



Proposal to Coordinate AODA Compliance for 2015-2017

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 continued compliance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) and resulting regulations.

In 2014, 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 the AODA by:

- Drafting the Annual Multi-Year Accessibility Plan Progress Report
- Developing an Accessible Communication Policy and Training Manual on how to create Accessible Documents
- Developed and implemented Election Worker Training Module
- Assisting JAAC municipalities in responding to AODA Compliance Audits 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 five 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 over 750 facilities and has created training programs to comply with the AODA’s Customer Service Standard O. Reg. 429/07 that have trained over 25,000 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 has volunteered 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 2012, Donna was honoured as a nominee for the Niagara Women in Business *Entrepreneur of the Year Award*.

2.1 Related Experience

- **Cadillac Fairview Corporation** – acted 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. Conducted accessibility audit of all NPC attractions.
- **Town of Oakville** - acted 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 provided 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.
- **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 2014

In 2014, 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 9 meetings and facilitated 2 subcommittee meetings. Maintained minutes and managed related action items.
3. Prepared the Annual Progress Report on the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan for each JAAC partner.
4. Prepared a response to the Province's Proposed Changes to O. Reg. 429/07 Customer Service Standard. Submitted comments to Council and Province.
5. Assisted JAAC members in accessing development opportunities including attendance at a regional meeting in Niagara Falls relating to the legislated 5-Year Review of the AODA by the Province.
6. Assisted JAAC members to submit comments for the AODA 5-Year Review to the provincial evaluator (Dean Mayo Moran, University of Toronto).
7. Prepared and submitted an Analysis Report regarding recent accessibility changes to the Ontario Building Code outlining technical requirements and impact on new construction.
8. Developed and submitted an Accessible Communications Policy and Training Manual relating to creating Accessible Documents to assist JAAC municipalities comply with upcoming 2015 O. Reg. 191/11 requirements.

9. Developed an Accessible Polling Location checklist in preparation of upcoming municipal election. Attended on site visits of polling stations as requested.
10. Developed Election worker training module and coordinated training sessions with municipal staff and JAAC members.
11. Assisted JAAC municipalities respond to AODA compliance questions from Province. Prepared, collated and submitted documents all compliance related documents. Provided legislative interpretation advice to municipal contacts, provided response advice and direction.
12. Conducted Site Plan reviews of Town of Pelham Sidewalk Café applications and Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake Outlet Mall and Public Works Office renovation.
13. Developed and submitted Support Letters for JAAC member accessibility related funding applications.
14. Consulted on Human Rights issues relating to disability; attended hearings as requested.
15. Responded to telephone and email access related enquires from JAAC partners and their staff. Attended several meetings with Town staff.

4.0 2015-2017 Project Deliverables and Responsibilities

To ensure effective compliance with AODA the consultant proposes the following services for the contract term:

1. Management of the Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee:

- Solicitation and screening of new committee members (as required)
- Orientation for new and existing committee members
- Preparation and distribution meeting packages (agendas, minutes, materials for review)
- Secure meeting locations ensuring a minimum of 8 regularly scheduled meetings in the planning year
- Arrange committee member transportation and other accommodations as required
- Attend JAAC meetings in the role of Secretary.

2. AODA Interpretation and Compliance Support:

- 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 any new Accessibility Standards created under the AODA and any related legislation which impacts compliance such as the Human Rights Code. Provide consultation and advice in a variety of formats (written and verbal) as required. This includes advising on existing and new Accessibility Standard implications, policy and procedural needs, training needs and equipment and capital 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 AODA 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. Provide Accessibility Training to New Council, Committee Members and Staff:

- Consultant and JAAC members will provide accessibility training to all new Council, Committee Members and municipal staff as requested

4. Coordinate and Host meeting of Niagara-based Accessibility Advisory Committees

- Host a meeting of all other Niagara-based accessibility advisory committees to share best practices, problem-solve joint issues and barriers and increase regional coordination of efforts
- Propose regional "working group"/subcommittee to increase regional coordination of efforts and increase communication between committees

5. Development of the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan Progress Report:

- The Consultant will create a Multi-Year Accessibility Plan Progress Reports.
- 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 coordinate and assist in developing a Communication Plan for the Report.
- 6. Site Plan Reviews - provide compliance interpretation and support for Niagara FADS, the AODA Built Environment Standard and updated Ontario Building Code:**
- The Consultant will conduct site plans and/or review as requested by JAAC partner municipalities to determine compliance with Built Environment Design Standards including Niagara FADS, AODA Design of Public Spaces and new Ontario Building Code as applicable.
- 7. 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 insurance in the amount of \$5,000,000 and omissions insurance in the amount of \$3,000,000. 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>Annual Amount</u>	<u>2-Year Total Contract Amount</u>	<u>4-Year Total Contract Amount</u>
Postage/Printing/Copying/Office Supplies	\$240	\$480	\$960
JAAC Committee Development	\$600	\$1,200	\$2,400
Transportation	\$4,000	\$8,000	\$16,000
Meeting of Niagara-based AAC's and Regional Sub-group	\$500	\$1,000	\$2,000
JAAC Meeting Accommodations	\$250	\$500	\$1,000
Consultant's Fee (plus HST):	\$53,500	\$107,000	\$214,000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JAAC Management • AODA Compliance Planning • Advice: New Accessibility Standards • Multi-Year Accessibility Plan Progress Report Development • Accessibility Training – New Council, Committees and Staff • Site Plan Review Services • Compliance Support • Staff Liaison Services • Administrative Support 			
TOTAL	\$59,090	\$118,180	\$236,360

5.1 Narrative Explanation of Proposed Budget

The JAAC pays for actual expense costs. All original receipts are submitted with invoices.

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

This figure reflects postage, printing and photocopying needs and is calculated at \$20/month x 12 months.

JAAC Committee Development - \$600/annum

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.

Transportation - \$4,000/annum

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. 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 usually no JAAC meeting in July and December).

Meeting of Niagara-based AAC's and Regional Sub-group - \$500/annum

Costs associated relate to hosting a meeting of all AAC's in Niagara and spearheading cross-committee partnerships and communications. Year one costs would relate to hosting a day-long plenary session. Year 2 costs related to JAAC member participation in a Regional Sub-group (specifically to cover transportation for participation in meetings)

JAAC Meeting Accommodations - \$250/annum

Costs here include light meeting refreshments for monthly JAAC meetings. Costs are estimated as such: Refreshments - \$30/meeting x 8 meetings.

Consultant's Fee - \$53,500/annum

Consultant fee includes:

- **JAAC Committee Management and Administration** – monthly meetings, minute taking, follow up support.
- **AODA Compliance Support**– provide interpretation and compliance support relating to existing or new Accessibility Standards 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.
- **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.
- **Accessibility Training to New Council, Committees and Staff** – provide updated orientation to accessibility issues and AODA compliance to new Council, Committee Members and Staff as requested.
- **Meeting of Niagara-based AAC's and potential development of Regional Sub-group** - hosting a meeting of all AAC's in Niagara and spearheading cross-committee partnerships and communications.
- **Site Plan Review Services** – as requested
- **Staff Liaison Services** – respond to email and telephone enquiries. Attend JAAC partner consultation meetings
- **Administrative Support** – calculated at \$15/hour x 10 hours/month x 12 months.

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