- Upon participation in the interview process
- When an offer of employment is made

When arranging for the provision of accommodations, the Township shall consult with the applicant to determine their specific accessibility needs.

### **Informing Employees of Supports**

The Township shall inform all employees of its policies and procedures used to support employees with disabilities, including but not limited to the provision of workplace accommodations. In doing so, the Township shall provide this information to new employees during their workplace orientation training.

### **Accessible Formats and Communication Supports for Employees**

When requested, the Township shall consult the employee with a disability when providing or arranging for the provision of accessible formats or communication supports for information related to the employee's job performance, and information generally provided to all employees. For example, awards ceremonies and information sessions.

### **Workplace Emergency Response Information**

The Township shall provide individualized emergency response information to employees with disabilities. This also applies to elected officials.

### **Individualized Accommodation Plans**

The Township shall establish a written process for the development of individualized accommodation plans for employees with disabilities. This also applies to elected officials.

### **Return-to-Work Process**

The Township shall develop, and have in place, a written return-to-work process for employees who have been absent due to a disability, and require workplace accommodations in order to return-to-work.

### **Performance Management**

The Township shall take into consideration the accessibility needs of employees with disabilities, and all individualized accommodation plans, when developing its performance management documents, tools, and resources.

### **Career Development and Advancement**

When providing career development and advancement opportunities to its employees, the Township shall take into consideration the accessibility needs as well as any individualized accommodation plans of its employees with disabilities.

## **Redeployment**

The Township shall take into consideration the accessibility needs as well as any individualized accommodation plans when redeploying employees with disabilities.

### **iv. Transportation Standard**

The Township of Essa is committed to providing accessible taxicab services to people with disabilities. We will take the following steps to provide such taxicab services to our residents:

#### **Duties of Municipalities: Accessible Taxicabs**

The Township shall consult with the Essa Accessibility Advisory Committee, the public, and persons with disabilities on the appropriate proportion of on-demand accessible taxicabs, and shall report on the progress being made to provide on-demand accessible taxicabs in its municipal Accessibility Plan.

#### **Duties of Municipalities – Taxicabs**

By licensing taxicabs, the Township will ensure that brokers, owners and operators of taxicabs are:

- Not charging a higher fee to persons with disabilities, than the fee charged to persons without disabilities for the same trip or distance
- Not charging a fare for the storage and transportation of assistive devices or mobility assistive devices.

In addition, the Township shall ensure that brokers, owners and operators of taxicabs place vehicle registration and identification information on the rear bumper of the taxicab, and that this information be made available in an accessible format to persons with disabilities who are passengers.

## **4.4 ACCESSIBLE BUILT ENVIRONMENT STANDARD**

The Township of Essa commits to creating an environment inclusive to all residents within its boundaries. As such, the municipality will include accessibility features and criteria in the planning stages as stipulated in Ontario Regulation 413/12 for the following areas:

- Recreational trails and beach access routes
- Outdoor public use eating areas
- Outdoor play spaces
- Exterior paths of travel (e.g. sidewalks, walkways, ramps, stairs etc.)
- Accessible parking spaces
- Obtaining services - service counters, queuing guides, waiting areas
- Maintenance

### **DESIGN FOR PUBLIC SPACES (O. REG. 413/12) - COMPLIANCE DATE – JANUARY 1, 2016**

#### **Recreational Trails and Beach Access Routes (Sections 80.6 to 80.15)**

The Township shall ensure that it consults with Essa's Accessibility Advisory Committee when they construct new or redevelop existing recreational trails with respect to the following criteria: slope; the need for, and the location of, ramps on the trail; the need for, location and design of, rest areas, passing areas, viewing areas, amenities on the trail, and any other pertinent features. The Township shall ensure that it complies with the technical

requirements respecting recreational trails and beach access routes (as outlined in O. Regulation 413/12).

### **Outdoor Public Use Eating Areas (Sections 80.16 to 80.17)**

The Township of Essa shall comply with the requirements set forth in Section 80.17 of the Regulation by ensuring that: a minimum of 20% of the available picnic tables are accessible; the ground surface leading to and under the tables are level, firm and stable for persons using mobility aids; and, that the accessible tables have clear ground space around them that allows for a forward approach to the tables.

