

Tourism London Accessibility Plan

2013-2017



TOURISM



LONDON
C A N A D A

Discover our Spirit!

A Message from John Winston

Tourism London has worked in collaboration with the City of London to remove barriers and facilitate accessibility at our Tourist Information Centres. About one in eight Londoners is currently living with a disability. Accessibility affects all of us including friends, families and coworkers.

London has emerged as a leader in accessibility. Over the past several years, we have developed some of the most comprehensive community resources related to accessibility available, most notably the Facilities Accessibility Design Standards (FADS), which has been adopted by over 80 other municipalities, school boards, hospitals and universities as their minimum standard for new or redeveloped buildings. We continue to make gains in the areas of employment, transportation and infrastructure. Our accessible recreation and leisure opportunities continue to grow. We have an extensive network of accessible trails and pathways throughout the city. We have some of the most accessible recreation facilities and community centres in the province.

Tourism London has come a long way. Ontario has established a goal of a fully accessible province by 2025. Tourism London is well on its way to meet the standards set out in the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)*. This plan will meet and exceed those needs and will set an example for other Tourism organizations in Ontario.

John Winston
General Manager
Tourism London, City of London

Table of Contents

<u>A MESSAGE FROM JOHN WINSTON</u>	1
<u>1. ABOUT THE PLAN</u>	3
PURPOSE AND SCOPE	3
REVIEW AND MONITORING	4
<u>2. PROVINCIAL ACCESSIBILITY LEGISLATION</u>	4
ACCESSIBILITY STANDARDS FOR CUSTOMER SERVICE (O. REG. 429/07).....	4
INTEGRATED ACCESSIBILITY STANDARDS (O. REG. 191/11).....	4
<u>3. ACCESSIBILITY ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2013</u>	5
<u>4. MOVING FORWARD</u>	6
<u>5. A FINAL WORD</u>	6
<u>APPENDIX A: ACCESSIBILITY ACTION PLAN FOR 2013-2017</u>	7

1. About the Plan

One in seven people in Ontario have a disability. By 2036, that number will rise to one in five as the population ages. Enhancing the ability of people with disabilities to live independently and participate in the community will have positive effects on future prosperity in Ontario. The City of London acknowledges that our municipality, though we have made great strides, has much that it can do to eliminate barriers to persons with disabilities.

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) mandates that each municipality prepares a multi-year accessibility plan outlining the organization's strategy to prevent and remove barriers and meet its requirements under the regulation.

This 5-year Plan provides an overall view of how the City intends to reach its goal of removing barriers and becoming more accessible. This plan includes an overview of work completed in 2012, as well as new actions to be completed over the next five years (See Appendix A). Objectives identified within this plan are both long and short-term, several of which being ongoing throughout the life of the plan.

Purpose and Scope

The purpose of the AODA 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 of Ontario.

This plan aligns with the standards under the AODA. In particular, its focus is on implementing the requirements of the Integrated Accessibility Standard Regulation (IASR). See Appendix B for the City's compliance to date.

Did You Know?

According to Statistics Canada, about 4.4 million Canadians (14.3%) reported having a disability in 2006.

According to 2012 research done by the Institute for Citizen Centred Service, the overall satisfaction with government services is lower for persons with disabilities, but has been improving steadily over time.

Disability tends to increase with age. In two decades, it is estimated that 20% of the population will have some form of disability.

The 2006 Participation and Activity Limitation Survey from Statistics Canada showed that between 2001 and 2006, the largest increase in the employment rate was among people with disabilities. The rate climbed to 53.5% from 49.3%

Review and Monitoring

Tourism London staff are responsible for monitoring the progress of the Accessibility Plan to determine if targets are being met.

Tourism London's Multi-Year Accessibility Plan will be reviewed and updated every five years. A status report will be completed annually to document progress and outline any changes to the plan. The status updates will be publicly posted on the Tourism London website. As required by IASR, the City will file an accessibility report with the Accessibility Directorate of Ontario every two years.

2. Provincial Accessibility Legislation

In June 2005, the Ontario Government passed the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)*. The Act provides for the development, implementation and enforcement of accessibility standards with a vision of a fully accessible Ontario by 2025. Standards have been developed in five areas: Customer Service, Transportation, Information and Communication, Employment, and Public Spaces (Built Environment). These have been developed in two regulations:

Accessibility Standards for Customer Service (O. Reg. 429/07)

The Accessibility Standards for Customer Service came into effect on January 1, 2008, making them the first to become law under the AODA. This regulation required all municipalities to be in compliance by January 1, 2010. Tourism London is currently in compliance, and fulfilling ongoing obligations including conducting training, and maintaining policies. Note: Tourism London's Orientation Manual is in compliance with customer service laws.

Integrated Accessibility Standards (O. Reg. 191/11)

The Integrated Accessibility Standard came into effect on July 1, 2011 and is now law. It applies to all organizations – public, private, and non-profit. The requirements of this standard will be phased in over time from 2011 to 2021. The Regulation covers the following standard areas:

- Information and Communication
- Employment
- Transportation
- Design of Public Spaces (Built Environment)

On January 1, 2013 the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation was amended to include accessibility requirements for the Design of Public Spaces (Built Environment). The goal of these standards is to remove barriers in public spaces and buildings for all Ontarians — including people with disabilities, seniors and families. Beginning in 2016,

Tourism London will be required to meet accessibility requirements when constructing and maintaining new or redeveloped elements of public spaces including:

- Exterior paths of travel
- Accessible Tourist Information Centre parking lots and ramped areas into building
- Barrier free service counter and waiting areas
- Barrier free access to phone and computer

The City is already in compliance with many of these standards, as it has been building to comply with its Facility Accessibility Design Standards (FADS) since 2001.

