

**THE CORPORATION
OF THE
TOWN OF SPANISH**



**2003-Plan
Updated December 2017**

ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

Submitted to:

**Mayor and Council
Town of Spanish**

Submitted by:

Pam Lortie, CAO

CONTENTS OF PLAN

| | |
|--|-------|
| Executive Summary..... | 3 |
| Accessibility Policy-December, 2009..... | 4 |
| Aim..... | 4 |
| Objectives..... | 5 |
| Description of the Town of Spanish..... | 6-7 |
| Council Commitment to Accessibility Planning..... | 7-8 |
| Accessible Customer Service Plan..... | 8 |
| Recent Barrier Removal Initiatives..... | 9-11 |
| Informal Site Audit of the Municipality Owned Buildings..... | 12 |
| Barrier Identification | 13-14 |
| Staff Training..... | 15 |
| Review and Monitoring of the Process..... | 15 |
| Communication of the Plan..... | 15 |

Executive Summary

The purpose of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001 (AODA) 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 AODA mandates that each Municipality prepare an annual accessibility plan.

The plan was first implemented in (2003) prepared by the Township of Shedden. Please note that the municipality changed its' name to the Town of Spanish in 2004. The municipality's geographical boundaries did not change.

The report describes the measures the Town has taken in the past and the measures the Town will take during the current year to identify, remove and prevent barriers to people with disabilities who use the facilities and services of the Town, including staff and members of the community at large.

In 2003 the Township committed itself to identifying improvements required accessing municipal facilities. The most significant finding was that the Township municipal office and Library were not fully accessible. The Township did focus on those barriers which denied access to the municipal office and Library on a day-to-day basis.

Policy Implemented-2009

In December 2009 the Council of the Town of Spanish, passed an Accessibility Policy. The purpose of this policy is to show that the Town of Spanish is committed to being responsive to the needs of all its residents and visitors. The Town will promote accessibility through the development of policies, procedures and practices and by ensuring they consider people with disabilities. To do this we will make reasonable efforts to ensure the policies, procedures and practices address **integration, independence, dignity and equal opportunity.**

A copy of this policy is available at the municipal office and on the Town's website.

The Accessibility Plan was updated in December of 2017.

Reports are regularly filed with the Ministry.

AIM

This report describes measures that the municipality has taken in the past and the measures that the Town will take in the future, to identify, remove and prevent barriers to people with disabilities who utilize the facilities and services of the Township, including staff.

OBJECTIVES

This updated report:

1. Describes the process by which the Town of Spanish 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 Town will review in the coming year to identify barriers to people with disabilities;
4. Describe the measures the Council will take in the coming year to identify, remove and prevent barriers to people with disabilities;
5. Describe how the Town has and will continue to make this accessibility plan available to the public;
6. Describe how the Spanish Public Library has met the Accessibility Standard for Customer Service.
7. Confirms that our Accessibility Plan has been posted for public viewing on the municipal website www.townofspanish.com and kept current.
8. Describes the staff training on Ontario's accessibility laws.
9. Commits to file all "Compliance Accessibility Reports in a timely manner.
10. Describes how we made our existing and new public spaces/park accessible.

DESCRIPTION OF THE TOWN OF SPANISH

The Town of Spanish is located on Highway 17 between Sault Ste. Marie and Sudbury, in Northern Ontario. The Town is bordered on the east by the Township of Sables-Spanish Rivers and on the west by the Serpent River First Nations.

The Town of Spanish has a population of approximately 700 persons.

The Spanish Municipal Office is a single storey building, which houses the municipal office, council chambers and public library. The council chambers are used by many public organizations such as Employment Solutions, ADSAB, East Algoma Mental Health, etc.

Within the community there is an apartment complex with 22 apartments, which houses seniors and low-income tenants. There is also a French separate elementary school with an attendance of 29 children [kindergarten to grade five] and 7 educators/staff members. The English public elementary school closed in 2012, with the students being now being transported by bus to either Massey or Blind River.

The Town has a large Four Seasons Waterfront Complex which is utilized by many service groups for a variety of functions and the public for weddings and funerals. Our community and area committees/Boards and organizations also hold fund raising dances and community events at this venue.

Adjacent to the Four Seasons Waterfront Complex is a 127-slip marina basin, with service building. There is a stairway to the bluff, lookout tower and shoreline discovery trail which is enjoyed

by our seasonal and transient boaters, bird watchers and local residents.

There is a Medical Clinic and Dental office located next to the municipal office.

We have a Public Works Building, Fire Hall, “Gignac’s Square” [an incubator building] which has four retail/commercial rental units and a “Satellite OPP office”.

The Town also owns a Farmers Market building with open sides and roof, which is located in our downtown core and used frequently by the travelling public for a place to stop and enjoy a picnic lunch.

There is one Cemetery-“The Mount Calvary Cemetery”, which is located on Brennan Harbour Road and maintained by the Cemetery Board.

Just northeast of the road from the Cemetery is the community ball field, canteen, playground and park.

COUNCIL COMMITMENT TO ACCESSIBILITY PLANNING

The Council of the Town of Spanish is committed to:

- The continual improvement 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 CAO to prepare an accessibility plan which will be reviewed annually for compliance with the Act and to enable the Council to meet those commitments.