### **Outdoor Play Spaces (Sections 80.18 to 80.31)**

The Township shall consult with its Accessibility Advisory Committee when it constructs new or redevelops existing outdoor play spaces. When purchasing new play equipment, it shall ensure that the new equipment incorporates accessibility features (such as sensory and active play components) for children and caregivers with various disabilities into the design of the outdoor play space, and that the ground surface is firm, stable and has impact attenuating properties for injury prevention and sufficient clearance to provide children and caregivers with various disabilities the ability to move through, in and around the outdoor play space.

### **Exterior Paths of Travel (Sections 80.21 to 80.31)**

When newly constructing and/or redeveloping exterior paths of travel (ie: outdoor sidewalks or walkways designed and constructed for pedestrian travel), the Township shall ensure that it complies with all requirements set forth in Sections 80.21 to 80.31 relating to the technical requirements, ramps, stairs, curb ramps, depressed curbs and accessible pedestrian signals. If a rest area is to be added along an exterior path of travel, the municipality shall consult with its Accessibility Advisory Committee on its design and placement of such rest area.

### **Accessible Parking – Off Street Parking (Sections 80.32 to 80.38)**

The Township shall ensure it provides Type A (minimum 3,400 mm width and signage indicating “van accessible”) and Type B (minimum 2,400 mm width and signage for accessible parking) parking spaces with access aisles measuring a minimum width of 1,500 mm, and that the off street parking shall comply with all requirements set forth in the Regulation (including number of accessible parking spaces required, signage).

### **Accessible Parking – On Street Parking (Section 80.39)**

The Township shall consult on the need, location and design of accessible on-street parking spaces with its Accessibility Advisory Committee when constructing or redeveloping existing on-street parking spaces.

### **Obtaining Services (Section 80.40 to 80.43)**

The Township shall meet the requirements set out in the Regulation in respect of all newly constructed service counters and fixed queuing guides; and all newly constructed or redeveloped queuing guides.

The Township shall ensure that when constructing new service counters (which includes replacing existing service counters), it shall comply with the requirements set forth in the Regulation. These requirements stipulate that a minimum of one service counter shall accommodate a mobility aid for each type of service provided, and that the countertop height must be such that it is usable by a person seated in a mobility aid, that there must be sufficient knee clearance for a person seated in a mobility aid (where forward approach to a counter is required), and that the floor space in front of the counter must be sufficiently clear.

The Township shall ensure that fixed queuing guides: provide sufficient width to allow for the passage of mobility aids and mobility assistive devices, have sufficient clear floor area to permit mobility aids to turn where queuing lines change direction, and that the queuing guides are cane detectable.

#### 4.5 BARRIERS

A “barrier” is anything that prevents a person with a disability from fully participating in all aspects of society because of his/her disability, including a physical barrier, architectural barrier, informational or communications barrier, attitudinal barrier, technological barrier, a policy or practice.

The following chart describes each barrier type listed above.

<b>Barrier Type</b>	<b>Example</b>
Physical Barrier	A door knob that cannot be operated by a person with limited upper-body mobility and strength.
Architectural Barrier	A hallway or door frame that is too narrow for a wheelchair or scooter to pass through.
Informational Barrier	Typefaces (fonts) that are too small or are too “fancy” to be read by a person with low vision.
Communicational Barrier	A website that is not accessible to people who are blind. A person who talks loudly when addressing a person who is deaf.
Attitudinal Barrier	A receptionist who ignores a customer in a wheelchair, or who talks to a support person rather than to the person with the disability.
Technological Barrier	A paper tray on a laser printer that requires two strong hands to open it.
Policy / Practice	The practice of announcing important message over an intercom system that people with hearing impairments cannot clearly hear.

**i. Barrier Identification**

In an effort to assist the municipality, the Township of Essa Accessibility Advisory Committee conducted audits on municipal facilities and parks within the boundaries of Essa Township. The results of these audits are intended to aid municipal staff in identifying accessibility barriers, thus helping staff and Council to prioritize the barriers identified by the Committee for removal in the future (pending budget approval).

