



2022 – 2026 – Accessibility Plan **2022 Status Update**



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Our 2022-2026 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan is a roadmap to continuous improvement in the City of London. The Accessibility Plan outlines key steps we will take together to meet and exceed our legislative responsibilities. These accessibility achievements improve access to employment and full participation in London. The accomplishments we have highlighted in this report demonstrate the City of London's commitment to creating an accessible and inclusive experience for all residents and visitors. This accessibility plan status update was developed with feedback and input from the City's Accessibility Community Advisory Committee (ACAC), Access without Limits (AWL) our Employee Resource group for employees with disabilities, community input from persons with disabilities, accessibility partners, our Senior leadership team and staff. It is organized around the AODA's accessibility standards. This 2022 status report highlights key actions taken from January 1st to December 31st, 2022 and is not meant to be a complete inventory of accessibility accomplishments but to highlight improvement and inclusion in key areas of focus.

This 2022 status update aligns our work under the key areas of focus of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA).

These include:

- Employment
- Information and Communications
- Design of Public Spaces
- Customer Service
- Transportation
- Continuous Improvement



Information & Communication Standards



What did we do in 2022? The following components of the 2022-2026 Accessibility Plan have been developed and/or implemented:

- Facilitated ongoing accessibility training and document remediation sessions with City staff to ensure that all documents on our website met compliance standards.
 - Over 200 employees were trained on accessible document standards in 2022.
- Worked with our People Services team to ensure ongoing accessibility document training for corporate document revision and upgrades for both external-facing websites and intranet documents and upgrades
 - Over 300 hours of coaching was provided on complex accessible document remediation in 2022
- Began work on an accessible communications plan to share information about accessible features of our parks, including simple and easy-to-understand maps of community parks listing essential services such as accessible bathrooms/
- Prepared “how to” videos and began work on easy-to-follow guides for City staff on the use of accessibility toolkits and equipment.
- The Anti-Racism and Anti-Oppression division developed a communications plan to recognize and acknowledge and recognize significant dates. As part of this initiative, we worked to ensure corporate acknowledgment of accessibility awareness date(s), to promote inclusion for persons with disabilities and alongside community partners, ACAC and the Access without Limits Employee Resource Group.

Employment



What did we do in 2022? The following components of the 2022-2026 Accessibility Plan have been developed and/or implemented:

- Drafted a new Accommodation and Inclusion for Employees with Disabilities Procedure with input from employees with disabilities and our Employee Resource Group (ERG) Access without Limits.
 - As part of the outreach for the preparation of the 2022-2026 Accessibility Plan, employees were interviewed to capture changes required to our Accommodation and Inclusion plan.
 - Our ERG, Access without Limits, was presented the findings of this research to help begin the organization and scope of the new plan.
- We began a thorough review to adopt and evaluate accessibility principles for all learning and development opportunities
 - We have equipped our learning locations with accessible hearing technology, and adjustable teaching desks and are now looking at developing a framework, using our equity tool, to advance accessibility in educational programs offered to employees at the City of London.
- We drafted and collaborated to build an employee survey about the experiences of employees with disabilities in our organization through a workforce census and equity audit for distribution early 2023.
 - The Anti-Racism and Anti-Oppression Division alongside People Services worked to develop an accessible, plain language survey to better understand experiences of equity and inclusion in our workplaces and to assess needs in our workplace.
- We began the development of a centralized list of professional development opportunities and resources for employees to learn more about anti-racism and anti-oppression including ableism and intersectionality.

Customer Service



What did we do in 2022? The following components of the 2022-2026 Accessibility Plan have been developed and/or implemented:

- Obtained 10 larger/adult-sized skate aids for public use at Storybook Gardens.
- Worked to create another successful Accessible Halloween Outreach campaign at Storybook Gardens including building in sensory friendly nights for children with disabilities for a more inclusive "Storyboo" experience.
- Continue to increase the number of accessible community garden plots by adding more benches, wheelchair-accessible plot spaces, accessible water access and accessible tools for community gardens across the City.
 - We added 8 new wheelchair-accessible plots in 2022 and updated pathways, signage, water access, and accessible gardening tools for our community gardens.
- Reviewed, updated, and prepared a 2022 Accessible Elections plan including updating materials, offering American Sign Language Interpretation at advanced polls, and ensuring accessible voting tools were widely available and broadly communicated for the 2022 Municipal elections.
 - In addition, we added a new accessible customer service training component for all poll workers to encourage understanding of accessibility at the polls.
- Reviewed and updated service area accessibility toolkits for necessary upgrades and updated tools for supportive communication and customer service. Three new toolkits were distributed in 2022 and accessible training videos were developed for the toolkits to ensure continuity of use and support for new users of the kits.
- Drafted a new American Sign language procedure to improve engagement with ASL (American Sign Language) interpreters within City programs and services.
- We launched sensory backpacks at Storybook Gardens, providing 25 backpacks for children with disabilities to borrow while they are in the park.
 - We worked with community partners and our Accessibility Community Advisory Committee to build these backpacks so they address a wide range of sensory needs.

