City of London's Draft Accessibility Plan

Presented by:

Melanie Stone, Accessibility and Inclusion Advisor

Background

- AODA requires all organizations in the province to post a public Multi-Year Accessibility Plan
- Our last plan ran from 2018-2021 and was focused on legislative requirements due in 2018-2021
- In the last plan, we had many required AODA components to work through and update. The focus of the plan was mostly on these issues and improving customer service, training opportunities etc…
- We met all of our requirements under that plan and have only one upcoming deadline to meet.

Research & Engagement for 2022

- Despite a very bumpy and COVID delayed 2021 and early 2022, significant public outreach and research was done for this plan, and we were able to focus on new and community driven tasks for continuous improvement.

- A Get Involved site was launched in September 2021 and collected information from residents on challenges/suggestions re: Accessibility

- Meetings with several community groups

- Analysis of complaints/concerns/conversations with residents.

Internal Research

- I met with 17 employees with disabilities in the organization as well, who I connected with through our new ERG and also who had connected previously with me on other issues.

- I also worked with the Access without limits ERG to present the findings of the research and use that group as a way to validate research findings and locate common themes.

Grouping Themes & Locating work being done

- I worked to gather common themes emerging in the data I collected and align those to the 5 key areas covered by the AODA (Customer Service, Employment, Design of Public Spaces, Transportation and Information & Communication)

- I also added a Continuous Improvement section that would incorporate work being done by our CI team but also, broadly, the work we were doing in the ARAO unit with the new equity tool and framework.

Information & Communication

- More information about tools and resources we already have re: Accessible supports

- Many people asked for things we already have in place, so creating some campaigns and posters and general info for the community and community partners about our accessible features and where to find them will be essential.

Design of Public Spaces

- Clear sidewalks were a huge request of all groups. **Timing of research may have highlighted this as the largest issue

- Sidewalks and construction connections that are clear were requested.

- Improved signage in the City.

Employment

- People with disabilities want meaningful employment with the City that is long term or permanent.

- Requests for more up front information about what accommodations are possible in interviews and during onboarding was requested.

- Internally people with disabilities would like more consideration for advancement or leadership

Customer Service

- Improved access to accommodations like ice sledges at community centres and adult skate aids
- Development of more accessibility tools and information on how to use them (our accessibility toolkits as an example)
- More specific training for staff on different disabilities like intellectual disability/dementia/Alzheimer's

Transportation

- Largest complaint is lack of accessible transportation and Taxis in the City.
- This has been a huge challenge through COVID and our known fleet of Accessible Taxis is low for a City of our size.

Enterprise-Wide Approach

- We have made significant progress on accessibility over the past few years. I am seeing incredible work in every service area and an awareness of inclusion that continues to increase. Accessibility is one key area in which we have all tackled significant change.

- Most program areas consult with me for broad advice but are well on their way in terms of making accessible changes that are just part of day to day operations. This is a meaningful shift.

ARAO Framework & Tool

Anti-Racism and
Anti-Oppression
Framework

2022

Photograph by Moses Latigo Odida
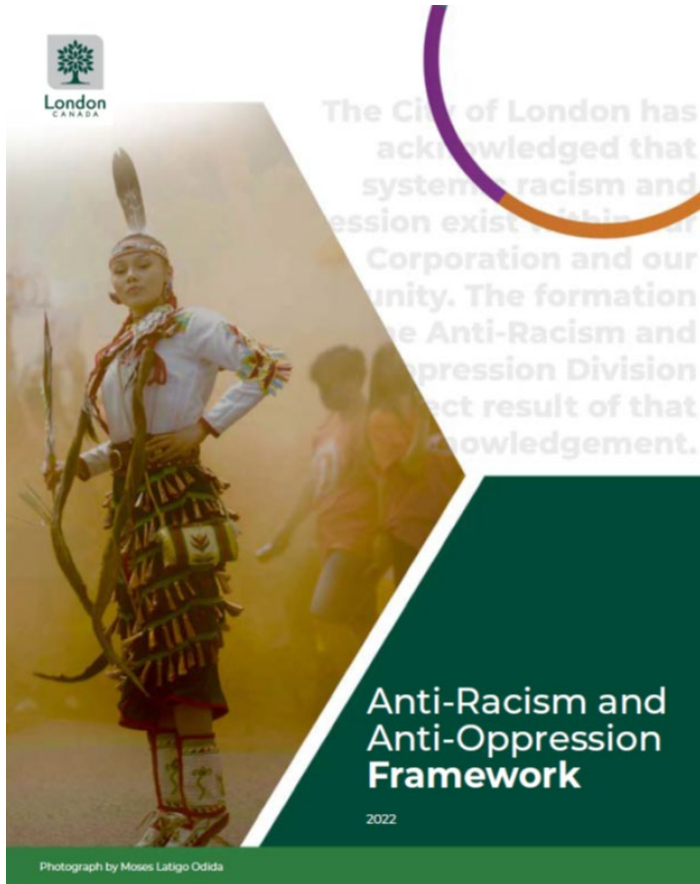
The new ARAO framework & Equity tool was being developed while this Accessibility Plan was in development.

If we use the ARAO framework, most of our accessibility goals will be met and most of our programs, budgets, policies and procedures will be made more intersectional and inclusive.

Encouraging the use of the Equity Tool is a part of the Accessibility Plan.

Next Steps

Would like your input/questions.

Finalizing details from public feedback on the draft plan.

Design being completed.

I would like to finalize by next ACAC meeting.

Thank you!

Happy to answer questions you have.