Going forward, the Accessibility Advisory Committee will continue to conduct audits on the remaining municipal facilities and parks, making suggestions to Council and municipal staff for improvements to accessibility within these facilities. The AAC will also suggest ideas for incorporation of accessibility features in the municipal trails and parks within the boundaries of the Township of Essa, in an effort to create parks and trails that will be inclusive and accessible to all users within our municipality.

Once the audits on all municipal facilities have been completed, the Accessibility Advisory Committee will continue doing audits ONLY on municipal facilities that have major renovations or are newly purchased by the municipality.

**APPENDIX A – 1  
BARRIER REMOVAL – RECENT ACHIEVEMENTS**

<b>CUSTOMER SERVICE STANDARD</b>	
<p>Staff developed and implemented an “Accessible Customer Service Policy” in December 2009 and provided training to all staff regarding accessibility, the Customer Service Standard (Ontario Regulation 429/07), and the Township of Essa’s Accessible Customer Service Policy in December of 2009. This Policy and “Best Practice Tips and Procedures” (A-001) is available on the Township of Essa’s website located at <a href="http://www.essatownship.on.ca">www.essatownship.on.ca</a>.</p>	
<b>FACILITIES / PARKS / TRAILS – Updated December 2016</b>	
<p><b>Essa Public Library- Angus Branch (2012)</b></p>	<p>The Angus branch of the Essa Public Library relocated into a new joint-use facility located at the Nottawasaga Pines Secondary School.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An audit was conducted on this new branch by members of the Accessibility Advisory Committee, and noted that several improvements were made in the layout of the facility.</li> <li>• Main entrance is fully accessible;</li> <li>• Assistive technology is now offered on one computer within the facility;</li> <li>• Desk area(s) can accommodate width/height of wheelchair(s);</li> <li>• Aisles can accommodate one wheelchair and one able-bodied user to pass through with ease;</li> <li>• Additional lighting was incorporated for patrons on the shelving units;</li> <li>• Books/Materials are available in accessible formats, and can be made available for those in need upon request;</li> <li>• Accessible Parking spaces are clearly identified. The spaces exceed the minimum requirement through the Zoning Bylaw.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Angus Recreation Centre (2010-2011)</b></p>	<p>This facility had renovations that included improvements to accessibility. The following is a listing of such improvements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lift was installed;</li> <li>• Stair edges have tonal contrast;</li> <li>• Front entranceway has wide motion-censored double doors;</li> <li>• Banquet room has ice-viewing area with glass for people to sit and watch games/events;</li> <li>• Banquet room bathrooms are accessible.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Thornton Recreation Centre (2010)</b></p>	<p>This facility had renovations that included improvements to accessibility. The following is a listing of such improvements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lift was installed.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Pine River Trail (2012)</b></p>	<p>This trail was developed taking into consideration users with mobility aids. The trail is constructed of a hard-compacted surface that is wide enough for mobility-devices and able-bodied users to easily get by (“two-way traffic”).</p> <p>The Pine River Trail signage located at the start of the trail uses tonal contrast for clear identification of the trail.</p> <p>One bench has been installed for a rest area along the border of the trail.</p>