Accessible Customer Service Plan

1. Communication:

- Ensure that staff is aware that there are both visible and non visible disabilities. Ensure that reading material and notices are available in alternative formats when requested, if possible. Alternatively, materials may be read to a customer where appropriate and staff will assist with completing forms for those that request assistance. In other instances it may be appropriate to write notes, print rather than handwrite, or paraphrase using plain language.

2. Assistive Devices:

- Ensuring that the public are able to access our facilities with ease. Staff will assist when they become aware that a customer requires help with access. The staff is also mindful not to block the foyer and/or hallways with boxes or other items that may impede accessibility.

3. Allow Service Animals:

- Service animals [trained to help people with disabilities] will be welcomed into all public areas.

4. Welcome Support Persons

- Support persons help someone with a disability perform daily tasks. Often people who have a support person are not able to do things by themselves, such as use the washroom or change their clothes. Without support, that person may be unable to access our facilities. Staff is trained that a customer with a support person is to be

respected by speaking to and looking at them and not the support person.

Barrier-Removal Initiatives

- The Town made arrangements to have the curb repaired on the sidewalk approach to the Municipal Office and Library to allow easy access for wheelchairs. The sidewalk approach from the north side of the municipal building was repaired to provide ease of access.
- The Library Board purchased additional computers and desks that will allow for those with disabilities to come into that facility and make use of these computers.
- During the construction of the new Municipal Marina, accessible parking space was identified and assigned for such use.
- During the construction of the Four Seasons Waterfront Complex, the sidewalk approach was designed to be accessible. Automatic doors were installed on both levels of the buildings, the foyer, hallways and doorways are wide, and the washrooms and showers have designated accessible facilities.
- The Medical Clinic and Dental Clinic each have a ramp leading up to the door to ensure ease of access. The clinic has an inside washroom that is accessible, as well as an elevated toilet.

- Automatic door openers were installed on both the outside and inside of the municipal building. The inside doors to the Library, municipal office and Council chambers are also equipped with automatic doors.
- Accessible parking has been designated at the municipal office, [two spots] medical clinic, [two spots] Gignac's Square, [1 spot] municipal marina [three spots].
- The Community Newsletter is now a one page printed on both sides, in a minimum of 12 Font. The monthly newsletter is posted on the municipal website as well, with a notation that it is available in larger font upon request.
- The Municipal web site makes the town's Accessibility Plan available for viewing by the public.
- The Recreation Committee provided an accessible path from the municipal roadway into the centre of the Deagle Crescent Park. A new picnic table was also installed that has one end specifically designed for accessibility. Water's Edge Memorial Park also has a specially designed picnic table to accommodate those in need.
- Ongoing training of staff and volunteers will continue on the accessibility requirements that apply to their job duties and organization.
- Giving notice of temporary disruptions in accessible services or facilities. Be sure to address when the situation is expected to be rectified.

- The Spanish Public Library has made many accommodations such as:
 - ◆ Lowering their counter
 - ◆ Additional width in the aisles to accommodate a wheelchair
 - ◆ Computers have been lowered
 - ◆ Purchased a computer with a larger key board, and font that is larger than usually and can be adjusted upwards, with zoom text. This computer can also read to you, to assist those who are visually impaired or blind
 - ◆ Access to a “Daisy Player” for those that cannot read
 - ◆ Have books on CD
 - ◆ Provides access to the internet, via high speed to the public who may not have computer access in their homes

- The municipality has an Emergency Plan and is aware of its obligation to make our emergency plan and public safety information accessible to people with disabilities and to work with them on how we can meet their needs as soon as possible. The municipality is also working on a Vulnerable Person Registry.

Informal Site Audit of the Municipal Owned Buildings

Staff conducts an annual survey of the municipally owned buildings, 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 Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act.

Barriers Identified

The following barriers have been identified by the staff and in discussion with the public. Council will have to decide which barriers should be addressed each year keeping in mind budget restraints and feasibility.

| Barrier | Type of Barrier | Strategy for Removal |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------|--|
| Location | | Prevention |
| Spanish Marina | Physical | There are three accessible parking spaces identified at the Spanish Marina. The signs are supported in a dirt pail, and are not located to allow sufficient room for a vehicle to park. All three signs need to be addressed and measures taken to ensure that adequate space is assigned to each sign. |
| Four Season's Waterfront Complex | Physical | The lower level automatic door is currently in a locked position and requires a detailed inspection to confirm if this door is in working order. |
| Municipal Website & Library Website | Technical | Updating the website to WCAG 2.0 standards by January 1 st , 2021 will begin shortly. |

Staff Training

As time goes by new staff come and go. This year staff will conduct an in-house session to discuss and review how to assist those with needs, taking into account communication, service animals, and welcoming support persons.

Additional emphasis will be placed on ensuring the public knows how to find our accessibility plan [office and website] and it being available in large print if required and requested.

Provide an accessible process for receiving and responding to feedback regarding the Town's accessibility plan.

Review and Monitoring of the Process

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

Communication of the Plan

This updated plan will be available on the web site and a note in our community newsletter that it will be available to be picked up at the municipal office upon request.