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REFERENCE POLICY:	9.3	REVISED:	n/a

Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

POLICY

The Multi-Year Accessibility Plan outlines the County of Oxford's strategy to prevent and remove barriers and to meet its requirements under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA)*, the *Accessibility Standards for Customer Service (O.Reg.429/07)*, and the consolidated *Integrated Accessibility Standards (O.Reg.191/11)*. This plan is to be established, reviewed and updated in consultation with the Oxford County Accessibility Advisory Committee. The goal in implementing this plan is to make our community fully accessible by 2025.

DEFINITIONS

<i>Accessible Format</i>	may include, but is not limited to, large print, plain language, recorded audio, or electronic, such as Word, PDF, Rich Text, or HTML formats, Braille, and other formats usable by persons with disabilities.
<i>Barrier</i>	anything that prevents a person with a disability from fully participating in all aspects of society because of his or her disability, including a physical barrier, an architectural barrier, an information or communications barrier, an attitudinal barrier, a technological barrier, a policy or a practice.
Disability	<p>(a) any degree of physical disability, infirmity, malformation or disfigurement that is caused by bodily injury, birth defect or illness and, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, includes diabetes, mellitus, epilepsy, a brain injury, any degree of paralysis, amputation, lack of physical co-ordination, blindness or visual impediment, deafness or hearing impediment, muteness or speech impediment, or physical reliance on a guide dog or other animal or on a wheelchair or other remedial appliance or device;</p> <p>(b) a condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability;</p> <p>(c) a learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language;</p> <p>(d) a mental disorder; or</p>

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(e) an injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the *Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1977*.

PROCEDURES

1.0 Statement of Organizational Commitment

Pursuant to its mission, the County of Oxford is committed to enriching the quality of life for persons with disabilities by continually identifying, removing and preventing barriers to ensure a fully accessible community exists for all citizens.

The County of Oxford acknowledges that persons with disabilities:

represent a growing and diverse community that is dramatically increasing due to the demographic trends of a maturing population;

- form part of the work force, and include our families, friends, customers and members of the community at large;
- purchase goods and services and make important financial decisions on where they do business, enjoy recreation and choose to live; and
- are valuable contributors in Canadian society.

The County of Oxford is committed to promoting a barrier-free County for employees, citizens and all who live, work, visit, and invest in the County of Oxford.

2.0 Legislative Authority

The purpose of the *Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001* (ODA) was to improve opportunities for persons with disabilities and to provide for their involvement in the identification, removal and prevention of barriers to full participation. Pursuant to the Act, the County established an Accessibility Advisory Committee to assist in developing an accessibility plan informed by consultation with persons with disabilities.

The *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (AODA) went a step further. It requires the development, implementation and enforcement of new, mandatory accessibility standards to address the most important aspects of the lives of those with disabilities. These mandatory standards apply to both public and private sectors with the ultimate goal of having a fully accessible province by 2025.

The legislated accessibility standards are:

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1. Customer Service (Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, O.Reg.429/07) – governs how we provide accessible customer service;
2. Information and Communication (Integrated Accessibility Standards, O.Reg.191/11) – aims to identify and consider the nature of barriers experienced by people with a wider range of disabilities in the area of information and communications;
3. Employment (Integrated Accessibility Standards, O.Reg.191/11) – governs how we recruit, hire and accommodate individuals in the workplace;
4. Transportation (Integrated Accessibility Standards, O.Reg.191/11) – aims to remove barriers to public transportation, so people with disabilities can travel more easily in Ontario; and
5. Built Environment (Design of Public Spaces) – (O.Reg.413/12) – aims to make outdoor public spaces in Ontario accessible for all new construction and extensive renovations.

The first set of standards to be released was the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service which was to be implemented by December 31, 2009 by all public sector organizations. See the [Accessibility Standards for Customer Service](#) Policy No. 9.3 available on the County of Oxford website.

In 2011, the Province of Ontario released the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR), which combined the accessibility requirements for information and communication, employment, and transportation, and included general requirements for policy, planning and training. The requirements of the IASR are to be implemented between 2011 and 2021.