<b>Stonemount Park Thornton Arena Park (2014)</b>	Stonemount Park and the Thornton Arena Park had play equipment installed that took into consideration the needs of children with disabilities. As such, tenders were reviewed with the municipal AAC representative, whereby recommendations were made based on accessible features incorporated into their design. Wood chips were laid surrounding the structures. Accessible picnic tables were installed at these two parks.
<b>Administration Centre (2013-14)</b>	Accessibility-related improvements made to this building including re-working upper level outer entrance (levelling the pathway leading into building and installing automatic door openers), installation of wider doors that will allow room for wheelchairs to easily maneuver into building (upper and lower level entrances), and improvements to upper and lower level washrooms (automatic door openers, removal of counters and installation of floating sink basins, "accessible" mirrors installed, re-vamping accessible toilet stalls to allow for wheelchair maneuverability in the stall-grab bars installed, new toilets installed, toilet paper dispenser at appropriate height, etc.).
<b>Community Park Glen- Eton/Wildflower Park (2015)</b>	Community Park and Glen-Eton/Wildflower Park had accessible play equipment installed at each location. Wood chips were laid as surface protection. The play equipment was reviewed with the municipal AAC representative, whereby recommendations were made based on the accessible features of the equipment.
<b>Community Park (2016)</b>	Adult Exercise Equipment was purchased and installed at Community Park. Municipality was successful in New Horizons for Seniors Program funding (\$25K). Ribbon Cutting Ceremony took place in October 2016. Published on website and on Twitter.
<b>Stonemount Park (2016)</b>	Request for inclusion in 2017 Budget for purchase/install of Adult Exercise Equipment at Stonemount Park.
<b>ADMINISTRATION / OTHER-Updated January 2019</b>	
<b>Accessible Customer Service Policy / Best Practice Tips and Procedures A-001 (2010)</b>	The Township implemented an Accessible Customer Service Policy and provided training to all staff regarding the requirements under Ontario Regulation 429/07. They also created an Accessible Customer Service Procedure which is available for viewing on the Township's website <a href="http://www.essatownship.on.ca">www.essatownship.on.ca</a> under "Accessibility".
<b>Taxi Cab Owner Training (2012)</b>	Training session conducted with Taxi Cab Company Owners on the changes that will affect the licensing of taxicabs (conducted jointly with Town of New Tecumseth).
<b>Zoning By-law (2012)</b>	The Township of Essa Zoning By-law was amended to include specifications relating to accessible parking spaces. Changes were made to include Type A and Type B parking spaces, as well as an accessible aisle.
<b>Enabling Accessibility Funding Application Round One (2012)</b>	Two applications submitted in 2012 for funding to renovate facilities (Thornton Arena and Administration Centre). Thornton Arena – declined by Province. Administration Centre – for consideration by Province in Round Two.
<b>Township Website (2013)</b>	Staff worked with Simcoe County IT to develop and unveil new website. Accessibility related features are built into the software (Sharepoint) which allows easier navigation / use for accessibility-related software to

	read (ie: Read Aloud). Site Improve Report forwarded to Township regarding WCAG Level 2.0 (A and AA) criteria.
<b>Accessibility Plan (2013) (2019)</b>	Staff developed the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan. The Plan is posted on the Township’s website at <a href="http://www.essatownship.on.ca">www.essatownship.on.ca</a> under “Accessibility”. The Plan will be updated once every five years in accordance with section 4 (1) (c) of O. Regulation 191/11.
<b>Integrated Accessibility Standard Policy HR13-01 (2013)</b> <b>Information and Communication Procedure A-002</b> <b>Employment Procedure A-003</b>	Staff created an Integrated Accessibility Standard Policy HR13-01 which was approved by Council in June 2013 via Resolution CW129-2013. The Township provided training to staff regarding the new accessibility standards (O. Regulation 191/11) and the Human Rights Code as it pertains to persons with disabilities (video created by the Ontario Human Rights Commissioner and available on the following website: <a href="http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/learning/working-together-code-and-aoda">www.ohrc.on.ca/en/learning/working-together-code-and-aoda</a> ). Staff implemented and reviewed procedures for Information and Communication (A-002), and Employment (A-003), as they relate to the standards. 19-02-20 Council Minutes.
<b>Procurement Policy A04-04 Amended (2013)</b>	Subsection 2.14 and Section 21 were added to the Procurement Policy in April 2013 so as to comply with requirements outlined in O. Regulation 191/11.
<b>Accessibility Advisory Committee Deputation to Parks and Recreation Committee (May 2013)</b>	Members of the AAC made a deputation to the Parks and Recreation Committee to advise of the new requirements under the Integrated Accessibility Standards. They presented the Committee with audits that had been performed from an accessibility perspective on the facilities and parks within the Township. AAC Committee members advised the P&R Committee of the requirements for planning to include accessibility features and criteria in new playgrounds and purchases (ie: play equipment, accessible picnic tables, accessible pathways, etc.).
<b>Enabling Accessibility Funding Application (2014) Round Two</b>	Application approved for improvements to the Administration Centre. Walkway for upper level entrance has been leveled to comply with the slope requirements introduced in the Design for Public Spaces (O. Regulation 413/12). Front doors (upper and lower level entrances) have been removed and replaced with wider doors. Renovations have been made to both the washroom facilities (counter removal and replaced with wash basins; accessible stall was widened to allow for wheelchairs and toilets replaced; lever handles installed; etc.)
<b>Public Space Challenge (2015)</b>	AAC challenged Council and Committee members to a Public Space Challenge on June 1 <sup>st</sup> , 2015. The Challenge saw all in attendance participating with the utilization of assistive mobility devices at Community Park. The Challenge assisted all members in identifying barriers for those utilizing the equipment on a daily basis; barriers that would otherwise have been deemed to not be barriers. This exercise kicked off National Accessibility Week, and assisted other committees in their planning stages for up-coming projects.
<b>New Horizons for Seniors Program (2015)</b>	Application was submitted to the Province requesting funds (\$25,000) to assist with the purchase of exercise equipment for seniors. If approved, the equipment will be installed at Community Park and will be the first “Intergenerational” Park that has something for all generations (not just kids).

