

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).

The 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, Resources & Membership Services; Manager, Library Systems & Analytics; Director, Business Services and Infrastructure; Manager, Facilities; Manager, Community Library, and the Senior Manager, Human Resources.

Accomplishments 2020/2021

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 Team	Completed 2020
Grand River Stanley Park book drop	Install accessible book drop at Grand River Stanley Park Community Library.	Angela Riddell Kevin Webb, Penny-Lynn Fielding, Robyn Zondervan	Completed 2021
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	Completed 2021
Readers for direct to player services	Investigate purchase of readers for direct to player services at community libraries.	Megan Clare	Completed 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 Teams	Completed 2021
Meeting Room Improvements	Meeting room equipment reviewed and improved to maximize accessibility for staff and customer use at Central.	Angela Riddell, Lisa Wallace	Completed 2021

Accessibility Initiative	Action	Responsibility (committee, staff, or department)	Date
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 Centre 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.	Michael Cruickshank and Inclusion Team	Completed 2020
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	Completed 2021
Policy			
Accessible Collections	Implement fine-free library service, with no overdue fines for all library customers.	Executive Team, Megan Clare, Gary Bauman, Circ Team	Completed 2021
Attitudinal			
Accessibility Training	Develop training content for staff on accessible software and hardware at the Access Centre workstations.	Kim Cluthe, IS Team, Kristin Johnson-	Completed 2021; Ongoing

Accessibility Initiative	Action	Responsibility (committee, staff, or department)	Date
		Perlock, Megan Clare	
Dementia Friendly customer service	Investigate opportunities for refresher/new staff dementia friendly customer service training	HR Team	Completed 2021
Programs			
Sensory Storytime Program	Implement sensory storytime program at Central Library. Program implemented in 2020 and ongoing in 2021.	Lindsey Skeen and Children's Team	Completed 2020; Ongoing

2022 Initiatives

Accessibility Initiative	Action	Responsibility (committee, staff, or department)	Date
Physical			
Country Hills book drop	Install accessible book drop at Country Hills Community Library.	Angela Riddell Kevin Webb, Penny-Lynn Fielding, Amanda Wiley	2022
Readers for direct to player services	Develop a plan, with staff training, and introduce new direct-to-player Daisy readers at community libraries.	Megan Clare, Chris Schnarr	2022
Pioneer Park Washroom	Audit accessibility features and enhancements for Pioneer Park washroom (e.g. automatic door opener, emergency lighting)	Angela Riddell, Kevin Webb	2022
Forest Heights and Pioneer Park – accessibility audit	Review accessibility audits of Forest Heights and Pioneer Park for potential accessibility enhancements when received from City of Kitchener	Accessibility Committee	2022-2023

Accessibility Initiative	Action	Responsibility (committee, staff, or department)	Date
Southwest Community Library	Initial building design presented to the GRAC committee for feedback. Accessibility standards and considerations to be ongoing as building design is finalized.	Design Team and Architects	2021-2023
Meeting Room Improvements	Meeting room equipment reviewed and improved to maximize accessibility for staff and customer use.	Angela Riddell, Lisa Wallace	Completed 2021
Business Plan Project – Mental Health Resource Centre	Consider space and sensory accommodations as part of project investigation and plan.	Natalie Gibbons	2021-2022
Technology			
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, Trevor Schoch, IS Team	2022 & Ongoing
Accessible Hardware, software and devices	Investigate new alternatives for people with hearing-related disabilities to attend and participate in library services.	Angela Riddell, Lisa Wallace, Matt MacKinnon, IS Staff	2022
Policy			
Accessible Service Delivery	Develop a community-based advisory committee to identify accessibility barriers to library service.	Accessibility Committee	2022
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	Collection Management Team	Ongoing

Accessibility Initiative	Action	Responsibility (committee, staff, or department)	Date
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	Conduct staff training at community libraries on accessible software and hardware.	Circ Team, IS Team	2022
Accessibility Training	Continue to provide training to staff related to appropriate service processes that supports accessibility for all	HR Staff & Others as required	Ongoing
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.	Kristin Johnson-Perlock, Sherry Erb, and IS Team	2021-2022

Communication Plan

- Communicate Plan to Management Team - February 2022
- Communicate Plan to staff - March 2022
- Communicate Plan to the public on KPL website - March 2022
- 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.