



Proposal to Coordinate AODA Compliance for 2014-2015

Submitted to:
The Town of Lincoln
The Township of West Lincoln
The Town of Pelham
The City of Thorold
The Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake and
The Town of Grimsby

Submitted to:
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1.0 Introduction

The Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee of Lincoln, West Lincoln, Pelham, Thorold, Niagara-on-the-Lake and Grimsby (JAAC) seeks a consultant to provide consultation and assistance in developing compliance strategies and tools in order to ensure compliance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) and resulting regulations.

In 2013, The Herrington Group (THG) was contracted by the JAAC to assist with compliance activities relating to the Accessibility with Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005. THG assisted the JAAC municipalities complete compliance requirements of new AODA regulations. THG assisted the JAAC partners in complying with this regulation by:

- Drafting an updated Accessibility Policy
- A Multi-Year Accessibility Plan Progress Report
- Accessibility criteria for Procurement Procedures
- Accessible Employment Policies and Procedures
- An Accommodation Planning template and
- Providing daily support to municipal staff and the Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee members.

The Herrington Group Ltd (THG) has extensive experience in accessibility consulting and compliance strategy development under the AODA having provided similar services to a variety of clients. This proposal will outline our understanding of the required deliverables as well as the suitability of our firm to provide consulting services to the JAAC.

2.0 Corporate Background and Experience

The Herrington Group is comprised of individuals who have extensive experience in disability issues, training, Universal Design, Barrier-Free Access, Human Resources, Human Rights legislation, planning and policy development, research, and architecture/construction. The majority of our team also consists of individuals who also live with a variety of disabilities. This “lived experience” informs our work and strengthens our products and services.

Donna L. Herrington, B.A., Accessibility Consultant and Project Manager

Donna Herrington, the senior planner and owner of The Herrington Group has extensive personal and professional experience in disability issues. Donna possesses over twenty years experience in accessibility planning, policy and program development, training development and organizational change processes. Donna is well-versed in compliance obligations under the AODA and consequently has extensive experience in the area of accessibility planning.

Since starting THG in 2003, Donna has conducted accessibility audits of 726 facilities and has created training programs to comply with the AODA's Customer Service Standard O. Reg. 429/07 that have trained over 22,000 people across the province. Clients include: The Ontario Pension Board, the Cadillac Fairview Corporation, The Niagara Parks Commission, the Town of Oakville, the Regional Municipality of Peel, the City of Port Colborne, the Township of Wainfleet, the Halton District School Board and the Upper Grand District School Board, the City of St. Catharines, the City of Ottawa, Brock University, the City of Waterloo, the City of Kitchener and the Niagara Health System.

Donna has been an instructor for Niagara College's Multidisciplinary Geriatric and Mental Health Program teaching courses in Ontario's Mental Health System. She has served as an Expert Proposal Evaluator for Human Resources Development Canada's Social Development Partnerships Program – Disability Component. She also volunteers her time with the Niagara Prosperity Initiative and previously served as a member of the Niagara Grant Review Team of the Ontario Trillium Foundation.

In June 2004 Donna was recognized by the Business Link Niagara for her business and community achievements as one of Niagara *Region's "Top 40 Business People Under 40"*. In 2012, Donna was honoured as a nominee for the Niagara Women in Business *Entrepreneur of the Year Award*.

2.1 Related Experience

- **Town of Oakville** - acts as an interim Accessibility Consultant coordinating all AODA compliance activities. Includes authoring compliance policies, documents, and planning tools to comply with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, providing peer review support for client developed materials and providing ongoing advice on compliance matters.
- **Ontario Pension Board** - acts as an Accessibility Consultant in the Corporation's compliance efforts under O. Reg. 191/11 including the authoring the organization's Accessibility Policy and providing templates for the development of a Multi-Year Accessibility Plan.
- **Cadillac Fairview Corporation** – acts as an Accessibility Consultant in the Corporation's compliance efforts under O. Reg. 191/11 including the authoring the organization's Accessibility Policy and providing templates for the development of a Multi-Year Accessibility Plan. O. Reg. 429/07. Authored the Cadillac Fairview's Accessible Customer Service Policy and conducted a peer review of the organization's accessible customer service training. Policy and training enacted across entire Ontario operations which includes 28 facilities.
- **Niagara Parks Commission**– acts as an Accessibility Consultant coordinating all AODA compliance activities. Includes authoring all compliance policies, documents, and planning tools to comply with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act.

- **The Regional Municipality of Peel** – acted as an Accessibility Consultant in the Region’s compliance efforts under O. Reg. 429/07. Conducted organization-wide training and policy gaps analysis. Assisted in the authoring of the Region’s Accessible Customer Service Policy. Designed training modules.
- **The City of Ottawa** – developed and piloted an accessibility training module for front line staff that can be customized for different types of City services and incorporated into existing learning/training opportunities. Developed and authored a facilitator’s handbook to guide trainers in delivering the accessibility training module
- **The City of St. Catharines, Brock University, Niagara Health System** – conducted accessibility audits of all facilities within these corporations (including offices, community centres, public pools, arenas, parking facilities, parks, lecture halls, theatres, recreational areas and outdoor spaces etc.). Conducted a Refresher Audit for Brock University in 2012.