	<p><b>UPDATED MAY 16, 2016 - Application Approved. Project to commence spring/summer of 2016.</b></p> <p><b>UPDATED NOVEMBER 2016 – Adult Exercise Equipment was installed at Community Park (Angus). Ribbon Cutting Ceremony took place for kick-off in October 2016.</b></p>
<p><b>Reporting</b>  <b>2010</b>  <b>2013</b>  <b>2015</b>  <b>2017</b></p>	<p>The Township submitted its reporting to the Province, as outlined in O. Reg. 429/07 (2010) and O. Reg. 191/11 (2013). The Township will submit its next report prior to December 31, 2019.</p>

**APPENDIX B – 1  
ACCESSIBILITY PLAN PRIORITY LIST AND COMPLIANCE DATES**

	Priority	Compliance Date(s) & Action Taken
<b>POLICIES &amp; PROCEDURES</b>		
Develop accessibility policies documenting how the municipality will meet its accessibility requirements under the IAS Regulation. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Must include Statement of Organizational Commitment</li> <li>• Has to be written Document(s)</li> <li>• Must be available to Public</li> <li>• Must be available in alternative formats (upon request)</li> </ul>	<b>2013</b>	Integrated Accessibility Standard Policy, Policy No. HR13-01 Approved by Council June 19, 2013 Statement of Organizational Commitment is included in Section 4.1 of this Plan. Procedures in place and posted on website regarding Accessible Customer Service (A-001), Information and Communication (A-002) and Employment (A-003).  2016-HR13-01 was updated to include requirements for Customer Service Standard (O. Reg. 429/07 was repealed; O. Reg. was introduced; Customer Service Standard requirements were incorporated into O. Reg. 191/11
<b>ACCESSIBILITY PLAN</b>		
Update and develop the Township's Multi-Year Accessibility Plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Must be developed in consultation with persons with disabilities and AAC;</li> <li>• Review at minimum every 5 years</li> <li>• Provide in an alternative format (upon request)</li> <li>• Prepare annual status report and post on website</li> </ul>	<b>2013</b>	Multi-Year Accessibility Plan completed and posted on website. The Plan includes a statement of Organizational Commitment, and a statement indicating that the Plan is available in an alternative format, upon request. Approved by Council at its meeting of February 6, 2013.
<b>PROCUREMENT</b>		
Develop accessibility criteria for use when purchasing goods or services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide explanation if not practicable to do so</li> </ul>	<b>2013</b>	April 2013 - Procurement Policy A05-01 Section 21 "Accessibility" was added. Also subsection 2.14 was added.
<b>TRAINING</b>		
Develop training plan to deliver training on all Accessibility Standards included in IAS and on Human Rights Code, as well as on all accessibility policies for all staff and volunteers, policy developers, those providing goods or services on behalf of the municipality	<b>2014</b>	Training includes reviews of Accessible Customer Service Policy, IAS Policy HR13-01, and Video from Human Rights Commission (to cover Section 7 training). Also reviewed procedures in place (A001 Best Practices-Accessible Customer Service, A002 Information & Communication Standard Procedure & A003 Employment Standard Procedure) as relates to job-specific duties. <b>ONGOING</b>

