

Multi-Year Accessibility Plan (2024-2027)



THE MUNICIPALITY OF
LAMBTON SHORES

Multi-Year Accessibility Plan (2024-2027)



Introduction

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) was passed by the Government of Ontario in 2005 to augment the Ontarians with Disabilities Act (ODA) that was adopted in 2001. The purpose of these Acts is to create dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity for all individuals within Ontario, and to break down barriers for those with disabilities.

The AODA outlines various ways for municipalities, businesses and organizations to achieve a barrier-free province. The Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR) sets requirements that an organization must meet in the areas of customer service, information and communications, employment, transportation and the design of public spaces.

The Multi-Year Accessibility Plan ('Plan') is a requirement under the AODA and the IASR. The Plan offers an organizational strategy to prevent and remove barriers and enact the requirements contained within the standards. It is also a requirement that the Plan be reviewed and updated at least once every five years.

Municipality of Lambton Shores' Commitment

The Municipality of Lambton Shores ('Municipality') is committed to ongoing efforts toward achieving the accessibility the requirements of the IASR, as well as making improvements based on innovative ideas and input from its Accessibility Advisory Committee ('AAC'), members of the public, and staff. The Municipality continues to plan to ensure its services, programs and facilities are inclusive and accessible for all.

The Municipality's AAC provides a broader perspective of accessibility needs and provides advice to Council on programs, policies and services to be provided to persons with disabilities. In addition, the Committee offers valuable feedback relating to reviewing site plans and drawings, capital projects and other operating programs and services offered through the Municipality.



Multi-Year Accessibility Plan Overview

The 2024-2027 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan for the Municipality is a living document that is designed to continually meet the requirements of the AODA and its standards regulation. In addition to staff input, this Plan was developed through extensive

consultation with the Accessibility Advisory Committee and members of the public as the different experiences and background are valuable in creating a Plan that supports an inclusive community through growth and change. With many of the timelines for specific standards having been met by 2021, a key aspect of this Plan will focus on monitoring and improving upon goals and strategies that are already in place and looking at how to provide better services to the community through new opportunities and public feedback.

The Plan contains a section for each domain of the IASR, as well as an additional section that covers content beyond the scope of the Standards. Each section of the Plan sets out a standard-specific goal and identifies strategies for achieving these goals. The implementation section of the Plan is slightly different than in previous plans as there is no 'year' deadline associated with the goal and strategies. Examples of specific actions to be undertaken are provided at the end of this document, however these are not intended to limit the potential scope of progress toward a barrier-free Municipality of Lambton Shores.

The decision to remove deadlines was made to emphasize that the identified priorities are all important throughout the duration of the Plan and is intended to help promote continual improvement, while still acknowledging that compliance timelines of the IASR will be adhered to. Opportunities to influence accessibility during the term of the Plan will be considered on an ongoing basis. The Plan will inform and work alongside other guiding documents and activities undertaken by the Municipality and community partners. The Municipality will monitor and report on progress toward the Plan's action items annually and will conduct a review and update of the Plan with each new term of Council.

This Plan furthers the municipal commitment to continue building a barrier-free community in which people of all abilities can enjoy the full extent of life.



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The Plan

The plan is developed around the following six areas, outlining goals and strategies for each and defining how the Municipality of Lambton Shores hopes to improve.

1. Information and Communications

Goal: To ensure all information and communications conveyed by the Municipality of Lambton Shores is created, provided, and received in a manner that is accessible to people of all abilities.

2. Employment

Goal: To ensure compliance with the requirements of the Employment Standard and take proactive action to ensure current and future employees do not face barriers at work.

3. Transportation

Goal: To support integrated transit through a manner that meets the needs of all people.

4. Design of Public Spaces

Goal: To ensure accessibility needs are met in newly constructed or redeveloped public spaces where community travels, meets, and gathers.

5. Customer Service

Goal: To prevent, identify, and remove barriers such that people of all abilities have equitable access to goods, services, and facilities.

6. Beyond the AODA

Goal: To create an accessible and inclusive community that is responsive to the needs of and improves well-being and quality of life for persons with disabilities.



Information and Communication

Goal: To ensure all information and communications conveyed by the Municipality of Lambton Shores is created, provided, and received in a manner that is accessible to people of all abilities.

Action: To improve the accessibility of communications, the Municipality will use the following strategies:

1. Enhance the capacity of all staff producing content intended for the public in an accessible manner by providing applicable training.
 - a. Provide enhanced training on accessible documentation to staff producing or overseeing public-facing content.
2. Continue to review the municipal website for Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 Level AA.
 - a. Plan for periodic website scans to ensure all content is WCAG 2.0 AA compliant and provide enhanced training for website users.
3. Consider opportunities to enhance promotion of programs and services that offer content tailored to persons with disabilities.
 - a. Look for new ways to promote programs and services in a variety of formats.

Employment

Goal: To ensure Municipality of Lambton Shores compliance with the requirements of the Employment Standard and take proactive action to ensure current and future employees do not face barriers at work.

Strategy: To enhance accessibility and inclusion in the workplace, the Municipality will:

1. Review the recruitment process to facilitate participation of all candidates
 - a. Articulate the availability of accommodations and alternative methods to candidates during the recruitment process.
2. Provide staff with accessibility training that is specific to their job duties.
 - a. Develop and implement a job-specific training matrix relating to accessibility legislation, policies, and best practices in providing service to persons with disabilities.