In 2013, the Province released the first part of the Built Environment Standard – Design of Public Spaces. This regulation focuses on creating accessible exterior spaces for persons with disabilities.

3.0 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

The IASR requires the establishment, implementation and maintenance of a multi-year accessibility plan which outlines the organization’s strategy to prevent and remove barriers. In fulfilling its obligations under the regulation, the County of Oxford commits to the following:

- Post the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan on the County of Oxford website and provide the plan in an accessible format upon request;

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- Review and update the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan at least once every five (5) years;
- Review and update the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan in consultation with persons with disabilities and with the established Oxford County Accessibility Advisory Committee;
- Prepare an annual status report on the progress measures taken to implement the strategies referenced in the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan; and
- Post the annual status report on the County of Oxford's website and provide the report in an accessible format upon request.

The County of Oxford's Senior Management Team, in consultation with the Oxford County Accessibility Advisory Committee, have reviewed the requirements of the legislation in detail and have provided the status of each requirement as well as proposed actions moving forward to achieve compliance and to ensure that our community is fully accessible by 2025.

Appendix 1 sets out the Oxford County Multi-Year Accessibility Plan, including target completion dates identified in the AODA, recommended actions and the current status of compliance for each requirement.

4.0 Review and Monitoring of Plan

Annually, Corporate Services will update the status report in conjunction with the annual business plan/ budget planning process and the County's Annual Report.

5.0 Communication of Plan

The Multi-Year Accessibility Plan will be posted on the County of Oxford website www.oxfordcounty.ca. Hard copies, electronic copies or accessible formats of the Plan will be made available to residents/stakeholders upon request.

Oxford County Multi-Year Accessibility Plan (2013 - 2018)

SECTION A - General

	Barrier or Accessibility Issue	Type of Barrier	Recommended Solution	AODA Deadline	Status
1	Statement of organizational commitment.	Admin	Capture statement of organizational commitment to accessibility in Oxford County Strategic Plan.	January 1st, 2013	Compliant - statement captured in Multi-Year Plan.
2	Establish, implement and maintain a multi-year accessibility plan outlining the County's strategy to prevent and remove barriers.	Admin	Review accessibility plan with staff and AAC. Seek Council approval. Communicate to public/ post on website and provide the plan in an accessible format upon request.	January 1st, 2013	Will be compliant with the approval and posting of this Multi-Year Plan. Must review & update at least once every 5 years in consultation with AAC.
3	Prepare annual status report on progress of measures taken to implement strategy in Multi-Year Plan.	Admin	Review annual status report with staff and AAC. Seek Council approval. Communicate to public/post on website and provide in an accessible format upon request.	January 1st, 2013. Annual requirement.	Ongoing.
4	Incorporate accessibility design, criteria and features when procuring or acquiring goods, services or facilities.	Admin	Include accessibility criteria and features in Oxford County purchasing policy.	January 1st, 2013	In progress.
5	Incorporate accessibility features when designing, procuring or acquiring self-service kiosks.	Physical	Ensure self-serve kiosks are accessible in accordance with the IASR.	January 1st, 2013	Compliant. Coin laundry in housing facilities have Braille. Library kiosks accessible.
6	Provide training on the requirements of the accessibility standards and Human Rights Code.	Educational	On-going training re accessibility standards to all employees, volunteers, policy developers and anyone who provides goods and services on behalf of the organization.	January 1st, 2014	On target.

7	Keep a record of training provided including dates and number of individuals.	Admin	Manage, maintain and monitor all accessible training records.	January 1st, 2014	Compliant
SECTION B - Information & Communications					
	Barrier or Accessibility Issue	Type of Barrier	Recommended Solution	AODA Deadline	Status
1	Feedback processes must be available in an accessible format and with communication supports upon request.	Admin	Develop feedback process and communicate to staff.	January 1st, 2014	Compliant
2	Upon request, provide information in accessible formats and with communication supports at the same cost charged to others.	Educational	Publicize the availability of accessible formats and communication supports.	January 1st, 2015	Compliant
3	Emergency procedures, plans and public safety information must be made available to the public in an accessible manner upon request.	Educational	Ensure plans and public safety information available to the public can be accessed by persons with disabilities (eg. website).	January 1st, 2012	Compliant
4	Internet websites and web content must conform to WCAG 2.0 at Level A.	Admin	In-house development of system.	January 1st, 2014	In progress.
5	Internet websites and web content must conform to WCAG 2.0 at Level AA.	Admin	In-house development of system.	January 1st, 2021	On target
6	Accessible library materials.	Physical	Oxford County Libraries to provide access to accessible formats where they exist.	January 1st, 2013	Compliant