	Priority	Compliance Date(s) & Action Taken
Continue to review Accessible Customer Service Policy with all members of staff, and provide training with all new staff members regarding IAS	<b>ONGOING</b>	<b>ONGOING</b>
<b>INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION STANDARDS</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Compliance Date(s) &amp; Action Taken</b>
Emergency Procedure and Plans or Public Safety Information <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To include notification of availability of accessible formats/supports to be made on the municipal website and through corporate communications with the public</li> </ul>	<b>2012</b>	January 2012 - Clause included on website (footer) that reads: "Information contained on our website is available in accessible formats upon request by contacting the Clerk's Department".  Fire Department will be including this clause in future Emergency Procedure and Plans.  Included in Section 4.3 of IAS Procedure HR13-01
Development of a feedback/communication policy and tools to ensure processes are accessible to persons with disabilities – providing/arranging for the provision of accessible formats/supports upon request	<b>2014</b>	Feedback/Communication guide included in Information and Communication Procedure A-002 Section 4.2  Feedback form created as part of Accessible Customer Service Policy in 2010
Identification of providers of alternative accessible formats/supports (Braille, audio, etc.) such that the Township will be able to respond to requests in a timely manner AT NO ADDITIONAL CHARGE TO PERSON MAKING REQUEST	<b>2015</b>	Included in IAS Policy HR13-01
Working on our website to ensure conformity to: WCAG 2.0 Level A WCAG 2.0 Level AA	<b>2014</b> <b>2021</b>	2013 County of Simcoe developed website design compliant with WCAG Level AA – Site Improve Reports reviewed to ensure compliance with WCAG 2.0
Libraries of Educational Institutes – Print upon request Digital upon request	<b>2015</b> <b>2020</b>	n/a
Public Libraries – arrange for provision of access to accessible materials where exist	<b>2013</b>	This is part of the services that Library offers residents.

EMPLOYMENT STANDARD	Priority	Compliance Date(s) & Action Taken
<p>Development of policies to include accessibility criteria for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Recruitment (Notify employees, and public of availability of accommodations) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Notify applicant of availability of accommodation upon request for assessments or selection process</li> <li>• Process required to arrange for suitable accommodation (if required by applicant)</li> <li>• Notice to successful applicant – notify of policies for accommodation</li> </ul> </li> <li>b. Informing Employees and Applicants of Supports Available</li> <li>c. Provision of Information and Communications in Accessible Formats (incorporate strategy/process)</li> <li>d. Workplace Emergency Response Information</li> <li>e. Individual Accommodation Plans (develop and document)</li> <li>f. Return to Work (develop process)</li> <li>g. Performance Management (employer to incorporate process)</li> <li>h. Career Development and Advancement (employer to incorporate process)</li> <li>i. Redeployment (employer to incorporate process)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. <b>2014</b></li> <li>b. <b>2014</b></li> <li>c. <b>2014</b></li> <li>d. <b>2012</b></li> <li>e. <b>2014</b></li> <li>f. <b>2014</b></li> <li>g. <b>2014</b></li> <li>h. <b>2014</b></li> <li>i. <b>2014</b></li> </ul>	<p>The Integrated Accessibility Standard Policy HR13-01 was adopted by Council on June 19, 2013 via Resolution CW129-2013. The Policy contains the Corporation’s commitments that are necessary for compliance with the Employment Standard in Section 5.3 of the Policy. The following are covered in the policy: recruitment, informing employees of supports, provision of information and communications in accessible formats, workplace emergency response information, individual accommodation plans (WERP), return to work processes (written plan), performance management, career development/advancement, and redeployment.</p> <p>As well, the Employment Standard Procedure A-003 was put in place in 2013, which contains instruction to staff regarding processes/procedures for implementation of the employment standard.</p> <p>Hiring Policy A04-04 was also amended in 2014 to ensure of compliance in all stages of our hiring process.</p> <p>d. Training Session conducted November 16, 2012 - Employees were asked to fill in the “Emergency Evacuation Form” and the “Employee Workplace Emergency Response Plan” forms and return to their Supervisor.</p>
<p>Development and implementation of Workplace Emergency Response Information for those that require it</p>	<p><b>2012</b></p>	<p>November 16, 2012 - Employees were asked to complete the Employee Workplace Emergency Response Plan form with their Supervisor, should they require assistance in the event of an emergency.</p> <p>Process/Procedure is incorporated in the Employment Standard Procedure (A003)</p>