Transportation



The following transportation components of the 2022-2026 Accessibility Plan have been implemented and or developed in 2022.

- Researched and investigated options to meet the community's need for on demand Accessible Taxi Cabs, recognizing that the number of accessible taxis on-demand within the City dropped during the COVID-19 pandemic
 - In 2021 we continued to hear from the public about their concerns about a lack of accessible transportation options, especially for same-day trips. We also heard from members of the taxi industry about the concerns they share about the financial sustainability of accessible taxi options, especially because of the COVID-19 crisis.
 - Using this research and feedback, we have worked to develop options to address the crisis and will be developing these resources for piloting in 2023.
- We better understand the impacts of COVID-19 on the accessible taxi industry and have prepared proposals to address the gaps which will be evaluated and piloted in 2023.
- We have continued to work with our Accessibility Community Advisory Committee (ACAC) to review transportation requirements related to Rapid Transit and our Mobility Master Plan, and we continue to engage this committee and the public on issues of mobility and transportation in our community.





Design of Public Spaces

What did we do in 2022? The following components of the 2022-2026 Accessibility Plan have been developed and/or implemented:

- Made use of our newly revised London Facilities Accessibility Design Standards (2021) for all newly constructed facilities and public spaces, including workspaces for employees to ensure improved accessibility standards across the Corporation. This guide, located at www.london.ca/accessibility is a refreshed guideline on best practices and standards related to the inclusion of those with physical, sensory, and other disabilities.
 - Notify and consult ACAC for advice about the continued design and construction of new facilities and those which are undergoing major renovations.
- Worked with City planners and engineers to ensure continued support of accessibility and equity as part of a new sidewalk neighbourhood connectivity plan.
- Continued to consult with the ACAC and community partners on the need and location of on-street parking as part of the roadwork planning process.
- Our Health and Safety team updated the traffic control training guidelines for employees based on new requirements of Book 7 training, with a specific focus on pedestrian detours and sidewalk disruptions.
 - The Health and Safety team reviewed the new temporary traffic control training to review pedestrian safety requirements and best practices for accessibility
 - Our environment and infrastructure staff continued to consult with our Accessibility Community Advisory committee (ACAC) on new park designs and on accessible park features





Continuous Improvement

What did we do in 2022? The following components of the 2022-2026 Accessibility Plan have been developed and/or implemented:

- In 2022, we implemented an Anti-Racism and Anti-Oppression framework and Equity Tool to improve equitable outcomes and deliverables across the Corporation. The tool includes reflection on ableism, and accessibility which will help us identify opportunities at the earliest stages of planning and make ongoing changes as required.
 - We began the roll-out Anti-Racism and Anti-Oppression Foundations required training for all City staff with priority areas identified by our Senior Leadership team
- The Anti-Racism and Anti-Oppression division began hosting regular designated coaching hours for staff to facilitate an increased understanding of anti-racism, and anti-oppression work including disability and accessibility in City programs, projects, and policies.
 - In particular, areas of advancement in this area included: accessible document preparation and remediation, accessible workspace review, policy and procedure review, and equity tool engagement.



What are our next steps in 2023?



Employment

- We will be finalizing and launching our new Accessibility and Inclusion Procedure for Employees with Disabilities in 2023, and developing training to help facilitate engagement and awareness of the procedure.
- We will complete an employee Equity and Inclusion survey to help us better understand the equity and inclusion needs in our corporation in 2023



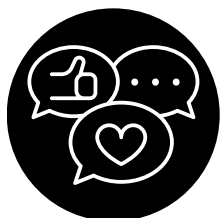
Customer Service

- We will be updating our accessibility toolkits and rolling out updated training on accessible customer service.
- We will be piloting new sensory backpacks at our camps in 2023.
- We will be updating our Accessible Customer Service training
- We will be building an accessibility working group with community partners to encourage improvements in accessible engagement and collaboration



Transportation

- We will be working to continue outreach and engagement for our Mobility Master Plan, our neighbourhood connectivity plans, and a pilot project to improve accessible taxi opportunities in our City for Londoners with disabilities.



Information and Communication

- We will be further developing and rolling out an accessible communications plan to better communicate accessible features available in our city facilities.
- We will continue to train our city staff on accessible document creation and remediation.



Design of Public Spaces

- Continue the renovation of existing outdoor playgrounds with improved accessibility features such as rubber surfacing, curb drops and pathways.
- Pilot Visual Communication Play Space Signage in public parks to increase accessible communication for children.



Statement of Commitment

Under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) all organizations need to share their statement of commitment publicly. The following is the City of London's Statement of Commitment:

The Corporation of the City of London is committed to providing quality goods, services, and facilities that are accessible to all persons we serve. We will continue to work with the community and allocate appropriate resources toward the elimination of accessibility barriers in customer service, information and communication, employment, transportation, and the design of public spaces and are committed to meeting the requirements of applicable legislation, including the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act and the Ontario Human Rights Code.

Contact Us:

To obtain a physical copy of this status update, or to inquire about accessibility in our City services, please contact accessibility@london.ca for more information.