SECTION C - Employment Standards

	Barrier or Accessibility Issue	Type of Barrier	Recommended Solution	AODA Deadline	Status
1	Provide and publicize the availability of accommodation in the recruitment and hiring process.	Admin	Develop and implement AODA action plan.	January 1st, 2014	Compliant - included in Recruitment Policy and external and website advertising. Council has adopted temporary and permanent accommodation policies. Also included in offer letters.
2	Provide individualized workplace emergency response information to employees with a disability.	Admin	Develop and implement workplace emergency response plan.	January 1st, 2012	Compliant
3	Provide documented individual job accommodation plans and return to work processes for employees with disabilities.	Admin	Develop and implement AODA action plan.	January 1st, 2014	Compliant
4	Accessibility becomes part of performance management, career development and redeployment processes.	Admin	Develop and implement AODA action plan.	January 1st, 2014	Compliant - included in Performance Appraisal policy and appraisal forms are being revised accordingly.

SECTION D - Design of Public Spaces

	Barrier or Accessibility Issue	Type of Barrier	Recommended Solution	AODA Deadline	Status
1	Exterior paths of travel, like sidewalks, ramps, stairs, curbs, accessible pedestrian signals, and rest areas must meet accessible design requirements.	Physical	Incorporate integrated accessible standard requirements for all new construction and redevelopment.	January 1st, 2016	On target.
2	Accessible parking (eg. employee parking spaces, etc.)	Physical	Incorporate integrated accessible standard requirements when constructing all new or redeveloped parking lots/ spaces.	January 1st, 2016	On target.
3	Accessible parking signage.	Physical	Identify signage deficiencies and ensure compliance with Highway Traffic Act and IASR.	January 1st, 2016	On target.
4	Service related elements like service counters, fixed queuing lines and waiting areas (reception and/or waiting rooms).	Physical	Incorporate integrated accessible requirements to ensure compliance with IASR.	January 1st, 2016	On target.
5	Area zoning by-laws to be updated to incorporate O.Reg.413/12.	Admin	Review and amend zoning by-laws to include accessibility standards in accordance with AODA, O.Reg.191/11 as amended by O.Reg.413/12.	January 1st, 2016	On target.

SECTION E - Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001

	Barrier or Accessibility Issue	Type of Barrier	Recommended Solution	ODA Deadline	Status
1	Information and directional signage within each facility.	Physical	Ensure signage is incorporated into standard guidelines for design and construction. Replace existing signage where required. Ensure compliance with FADS.	Long-term	Ongoing.
2	Consistent use of directional and descriptive signage for municipal properties and facilities (i.e. signage from parking locations to entrances).	Physical	Develop procedure to ensure standard across all facilities and services. Comply with FADS. Implement signage strategy.	Short-term	Ongoing.
3	County facilities require audio/visual alarms for persons with visual/hearing impairments (staff and clients).	Physical	Investigate availability/costs of CSA approved/universal designed alarms.	Long-term	In progress.
4	Facilities require automatic doors that are routinely checked for proper functionality - review County Square in particular for location of automation.	Physical	Investigate automatic doors for County facilities if feasible. Implement procedures for routine maintenance to ensure continued functionality.	Long-term	Ongoing.
5	Implementation, distribution and promotion of the adopted Facility Accessibility Design Standards (April 26, 2006).	Admin	Encourage application of the FADS within all County departments.	Ongoing	Ongoing.

6	Inventory of County-owned accessible features, services and facilities.	Physical/ Admin	Develop a tool from existing resources that will indicate all accessible features of municipal facilities. Conduct audit of County-owned facilities.	Short & long-term	Ongoing.
7	Social housing buildings.	Physical	Increase modified/accessible units within social housing portfolio.	Long-term	Ongoing.