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3. Continue the periodic review of policies and procedures to ensure ongoing compliance with the Employment Standard.
 - a. Work with HR to remain current and relevant in documentation and ensure all content is communicated to staff for their reference.

Transportation

Goal: To support integrated transit through the Municipality of Lambton Shores in a manner that meets the needs of people of all abilities.

Strategy: To meet the applicable requirements of the AODA Transportation Standard, the Municipality will:

1. Seek opportunities to enhance Huron Shores Area Transit.
 - a. Solicit periodic feedback from transit users.
 - b. Undertake a review of the current services contract.
2. Undertake efforts to increase ridership of Huron Shores Area Transit.
 - a. Assist with promotion of Huron Shores Area Transit campaigns that target increased specialized transit opportunities.
3. Strengthen pedestrian linkages.
 - a. Review pedestrian and active transportation infrastructure for suitability for all abilities

Design of Public Spaces

Goal: To ensure accessibility needs are met in newly constructed or redeveloped public spaces in the Municipality of Lambton Shores where community travels, meets, and gathers.

Strategy: To enhance accessibility and inclusion in the design of public spaces, the Municipality will:

1. Consider elements of Universal Design as the Municipality implements service changes and undertakes lifecycle upgrades of municipal facilities.



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- a. Ensure accessibility is integrated into Community Design Standards and other municipal documents guiding capital projects.
2. Ensure all municipal building plans, new construction and significant renovations, are reviewed by the Accessibility Committee for comments and feedback on accessible design features.
 - a. Maintain the internal practice of referencing members of the Accessibility Advisory Committee early in the planning process and consider additional support to help obtain valuable feedback based on the size of the project.
3. Look for ways to provide information to developers through the planning process on the construction of new recreation trails and other public spaces.
 - a. Work with Public Works and Planning Department to support the information available to developers relating to accessible requirements and opportunities.
4. Promote funding opportunities that support building owners and businesses to undertake accessibility upgrades.
 - a. Share information about opportunities to leverage Community Improvement Plan funds and other grant opportunities for accessibility upgrades.
5. Enhance accessibility in outdoor spaces and improve access to nature, including infrastructure for recreation and active transportation.
 - a. Identify opportunities and invest in accessible recreation through the budget process.
 - b. Create and promote opportunities for accessible cycling.
 - c. Ensure adequate public seating and rest areas are available in parks and other public spaces.
6. The Municipality will continue to review and update annually its procedure for preventative and emergency maintenance of the accessible elements in public spaces and procedures for dealing with temporary disruptions when accessible elements are not in working order.

Customer Service

Goal: To prevent, identify, and remove barriers such that people of all abilities have equitable access to goods, services, and facilities in the Municipality.

Strategy: To provide accessible customer service, the Municipality will:



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1. Provide ongoing and refresher training to employees and volunteers on delivering accessible customer service.
 - a. Develop internal training supports for training.
2. Renew and raise awareness of accessibility assets available to the public, in partnership with economic development and tourism.
 - a. Update and promote online accessible amenities.
 - b. Review accessible parking availability in the Municipality and assess new prospective locations.
3. Review and update policies related to service provision to ensure adequate support is in place for persons with disabilities.
 - a. Update customer service standards policy.

Beyond the AODA

Goal: To create an accessible and inclusive Municipality of Lambton Shores that is responsive to community needs and improves well-being and quality of life for persons of all abilities.

Strategy: Outside of legislative requirements, the Municipality will:

1. Participate in opportunities to educate and raise awareness amongst the public about accessibility and inclusion.
 - a. Promote accessibility at public events.
 - b. Recognize and promote awareness events such as National Accessibility Week and National Disability Employment Awareness Month.
2. Technology – invest in assistive devices.
3. Offer support to organizations, businesses, and institutions to enhance accessibility for their patrons.
 - a. Promote the Community Improvement Program as a funding mechanism to make accessibility upgrades.
 - b. Promote available grants to ensure the broader community is aware of opportunities.
 - c. Connect accessibility-focused organizations with the community to offer additional training.



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4. Leverage grants, plans, programs, and services are being implemented to maximize accessibility benefits.
 - a. Participate in local implementation of the Lambton County Age-Friendly Community Strategy and Action Plan.
5. Enhance emergency services capabilities to meet the needs of persons with accessibility needs.
 - a. Develop a registration program to assist Lambton Shores Fire and Emergency Services in understanding the location of residents with special needs
 - b. Assisting with preventative alarm maintenance



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Measuring Impact

In keeping with the requirements of the AODA, the Municipality publishes an annual Accessibility Status Update. Through this annual report, the Municipality will report on progress toward the goals and strategies outlined in the Plan.

Feedback and Contact Information

The Municipality of Lambton Shores encourages feedback from the public on accessibility, including suggestions relating to new initiatives and how we can improve our services. Feedback can be provided at www.LambtonShores.ca/accessibility or by contacting the Corporate Services Department to obtain a paper copy of the feedback form.

Corporate Services Department

Clerks@LambtonShores.ca

519-243-1400 (option 4)