<b>EMPLOYMENT STANDARD</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Compliance Date(s) &amp; Action Taken</b>
Educate and Train Staff re: Employment Standard *inform employees of policies re: job accommodations	<b>2014</b>	<b>ONGOING</b> Staff were trained on Section 7 requirements (Ontario Human Rights Commission Videos) and on IAS Policy HR13-01 and requirements pertaining to the Employment Standard (as well as General, Information and Communication & Transportation Standard)

TRANSPORTATION STANDARD	Priority	Compliance Date(s) & Action Taken
<p>Clerk to meet with AAC and persons with disabilities to determine the need for on-demand accessible taxicabs for those in municipality</p> <p>The municipality shall report on progress made toward meeting the need for accessible taxicabs in its accessibility plan.</p>	<p><b>2013</b></p>	<p>January 2013 – Two Open Houses were held asking for the public’s input relating to the need for on-demand accessible taxi services within our municipality.</p> <p>Surveys will be examined by the Clerk in order to determine the need, and the progress will be updated in the Plan.</p>
<p>Municipalities licensing taxicabs shall ensure owners/operators are prohibited from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Charging a higher fare or an additional fee to persons with disabilities</li> <li>b. Charging for the storage of mobility aids or assistive devices</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. <b>2011</b></li> <li>b. <b>2011</b></li> </ul>	<p>July 2011-Taxi Companies received written notice from the municipality regarding the prohibition of charging higher fares to persons with disabilities, as well as for charging for the storage of mobility aids/assistive devices.</p> <p>January 30, 2013 – Information sessions were held jointly with the Town of New Tecumseth Taxi Company Owners outlining their requirements for Ont. Reg. 429/07 and Ont. Reg. 191/11.</p> <p>February 4 and 5, 2013 – Information sessions were held jointly with the Town of New Tecumseth Taxi Drivers to outline their requirements under Ont. Reg. 429/07 and Ont. Reg. 191/11.</p>
<p>Municipalities that license taxicabs/companies shall:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Ensure vehicle registration and identification information is on the rear bumper of the taxicab</li> <li>b. Municipalities that license taxicabs/companies shall ensure that owners/operators make available vehicle registration and identification information in an accessible format to persons with disabilities who are passengers.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. <b>2012</b></li> <li>b. <b>2012</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. December 2012 - Vehicle Registration and ID information stickers posted on the rear bumper of taxicabs. Taxi Company Owners/Drivers were advised in the information session about this requirement.</li> <li>b. December 2012 - Owners/Drivers were given a template for business cards to be used by drivers. Owners/Drivers were also advised about this requirement in the Information Session (January 30, February 4 and 5, 2013) about the requirement for information being made available in accessible format upon request at no additional charge to the person making the request, and that it must be provided within a reasonable amount of time. They were advised by municipality that business cards should be available with driver information for passengers making the request, and that they are not allowed to charge a higher fee if someone requests the information in an accessible format.</li> </ul>

The Township does not currently offer conventional or transportation services. However, should the municipality offer these services in the future they will make every reasonable effort to work with the public, the AAC and persons with disabilities in the planning, development and construction of accessible design criteria for construction and/or replacement of bus stops and shelters.

### **ODA – ACCESSIBILITY PLAN CONTINUANCE – Updated November 2016**

The following is a listing of items that the municipality will endeavour to continue:

AODA REPORTING – Bi-Annual

UPDATE PROGRESS REPORT-Annual

LIST CURRENT AND NEW PROJECTS - Annual

#### **CUSTOMER SERVICE**

Ongoing training

Annual Policy Review

2010 Policy was repealed and incorporated into HR13-01 (Nov 2016)-New regulations introduced via O. Reg. 165/16

#### **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION**

Job-specific training

Annual Policy Review

#### **EMPLOYMENT**

Job-Specific Training

Annual Policy Review

#### **BUILT ENVIRONMENT**

Job-Specific Training

Annual Policy Review

#### **PROCUREMENT**

Job-Specific Training

Annual Policy Review

#### **ACCESSIBILITY TRAINING**

Ongoing

#### **ACCESSIBILITY FEEDBACK**

Ongoing