3.0 Deliverables Provided by The Herrington Group in 2013

In 2013, The Herrington Group provided the following deliverables to the JAAC:

1. Provided support to JAAC members. The JAAC has the following priorities and objectives:
 - Establish an effective working relationship with JAAC staff and Councils to ensure appropriate compliance with AODA Accessibility Standards;
 - Assist JAAC staff and Councils by providing compliance planning tools and resources with the aim to make compliance easier for staff and more effective for people with disabilities receiving programs and services;
 - Educate JAAC staff and Councils about barriers facing people with disabilities in our community.
2. Managed the Accessibility Advisory Committee; facilitated 8 meetings and facilitated 2 subcommittee meetings. Maintained minutes and managed related action items.
3. Prepared a comparative Analysis of the Proposed Ontario Building Code and the Niagara FADS and submitted the JAAC’s comments to the Province regarding concerns related to the proposed accessibility related changes to the Ontario Building Code.
4. Prepared and circulated an updated Accessibility Policy, Employment Policy, Accommodation Policy and Accommodation Planning Template (for ongoing accommodation and return-to-work needs).

5. Conducted a gaps analysis of all JAAC human resources policies and proposed clauses to assist in meeting O. Reg. 191/11 Employment Standards.
6. Prepared the Annual Status Report on the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan for each JAAC partner.
7. Provided an Analysis of the Design of Public Spaces Accessibility Standard; its requirements and implications.
8. Assisted JAAC members in accessing development opportunities including attendance at the Regional Accessibility Advisory Committee Meeting hosted by the Accessibility Directorate of Ontario in Burlington.
9. Conducted Site Plan reviews of proposed Town of Lincoln Community Centre, Town of Pelham – Old Town Hall renovations, Town of Pelham Sidewalk Café applications, Town of Pelham Renovation of Marlene Stewart Streit Park Pool House.
10. Responded to telephone and email access related enquires from JAAC partners and their staff. Attended several meetings with Town staff.
11. Prepared an E-learning course to meet training requirements of O. Reg. 429/07 (refresher training) and O. Reg. 191/11 (anticipated completion and distribution – early November 2013).

4.0 2014 Project Deliverables and Consultant's Responsibilities

To ensure effective compliance with O. Reg. 191/11 the consultant proposes the following services for the contract term:

1. Management of the Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee:

- Orientation for new and existing committee members
- Secure meeting locations ensuring a minimum of 10 regularly scheduled meetings in the planning year
- Prepare and distributing meeting packages (agendas, minutes, materials for review)
- Arrange committee member transportation and other accommodations as required
- Attend JAAC meetings in the role of Secretary.

2. AODA Interpretation and Compliance Preparation for Integrated Accessibility Standard:

- The Consultant will provide AODA and Accessibility Standard analysis and interpretation and will orient JAAC members and JAAC Admin staff to compliance requirements (addressing general information needs as well as answering specific enquiries).
- The Consultant will review the AODA, the AODA Standards, and any related legislation which impacts compliance such as the Human Rights Code and provide consultation and advice in a variety of formats (written and verbal) as required. This includes advising on Accessibility Standard implications, policy and procedural needs, training needs and equipment needs in order to comply with regulations.
- The Consultant will develop legislative orientation documents (regarding specific AODA Standards), draft reports, and create primer documents and resources in a variety of written and verbal formats to meet JAAC's needs.
- The Consultant will audit sample internal and external documents, processes and information systems to identify barriers to people with disabilities as well as identify Accessibility Standard compliance gaps with the assistance of the JAAC.
- The Consultant will provide assistance in compliance strategies according to legislated timelines.
- The Consultant will assist in policy writing, procedure development and training plan and content development to comply with IAR requirements.
- The Consultant will recommend strategies and implementation measures that are identified as best practices as a result of THG's previous experience with the identified compliance need as well as best practices from a legislative perspective.
- The Consultant will recommend best practices as they relate to providing the greatest extent of accessibility for individuals living with a wide variety of disabilities (i.e. maintaining a "cross-disability focus" addressing the needs of individuals with physical, sensory, environmental and mental health disabilities).

3. Development of a Multi-Year Accessibility Plan Progress Report:

- The Consultant will create a Multi-Year Accessibility Plan Progress Report Template.
- The Consultant will circulate the reporting tool and coordinate the drafting of the Annual Progress Report with input from JAAC partner contacts and submit the Report to Council for approval and adoption.

- Upon completion of the Progress Report, the Consultant will assist in developing a Communication Plan for the Report.

4. Develop Process for Accessible Documents:

- As O. Reg. 191/11 indicates that all organizational material be available in alternate formats or communication supports by 2015, the Consultant will conduct a compliance readiness assessment/gaps analysis of JAAC communications reviewing internal operations, processes, documents and internal and external communications (as appropriate) within all partners.
- Consultant will liaise with staff and assist in developing an accessible style guide to assist municipalities in the creation of accessible documents as well as the provision of alternate formats and communication supports when requested.

