



REPORT TO THE LIBRARY BOARD

MEETING DATE: OCTOBER 22, 2009

Session:	Public Session
Subject:	London Public Library Accessibility Plan, 2010
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Presented By:	Margaret Mitchell
Purpose of Report:	For Receipt and Information Only <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that this report be received by the Library Board.

ISSUE/OPPORTUNITY

London Public Library (LPL) has a responsibility to provide universal access to library services and facilities. Enabling accessibility for people with disabilities is critical to the library's mandate. As stated in the **LPL Service Excellence Model**: "Library Service is relevant, inclusive and responsive for all. Each member of the community has an equal right to public library and information services. Service is accessible to all people regardless of age, race, gender, religion, nationality, language, ability, social status, economic status or educational attainment."

Provincial legislation requires that the council of every municipality shall prepare an accessibility plan each year that addresses the identification, removal and prevention of barriers to persons with disabilities in its by-laws, policies, programs, practices and services. LPL participates in the annual **City of London Accessibility Plan**, developed by Civic Administration in partnership with the members of the City of London Accessibility Advisory Committee.

BACKGROUND

The **Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA)** became law on June 13, 2005 and is comprised of five "Standard Development Areas": Customer Service, Information and Communications, Employment, Built Environment and Transportation. The "Accessibility Standards for Customer Service" have been adopted (Ontario Regulation 429/07). These regulations came into force on January 1, 2008 with compliance dates of January 1, 2010 for the public sector.

In 2009 and 2010 LPL is working to ensure total compliance with the Customer Service Regulations. LPL has participated actively in the development of the City of London's response to the provincial government request for input regarding the development of all

the standards as they relate to public libraries in the areas of Built Environment, Information and Communications and Employment. All of these standards are in various phases of review. LPL will comply with their requirements when they have become provincial Regulations under the Act.

2010 PLAN

Appendix 1 contains LPL's submission to the *City of London's Accessibility Plan* for 2010.

APPENDIX 1

London Public Library 2010 Accessibility Plan

VISION

London Public Library is the Community Hub that strengthens individuals, families and neighbourhoods by connecting them to people and to relevant information, collections, programs and resources.

MISSION

We are passionate about making a difference in our community, one person at a time, by enriching lives and empowering people through relevant, accessible, high quality library services.

OBJECTIVE

We understand the diversity of the communities we serve and provide responsive Library services and outreach that meet unique community needs.

We facilitate accessibility through the recognition, removal and prevention of obstacles for individuals with disabilities.

We will meet or exceed the requirements of the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service (2005) as part of the ODA.

We will strive for universal access where possible.

DEFINITION OF DISABILITY

Disability, in relation to a person, means:

- 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, including diabetes mellitus, epilepsy, any degree of paralysis, amputation, lack of physical coordination, blindness or visual impediment, deafness or hearing impediment, muteness or speech impediment, or physical reliance on a guide or service dog or on a wheelchair or other remedial appliance or device,
- an intellectual development disability,
- a learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language,
- a mental disorder, or
- an injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Our **Shared Values** apply to all members of the community including people with disabilities.

A person with a disability has the right to expect service in all aspects of Core Service outcomes: literacy; learning; culture, leisure and recreation; information; and community meeting space and in the way that all services are delivered: reference, reader's advisory and referral; collections and lending; technology; programming and outreach.

The London Public Library's **Value Promise, Customers First** and **Service Excellence Plan** statements strive to ensure that all members of the community can access library services in person, by telephone, by e-mail, in the community and remotely through technology such as the Library web site and that the Library designs and delivers programs and services to support the participation of everyone, including people with disabilities.

Our definition of **Library Service** is:

- Service is relevant, inclusive and responsive for all. Each member of the community has an equal right to public library and information services.
- Service is accessible to all people regardless of age, race, gender, religion, nationality, language, ability, social status, economic status and educational attainment.
- Specific services and materials are provided for those users who cannot use regular services and materials.
- A person with a disability has the right to be treated with the same respect, consideration and consistency as any other member of the community.