Organizations are not required to retrofit their public spaces.

3. Accessibility Achievements in 2013

- Updated Accessibility information on Tourism London's website.
- Providing orientation to summer staff regarding barrier free accessible.
- Coordinating site inspections to hotels regarding wheelchair accessibility.
- Provide listing of wheelchair accommodation in the city.
- Identified barriers and renovated the Wellington Tourist Information Centre in summer of 2013 to ensure it is wheelchair accessible and barrier free.
- Identified wheelchair parking spots at the Wellington Road Tourist Information Centre/Welcome Centre.
- Wheelchair logo on interior public washroom doors.
- Delivered Accessible Customer Service training to all new front line Tourist Counsellors.
- Consultation with the taxi company providers regarding accessibility.
- Continued to use feedback methods for accessibility related feedback online and by email and by telephone.
- Began the re-design of the Tourism London's website with contrast of colour.
- Inclusion of accessibility of hotels and attraction improvements on Tourism London's website.
- Implemented provisions in the Integrated Accessibility Standards including providing accessible emergency and public safety information; ensuring employees are given accessible workplace emergency response information.

Facility Upgrades

- Downtown and Wellington Road South Tourist Information Centres equipped with remote door openers.
- Signage in braille.

4. Moving Forward

This plan demonstrates Tourism London's ongoing efforts to eliminate barriers to its locations and services. Tourism London has made many accessibility improvements to its facilities, and services in 2013. We recognize that creating a city where everyone can participate fully is necessary to respect the rights and dignity of all citizens and tourists.

5. A Final Word

It is clear that strong partnerships between persons with disabilities, the City of London Accessibility Advisory Committee, and organizations that represent the interest of persons with disabilities in our community are extremely important to developing solutions that will lead to full inclusion.

Tourism London remains committed to the objectives and intent of the AODA. Removing barriers improves the quality of life for people of all ages and abilities. Tourism London is recognized as a leader in accessibility, and continues to serve as an example for other Tourism offices.

Feedback on the accessibility of the Tourism London offices and services are welcome. Contact Joan Beaune,

Joan Beaune
Co-ordinator, Information Services & Administration
Tourism London
267 Dundas Street, Suite 201
London, ON N6A 1H2
Phone 519-661-6157

jbeaune@londontourism.ca

Appendix A: Accessibility Action Plan for 2013-2017

Service Area	Action	Timeline
GENERAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES		
Tourism London	Status update on accessibility plan.	Yearly
Tourism London	Orientation Training regarding accessibility	Yearly
Tourism London	Continue to prepare bid documents for sporting events/conventions	Ongoing
Tourism London	Continuing barrier free/accessibility information	Ongoing
EMPLOYMENT		
Tourism London	Tourism London will provide workplace emergency plan and response information to employees and visitors with disabilities	Beginning 2013

Service Area	Action	Timeline
INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS		
Tourism London	Provide notice of temporary disruptions on wheelchair accessible doors	Ongoing
Tourism London	Update the Tourism London hotel listing of accessible properties.	Ongoing
PUBLIC SPACES/BUILT ENVIRONMENT		
Tourism London	Barrier free upgrades at Wellington Road South Tourist Information Centre.	2013
Tourism London	Accessibility upgrades to public area counters and circulation at Wellington Road South Tourist Information Centre.	2013
CUSTOMER SERVICE		
Tourism London	Continue to conduct Customer Service Training	Ongoing
COMMUNITY SERVICES		
Tourism London	Train summer staff in inclusion and sensitivity training	Ongoing

Appendix B: Accessibility Standard Compliance

Standard	Compliance Date	Status
CUSTOMER SERVICE STANDARD		
Customer Service Policy	2010	Compliant
Allow Service Animals and Support Persons	2010	Compliant
Notice of Temporary Disruptions	2010	Compliant
Training	2010	Compliant
Establish Feedback Process	2010	Compliant
Notice of Availability of Documents	2010	Compliant
Accessible Customer Service Documents	2010	Compliant
INTEGRATED ACCESSIBILITY STANDARDS		
Information and Communications		
Accessible Emergency/Public Safety Information	2012	Compliant
Establish Accessible Feedback Processes	2013	Compliant
New Internet Websites and Web Content to Conform with WCAG	2014	In Progress – Next major upgrade in 2014

Standard	Compliance Date	Status
2.0 Level A Colour & contrast, video, transcript or text		
Accessible Formats and Communication Supports Upon Request	2015	In Progress
Websites and Web Content to Conform with WCAG 2.0 Level AA	2021	In Progress
Employment		
Workplace Emergency Information	2012	Compliant
Accessible Formats for Employees	2013	Compliant
Built Environment		
Public Spaces Standards	2013	Compliant
General		
Integrated Standards Policy	2013	Compliant
Multi-Year Accessibility Plan	2014	Compliant