

2020-2022 Accessibility Plan for Kitchener Public Library

Introduction

This plan meets the needs of the Ontarians with Disabilities Act (ODA, 2001), and the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA, 2005). Plan shows the steps being taken to identify, remove and prevent barriers to accessibility in our library.

Background

Ontarians with Disabilities Act of 2001

The Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001 (ODA) was passed into law by the Ontario Legislature on December 4, 2001. The purpose of the Act 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”. The ODA applies to all municipalities, hospitals, district school boards, colleges, universities, public transportation organizations, the Ontario Government, ministries and agencies.

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act of 2005 (AODA)

The AODA received Royal Assent in the Ontario Legislature in June 2005. The AODA focuses on improving accessibility in buildings and spaces, employment, customer service, communications and transportation. The AODA intends to:

- make an accessible Ontario on or before January 1, 2025;
- create and make mandatory and enforceable accessibility standards to be achieved within five years or less

Description of Kitchener Public Library

Kitchener Public Library is a public sector organization, providing excellent public library service. The library’s Mission is that “we welcome our community to engaging spaces where people connect, ideas flourish, and lives are transformed”.

The library has five locations: four community libraries and Central Library. The library serves a diverse community and is committed to providing equitable access to all our services and collections.

Kitchener Public Library Accessibility Plan Committee Members

The Kitchener Public Library Accessibility Plan Committee members are the Manager, Systems and Resources; Web Services Librarian; Director, Business Services and Infrastructure; Manager, Facilities; and the Senior Manager, Human Resources.

Accomplishments, 2020

Accessibility Initiative	Action	Responsibility (committee, staff, or department)	Date
Physical			
Self-Checkout display	Assess Bibliotheca software for font adjustments on display for new self-checkout	IT Department	Completed 2020
Technology			
Website accessibility	Add accessible features in compliance with WCAG 2.0, Level AA standards such as video captions, audio transcripts, more complete text content and labels for fields in web forms, and accessible documents	Gary Bauman	Ongoing; Audit Completed 2020
Access Centres	Review Access Centres and accessible technology at all locations to maximize usability. Software licenses renewed and hardware replaced.	Lisa Wallace and IT Team	Completed 2020
Accessible Hardware, software and devices	Update current inventory of accessible hardware, software and equipment	Lisa Wallace Angela Riddell	Completed 2020
Digital Collections	Stories in Sign Language ASL children's collection added to Download Library	Teneile Warren, Michael Cruickshank	Completed 2020

Accessibility Initiative	Action	Responsibility (committee, staff, or department)	Date
Programs			
Sensory Storytime Program	Implement sensory storytime program at Central Library. Program implemented in 2020 and ongoing in 2021.	Lindsey Skeen	Completed 2020; Ongoing

2021-2022 Initiatives

Accessibility Initiative	Action	Responsibility (committee, staff, or department)	Date
Physical			
Grand River Stanley Park book drop	Finalize design and costing. Design, costing, and purchase complete in 2021. Installation planned for early 2021.	Angela Riddell Kevin Webb, in consultation with Penny-Lynn Fielding and Robyn Zondervan	2020-2021
Pioneer Park Washroom	Audit accessibility features and enhancements for Pioneer Park washroom (e.g. automatic door opener)	Angela Riddell Kevin Webb	2021
Forest Heights – accessibility audit	Review accessibility audit of Forest Heights for potential accessibility enhancements when received from City of Kitchener	Accessibility Committee	2021
Southwest Community Library	Ensure that accessibility is a key consideration in the building design, and that the design meets accessibility standards.	Design Team and Architects	2021-2022

Accessibility Initiative	Action	Responsibility (committee, staff, or department)	Date
Central Library - RHF Accessibility Rating & Certification	Plan Central Library on-site review with the Rick Hansen Foundation for a site rating and accessibility certification.	Angela Riddell, Megan Clare	2021
Space Rentals Project	Review space rentals for meetings and special events to maximize accessibility for renters and attendees	Angela Riddell, Matt MacKinnon, Gary Bauman	2021 - 2022
Readers for direct to player services	Investigate purchase of readers for direct to player services at community libraries	Megan Clare	2021
C-Pen Readers	Add c-pen readers to the collection so that they are available to community members with low vision or reading difficulties such as dyslexia.	Bib Services & Circulation	2021
Business Plan Project - Mental Health Resource Centre	Consider space and sensory accommodations as part of project investigation and plan	Natalie Gibbons	2021
Physical			
Public computer workstations	Review configuration of public workstations at Central to maximize accessibility, including physical space and sensory considerations as part of the library's reopening plans.	Lisa Wallace, Penny-Lynn Fielding, Kristin Johnson-Perlock, Kevin Webb	2020-2021
CELA Outreach & Marketing	Provide information on CELA and library services to community upon request. Develop a marketing program to raise awareness of the CELA program.	Megan Clare, IS staff	2021 & Ongoing

Accessibility Initiative	Action	Responsibility (committee, staff, or department)	Date
Accessible hardware, software and devices	Investigate new alternatives for people with hearing-related disabilities to attend and participate in library programs	Angela Riddell (Events Staff, IS staff)	2021
Policy			
Accessible Collections	Implement fine-free library service, with no overdue fines for all library customers	Administration, Megan Clare, Circulation Team	2021
Accessible Collections	Continue to identify collection formats and other resources that support accessibility	Collection Management Team	Ongoing
Accessible Collections	Consider accessibility in the implementation of new collections (e.g. board games, library of things, etc.)	Collection Management Team	2021
Attitudinal			
Accessibility Awareness	Provide information and updates about accessibility in staff and volunteer newsletters and by email	HR staff, Volunteer Services staff	Ongoing
Accessibility Training	Continue to provide training to staff related to appropriate service processes that supports accessibility for all	HR Staff & Others as required	Ongoing
Accessibility Training	Develop training content for staff on accessible software and hardware at the Access Centre workstations	Kristin Johnson-Perlock, Megan Clare, IS Staff	2021
Dementia Friendly customer service	Investigate opportunities for refresher/new staff dementia friendly customer service training	HR Staff	Spring 2021

Accessibility Initiative	Action	Responsibility (committee, staff, or department)	Date
Access Support Staff	Investigate opportunities for an accessibility liaison at each location, to support staff awareness and provide one-on-one support to customers	Accessibility Committee	2021
Programs			
Older Adult Advisory Committee	Establish an older adult advisory group, a volunteer committee to provide input on making library services and spaces more accessible to older adults.	Ada Wassink and project team	2021
Adult Programs	Investigate autism and American Sign Language programming for adults	Kristin Johnson-Perlock	2021

Communication Plan

- Communicate Plan to Management Team – February 2021
- Communicate Plan to staff and volunteers – March 2021
- Communicate Plan to the public on KPL website – March 2021
- Provide paper copies of the Plan upon request – Ongoing

Conclusion

This Plan will be reviewed and updated annually. Kitchener Public Library is committed to providing equitable access and removing barriers to all services and facilities.