

2012 Accessibility Plan for Kitchener Public Library

INTRODUCTION

This report was prepared to meet the obligations of the Ontarians with Disabilities Act (ODA, 2001), and the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA, 2005). It will be referred to as “The Plan” throughout this document.

The Plan describes the background of the Act, a communication plan and initiatives with timelines, measures and actions for 2012. The overall purpose of The Plan is to report on the steps that are being taken to identify, remove and prevent barriers to accessibility in our library. As this is a Plan that is devised annually, a status update of initiatives from the 2011 Accessibility Plan has been included.

BACKGROUND

Ontarians with Disabilities Act of 2001

The Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001 (ODA) was passed into law by the Ontario Legislature on December 4, 2001. The purpose of the Act is “to improve opportunities for persons 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”. The ODA applies to all municipalities, hospitals, district school boards, colleges, universities, public transportation organizations, the Ontario Government, ministries and agencies.

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act of 2005 (AODA)

The AODA received Royal Assent in the Ontario Legislature in June 2005. The AODA will focus on improving accessibility in areas such as buildings and spaces, employment, customer service, communications and transportation in the private, government and broader public sector. The AODA intends to:

- achieve an accessible Ontario on or before January 1, 2025;
- establish and implement mandatory and enforceable accessibility standards to be achieved within five years or less

The ODA 2001 will eventually be repealed once all regulations for the AODA are in place.

Description of Kitchener Public Library

Kitchener Public Library is a public sector organization, providing excellent public library service. The library's Mission is to "connect the community to a world of imagination, information and discovery. We respond to community needs, embrace innovation, and value our customers, staff, volunteers and partners."

The library has five locations: four community libraries and a Main library. The library serves a diverse community and is committed to providing equitable access to all our services and collections.

Kitchener Public Library Accessibility Plan Committee

Members

The Kitchener Public Library Accessibility Plan Committee consists of staff, coordinators and managers. They are: Julie Curry, Coordinator, Borrower Services, Gary Bauman, Web Services Librarian, Sabina Franzen, Senior Manager, Administration, Paul Hunter, Coordinator, Facilities, and Sarah Jewett, Coordinator, Human Resources.

2011 Initiatives Status Update

The following is a chart which identifies initiatives and projects that the library undertook in 2011.

Accessibility Initiative	Action	Completion Date
Physical		
Review physical barriers identified in City of Kitchener Accessibility Audit 2007	Investigate feasibility of addressing priority 3 and 4 items at community libraries (excluding Main during construction)	Completed – awaiting built environment regulation to confirm requirements
Address physical barriers within library buildings	Ensure either a walker or wheelchair is available at all locations	Completed
Address physical barriers to collections	Purchase hand-held magnifiers for community libraries that do not have one for public use	Completed
Improve access to collections	Shelve material on all lower shelves with spine label up at all locations	Completed – implemented on collections as feasible

Accessibility Initiative	Action	Completion Date
Technology		
Continue improving accessibility of website	Implement accessible 2.0 initiatives	Ongoing, Completed - larger base font, text re-size tool, resized pages, multi-platform video player, tabbing functions
Public stations adjusted for universal usage	Investigate whether standards regarding public computer screen resolution can be established for all locations	Completed – standard established and applied where technically feasible
Communication		
Improve communication for deaf, deafened, and hard of hearing customers	<p>Include information regarding TextNet at KPL in all brochures.</p> <p>Submit article on TextNet for In Touch magazine.</p> <p>Include TextNet phone # on all email signatures and business cards</p>	<p>Completed – included in all reprinted copies</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Completed – business card template changed, staff informed to add to email signatures</p>
Communicate impact of construction on services	Consult with Services during Construction Team regarding communication of any disruptions to service during construction	Ongoing
Policy		
Prepare for compliance with Proposed Integrated Accessibility Standard	Monitor progress of standard and regulations for development of an implementation plan regarding Employment and Information and Communications.	Completed – implementation work plans established
Prepare for compliance with Proposed Accessible Built	Monitor progress of standard and regulations for development of an implementation plan; Incorporate proposed standards into New	Ongoing – standard not yet released

Accessibility Initiative	Action	Completion Date
Environment Standard	Central Library Design.	
Enhance accessible collections	Investigate feasibility of introducing MP3 format into collection	Completed – collection under development
Attitudinal		
Enhance staff training to maintain Customer Service Standards	Assess need for additional staff sensitivity training building on sessions offered already	Completed – Professional Development day session, Information Services staff trained on Access Centre equipment and procedures

2012 Initiatives

Accessibility Initiative	Action	Completion Date
Physical		
Accessible keyboards	Investigate options for keyboards on accessible computer stations for purchase at all locations	Jun. 2012
Improve access to collections	Create and insert plot summaries for Daisy Books to assist in reader's advisory and selection	Jan-Dec. 2012
Improve access to collections	Create large print labels on all large print materials	Jan-Dec. 2012
Technology		
Continue improving accessibility of website	Implement accessible 2.0 initiatives	Jan-Dec. 2012
Staff IntraWeb accessibility	Investigate opportunities to incorporate accessible initiatives in staff IntraWeb redesign project	Jan-Dec. 2012
Text to speech software	Implement Kurzweil 1000 software in Access Centre	Jan-Dec. 2012

Accessibility Initiative	Action	Completion Date
Communication		
Communicate impact of construction on services	Consult with Services during Construction Team regarding communication of any disruptions to service during construction	Jan-Dec. 2012
Policy		
Customer Service Compliance	Register compliance for Customer Service Regulation with Province of Ontario	Jan 2012
Individualized workplace emergency response plans	Develop individualized workplace emergency response plans for employees with a disability as required	Jan 2012
Public emergency safety information	Provide public emergency response information in accessible format upon request	Jan 2012
Comply with Integrated Accessibility Standard	Monitor for resources to aid in compliance with standard and regulations	Jan-Dec. 2012
Prepare for compliance with Proposed Accessible Built Environment Standard	Monitor progress of standard and regulations for development of an implementation plan; Incorporate proposed standards into New Central Library Design.	Jan-Dec. 2012
Attitudinal		
Enhance staff training to maintain Customer Service Standards	Investigate further training needs via staff survey	Jan-Dec. 2012
Provide staff training to meet Integrated Accessibility Standard	Identify and conduct training to meet requirements of standard	Jan-Dec. 2012
Enhance staff training on Access Centre equipment	Train staff on new Kurzweil 1000 software	Jan-Dec. 2012

Communication Plan

- Communicate Plan to Kitchener Public Library Board – January 2012
- Communicate Plan to Management Team – January 2012
- Communicate Plan to staff and volunteers – January 2012
- Communicate Plan to the public on KPL website - January 2012
- Provide paper copies of the Plan upon request – January 2012

Conclusion

This Plan will be reviewed and updated annually. Kitchener Public Library is committed to providing equitable access and removing barriers to all services and facilities.