We have adopted a **Policy for Accessibility for Library Users with Disabilities**, the scope of which includes:

- Library services will be provided in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities.
- When communicating with a person with a disability, we shall do so in a manner that takes into account and is sensitive to the person's disability.
- Persons with disabilities will be given an opportunity equal to that given to others to obtain, use and benefit library services.
- The provision of library services to persons with disabilities and others will be integrated into our overall service model.
- Library facilities will meet the City of London accessibility requirements for the design and construction of new facilities and the retrofit, alteration or addition to existing library facilities.

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Strategic Direction	Responsibility	Barriers	Current Actions	Estimated Cost (2010 capital/operating)
Services Delivery	COLLECTIONS AND LENDING			
<p><u>Core Services</u></p> <p>Collections and Lending</p> <p>Reference, Reader's Advisory, and Referral</p> <p>Technology</p> <p>Programming</p> <p>Outreach</p>	<p>Services and Operations</p> <p>Information Technology</p> <p>Facility Services</p>	<p>High cost of alternative format collection materials, all titles not published in all formats</p>	<p>Current and Ongoing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide specialized collections/alternative formats for adults and children. • Label collections appropriate to need, e.g. large print labels on large print books • Ensure technology supports access to digitized content such as on-line magazine databases. <p>New:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review and update Lending Services Policy and procedures to ensure compliance with AODA Service Standards • Address Lending Services processes (eg. date due slip, signature, etc.) to ensure compliance with AODA Service Standards. 	<p>Ongoing operating budget collection costs: \$40,000 annually</p>

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Strategic Direction	Responsibility	Barriers	Current Actions	Estimated Cost (2010 capital/operating)
Service Delivery	REFERENCE, READER'S ADVISORY AND REFERRAL			
	Services and Operations Information Technology Facility Services	Children and adults who have difficulty communicating verbally need assistance in accessing services in locations	<p>Current and Ongoing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update <i>Libraries For All</i> Service: 1) communications boards updated and redistributed in 2009 in support of Thames Valley Children's Centre initiative in community; 2) Continue to utilize and monitor community response to communications boards at locations to assist children and adults <p>New</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop feedback mechanisms articulated in AODA Customer Service Responses document (available January 1, 2010) 	
Service Delivery	PROGRAMMING			
	Services and Operations Information Technology		<p>Current and Ongoing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assistive Listening Systems for the hard of hearing are available for programs in meeting rooms at the Central Library and at Crouch, Masonville, Westmount branches. 	a past year \$20,000 purchase of additional listening systems

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	Facility Services		<p>locations and can be booked for loan around the system</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue adaptive story time programs in some locations, in response to community need • Promote and continue to offer Adaptive Technology Volunteer Tutors to provide one-on-one assistance for people with disabilities attending library programs, events. <p>New</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review Meeting Space, Rentals and Program policies and procedures to accommodate support persons and patrons accompanied by service animals 	
Service Delivery	TECHNOLOGY			
	<p>Services and Operations</p> <p>Information Technology</p> <p>Volunteer Services</p>	<p>Assistive Technology is challenging to maintain and support:</p> <p>a) Costly to keep up to date in terms of ongoing software and hardware upgrades</p>	<p>Current and Ongoing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintains and updates computer workstation that provide early years literacy skill development in all locations • Continue to develop audio/video tutorials to assist patrons, e.g. use of 	<p>Ongoing operating costs</p> <p>\$10,000 staff</p>