5. Provide compliance interpretation and support for Niagara FADS, the AODA Built Environment Standard and updated Ontario Building Code (if released)

- During the contract term, should the new Ontario Building Code be regulated, the Consultant will provide an analysis of the relating requirements and implications and will provide assistance in drafting a compliance plan according to legislated timelines.
- The Consultant will conduct site plans as requested by JAAC partner municipalities to determine compliance with Built Environment Design Standards including Niagara FADS, AODA Design of Public Spaces and new or existing Ontario Building Code as applicable.

6. Liaison support for JAAC staff:

- The Consultant will respond to email and telephone questions, attend meetings at JAAC and other appropriate locations as requested.

Service Inclusions and Additional Considerations:

- a) Assignment activities will be conducted at The Herrington Group Ltd's offices. Email and telephone consultation will be widely used to reduce the amount of required travel in providing services. However, services will also be provided on site within JAAC municipalities as required.
- b) The consultant will be responsible for planning, meeting facilitation, production of draft materials, dissemination of materials for review, and collecting and consolidating feedback. The consultant will be responsible for the development of the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan Progress Report and any other compliance related policies.

- c) All staff of The Herrington Group Ltd is subject to its Health and Safety Policy and Confidentiality Agreement.
- d) The Herrington Group Ltd holds general liability and errors and omissions insurance in the amount of \$3,000,000 each. THG also holds an account, in good standing, with WSIB. Certification to confirm both accounts will be provided upon contract commencement.

5.0 Budget

<u>Expense</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Postage/Printing/Copying/Office Supplies	\$240
JAAC Committee Development	\$500
Transportation	\$5,000
JAAC Meeting Accommodations	\$250
Consultant's Fee (plus HST):	\$48,930
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JAAC Management • AODA Compliance Planning and Policy Development • Multi-Year Accessibility Plan Progress Report Development • Accessible Documents Procedure Development • Site Plan Review Services • Built Environment/New Building Code Compliance Support • Staff Liaison Services • Administrative Support 	
TOTAL	\$54,920

5.1 Narrative Explanation of Proposed Budget

Postage/Printing/Copying/Office Supplies - \$240

This figure reflects postage, printing and photocopying needs and is calculated at \$20/month x 12 months. JAAC pays for actual costs only. Expense receipts are included in all invoices.

JAAC Committee Development - \$500

This amount is budgeted to identify and provide training opportunities for JAAC member development including workshops, in-service facilitation and planning sessions and conference opportunities. JAAC pays for actual costs only. Expense receipts are included in all invoices.

Transportation - \$5,000

These funds will ensure consumer participation from all partnering municipalities. By providing transportation for JAAC members with disabilities, barriers to participation are eliminated and equality in the JAAC planning process is ensured. As the JAAC has a number of new members who require transportation costs in this area are higher than in previous years. Also JAAC members are utilizing transportation most often as they participate in direct service activities such as staff training and consultations.

Eligible transportation costs include: mileage reimbursement, taxi and bus costs and the chartering of accessible taxi cabs for wheelchair users. Costs are reflective of on current actual costs and are calculated at \$500/month x 10 months (there is no JAAC meeting in July and December). JAAC pays for actual costs only. Expense receipts are included in all invoices.

JAAC Meeting Accommodations - \$250

Costs here include light meeting refreshments for monthly JAAC meetings and the Annual Appreciation Dinner including all JAAC members, Mayors and Administrative Contacts. Costs are estimated as such:

Refreshments - \$25/meeting x 10 meetings.

JAAC pays for actual costs only. Expense receipts are included in all invoices.

Consultant's Fee - \$48,930

Consultant fee includes:

- JAAC committee management and administration – monthly meetings, minute taking, follow up support.

- AODA Compliance Planning – a compliance readiness assessment of JAAC operations including accessibility audits of internal operations, processes, documents, internal and external communications. Meeting with Senior Staff to obtain needed information, propose compliance measures, provide status updates and create required documents.
- Accessible Documents - Process Development – including review of existing process and policies, drafting new policies and procedures including accessibility criteria for review and adoption.
- Multi-Year Accessibility Plan Progress Report Development – including designing progress reporting process, collecting and synthesizing data, adding new data should new AODA Standards be regulated, managing JAAC consultation process, drafting Final Progress Report and submission of same to Councils.
- Assistance in orienting and managing Alternate Format Service Provider.
- Site Plan Review Services as requested
- Built Environment/New Building Code Compliance Support – analysis and application of new AODA Design of Public Spaces Standard and New Ontario Building Code to municipal projects
- Staff Liaison Services – respond to email and telephone enquiries. Attend JAAC partner consultation meetings
- Administrative Support – calculated at \$14/hour x 10 hours/month x 12 months.

Fee will be billed monthly and Harmonized Sales Tax will be added.