

**SEPTEMBER 2006 – SEPTEMBER 2012**

**CORPORATION**

**OF THE**

**TOWNSHIP OF STRONG**

**ONTARIANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT, 2001**

**ACCESSIBILITY PLAN**

**Submitted to:  
Mayor and Council  
Township of Strong**

**Revised By:**

**Linda Maurer  
Clerk/Treasurer  
October 25, 2011**

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## **Executive Summary**

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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 to their full participation in the life of the Province. To this end, the ODA mandates that each municipality prepare an annual accessibility plan.

This is the first year plan (2003) prepared by the accessibility working group of the Township of Strong. The Plan has been updated to September 2012. The report describes the measures the Township has taken in the past and the measures the Township will take during the current year to identify, remove and prevent barriers to people with disabilities who use the facilities and services of the Township, including staff and members of the community at large.

This year the Township committed itself to the continual improvements of access to municipal facilities including the electronic (world wide web) premises as well as the actual physical premises.

The working group identified a number of barriers to people with disabilities. The most significant findings were that the Township Administrative office is not fully wheelchair accessible. Over the past two years, the working group focused on those barriers and the Municipal Office does not deny access to the Administration Offices on a day-to-day basis as a wheelchair ramp has been installed, automatic doors, larger hallway to provide access to the Council Chambers as well as providing accessible public washrooms, better lighting in all office space.

## Aim

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This report describes one measure that the Township of Strong has taken for the 2003 year and the measures that the Township will take for the 2012 year to identify, remove and prevent barriers to people with disabilities who utilize the facilities and services of the Township, including staff.

## Objectives

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This report:

1. Describes the process by which the Township of Strong will identify, remove and prevent barriers to people with disabilities.
2. Review earlier efforts to remove and prevent barriers to people with disabilities
3. List the facilities, policies, programs, practices and services the Township will review in the coming year to identify barriers to people with disabilities
4. Describe the measures the Board will take in the coming year to identify, remove and prevent barriers to people with disabilities
5. Describe how the Township will make this accessibility plan available to the public.

## Description of the Township of Strong

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- ❑ **Provincial Location** - The Township of Strong is located north of Central Ontario on the East side of Parry Sound District and in the Central area of the Almaguin Highlands and the Blue Sky Region. The Township has an area of 15,861 ha. and surrounds Lake Bernard, the largest lake in Ontario without an island and with a flood elevation at 330.5 m. There are 14 concessions in Strong and 32 Township original lots of survey.
  
- ❑ **Local Location** - **The Township of Strong has Hwy #11 and Hwy #124 intersecting in the centre of the Township. There is the CN Railway line running south to north through the centre of the Township and also to the North east of the Township there is the South River Sundridge and District Airport located in Joly Township to the East of Strong Township and also located east of Strong is the Unorganized Township of Laurier. To the North of Strong is the Unorganized Township of Lount, Machar Township and the Village of South River and located within the boundaries of Strong Township is the Village of Sundridge. South of the Township of Strong is the Township of Armour and within Armour is the Village of Burk's Falls. To the West of the Township of Strong is the Municipality of Magnetawan and the Township of Ryerson.**

**Population/Households** -The Township of Strong has a population of 1327 and 881 households. (2006 census)

**Public Assembly Buildings within the Township of Strong**

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The High School, Almaguin Highlands Secondary School is located within the Township.

There are 3 churches within the boundaries of the Township.

The Masonic Lodge is located within the Township.

The De Novo Treatment Centre is located within the Township

The Township Municipal Office and Public Works Garage are located on adjoining properties.

**Council commitment to accessibility planning**

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The council of the Corporation of the Township of Strong is committed to:

- The continual improvements of access to all municipally owned facilities, premises and services for all those with disabilities
- The provision of quality services to all members of the community with disabilities

The Council has authorized the Clerk to prepare an accessibility plan that will enable the Council to meet these commitments.

**Recent barrier – removal initiatives**

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Council have approved that the web site has sections that are text only which will work hand in hand with the current web site that is available. This will allow those who have to have the use of a reader for visually impaired persons to be able to access the web site and keep up to date on current issues within the Township. This will also allow those who are using older technology to also be able to access the site thus making it become barrier free. Council will review updating the website to include a greater number of pictures along with sound to enable those with disabilities access to municipal information. In 2010 the municipal office completed a major expansion to the facility and included a wheel chair ramp to the front office door, automatic doors in both entrances, accessible public washrooms, accessible hallway to council chambers.

**Informal Site Audit of the Municipally owned buildings**

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In July 2003 the staff and council completed a survey of the municipally owned building and in particular to assess any barriers that may exist and with that, any solutions to removing those barriers in order to comply with the current legislation under the Ontarians With Disabilities Act, 2001.

There have been some barriers identified in the Municipal Administration Office and parking lot. Those will be discussed further in this document under Barriers identified.

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**Barriers Identification Methodologies**

In Order to identify barriers the following methodology was used:

Methodology	Description	Status
Survey to Staff/Council	A survey was given to all members of council, staff and the Chief Building Official and the Public Works Department	The Survey has been completed by the Office staff, Council and the Chief Building Official. The Public Works could not identify any Barriers.

**Barriers Identified**

Those who completed the survey identified the barriers listed below. Over the next year, council will have to decide which barriers should be addressed, keeping in mind budget restraints and feasibility.

Barrier	Type of Barrier	Strategy for removal or Prevention
Front walkway slopes to door	Architectural	2004 - Had a part of the front walk removed and levelled
Front Door has no automatic opener	Architectural	2004 - Installed automatic door opener
Foyer Door has no automatic opener	Architectural	2004 -Installed automatic door opener
No handicap parking spot at office	Architectural	Have a spot signed for Handicap Parking at office & enforced by parking by-law
Washroom is not handicap accessible	Physical	Installed new public washroom
No Handicap Signage on Bldg.	Communications	Handicap parking signs installed
Tax Bills – sight impaired could not read the tax bill	Communications	The Province legislated the wording of tax bills. A solution will have to be found.
Communications to Residents	Communications	Parts of the Web Page are text only for those who use reader services

**Barriers to be addressed in 2010**

The first barrier that will be addressed in 2012 will be paving the parking lot to make it easier for those in wheelchairs to use.

**Review and monitoring of the process**

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Council is committed to following through with this plan. This plan will be updated annually thus allowing council, staff and the public to monitor the barriers identified and the direction to which the Township is moving to remove all barriers under the Ontarians With Disabilities Act, 2001.

**Communication of the Plan**

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This Plan will be available on the web site as well as at the office and we will make every attempt to make it available to those with disabilities for their perusal and review. Should a copy in braile be requested, Council will try to accommodate by having staff contact the CNIB to inquire if it could be translated.

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