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		<p>b) Difficult to maintain staff expertise in the use of Assistive Technologies</p> <p>c) Staff resources are stretched thin in busy reference service areas and AT support requires significant time with individual patron.</p> <p>d) Staff need to be close to AT areas which requires reconfiguration of service area at Central.</p> <p>e) Service levels at branches are inconsistent.</p> <p>People with disabilities may require assistance in attending programs and events</p> <p>Challenging to attract volunteers to assist with Assistive Technology services</p>	<p>website: catalogue and remote access features</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Copy of the Library's AODA Customer Services response document is posted on the web site and distributed to all locations, audio file available on web site – completed by December 31, 2009 • Mobile training labs (laptops) move through the branch system. Will be enhanced in 2010 with ungraded Windows Accessibility Features and other AT software. <p>New:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update hardware and software plan for assistive technologies for Central and Branch libraries, including funding plan with an emphasis on upgraded access to Adaptive Technology software and hardware in branches • Staff training related to Windows XP Accessibility Features offered on all public workstations (completed by January 1, 2010) 	<p>resources per annum</p> <p>A past year \$5,000 expenditure</p> <p>\$75,000 ; seeking alternative sources of funding</p>

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued provision of remote technological access to core services through website, eg. program registration, renewals, downloadable e-books, ASK-ON reference services <p>New:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhance remote services with introduction of E-commerce services 	
Service Delivery	OUTREACH			
	Services and Operations		<p>Current and Ongoing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with community agencies serving people with disabilities in order to ensure coordinated responses to needs and efficient use of resources 	
Communication	Marketing and Communications	<p>Website access and content is an ongoing process to ensure currency and innovation which requires human and financial resources.</p> <p>AODA Standards regarding</p>	<p>Current and Ongoing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing review and implementation of navigation and signage in all locations, including moving towards anticipated AODA standards Continue to update navigation and menus on website for accessible 	

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		Information and Communications are not yet finalized.	navigation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intranet (for staff) content updated to ensure compatibility with screen readers <p>New:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update all print materials designed to market and promote services such as registration information packages to new standards • Review processes to ensure communication related to disruption of services mandated by AODA Service Standards • Review and upgrade TTY services 	estimated at \$10,000 Additional costs will be calculated when AODA standard finalized;
Human Resources	Human Resources Volunteer Services	Need to increase knowledge and competence in serving people with disabilities	<p>Current and Ongoing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Train staff on clear writing, annually • Training for new staff and refresher training on: LPL Mutual Respect Policy; staff diversity training/awareness programs; our services available • Post jobs through LEADS • Provide cooperative work opportunities, eg. March of Dimes. 	Supported through training budget for 2009 Additional costs will be calculated when AODA standards are finalized.

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		<p>Volunteers may have language, writing and communications barriers due to diverse backgrounds</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training provided in use of <i>Libraries for All</i> communication boards. • Complete mandated training in the awareness of the AODA • Train staff re: consistent customer service responses as outlined in the Customer Service Regulations of AODA (complete by December 31, 2009). • Volunteers have received initial and refresher training in AODA and Customer Service Training. • Eliminate the barriers in volunteer recruitment by using clear writing, moving recruitment sites, promoting through diverse communities. <p>New:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to undertake best practices review in preparation for continued AODA implementation. 	

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Facilities	Facility Services	<p>AODA Built Environment Standards are not yet completed for implementation.</p> <p>Space limitations in some branches limit the ability to implement FADS/AODA as effectively as possible</p> <p>Sources of funding for continued retrofit of locations to meet FADS standards and to purchase specialized furniture, such as service desks and technology</p>	<p>Current and Ongoing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most locations are FADS compliant • Ongoing accessibility review and accommodations, furniture and equipment <p>New:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to monitor the impact of new AODA Built Environment proposed standards. 	Estimated \$40,000 to meet requirements of standards; additional costs will be calculated when AODA standards are finalized.
Transportation	<p>Services and Operations</p> <p>Facility Services</p>	Patrons with limited mobility may have difficulty visiting or cannot visit a library in person	<p>Current and ongoing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued offering of Visiting Library Services (provision of home delivery service) for home bound patrons 	Ongoing operational costs