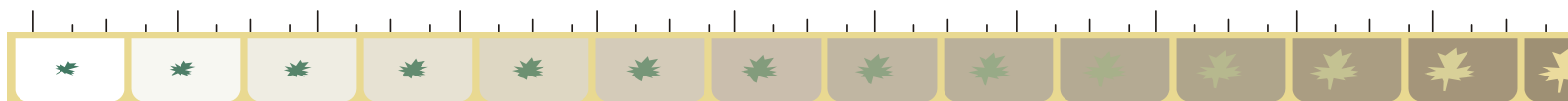


THE CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF LONDON 2009 ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

Submitted by:

The ODA Staff Resource Group
In Partnership with
The City of London Accessibility Advisory Committee

This publication is available in alternative formats upon request.



London
CANADA

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2009 ACCESSIBILITY PLAN
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SECTION 1 - EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On behalf of the Ontarians with Disabilities Staff Resource Group of the City of London and the City of London Accessibility Advisory Committee, we are pleased to present the City of London Accessibility Plan for the year 2009. The plan consists of Appendix "A" - Chart of New Strategy Actions to be approved by Council as well as Appendix "B" – Chart of Continue-To and Follow-Up to Actions based on the London 2008 Accessibility Plan.

We recognize that people with disabilities represent a significant and growing part of our Province's and City's population. According to Statistics Canada, about 1.9 million Ontarians have disabilities — about 16% of the population. Disability tends to increase with age. In two decades it is estimated that 20% of the population will have disabilities. Enhancing the ability of people with disabilities to live independently and contribute to the community will have positive effects on future prosperity in Ontario. The City of London would like to acknowledge that our municipality, though we've made great strides, has much that it can and should do to eliminate barriers to persons with disabilities.

The *Ontarians with Disabilities Act, (ODA 2001)* mandates that each municipality prepare an annual accessibility plan for the purpose of improving 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.

Please take time to review this Plan. We appreciate your involvement in the development of this City of London Accessibility Plan to date and look forward to your continued involvement in this journey, as London becomes a fully accessible municipality.

The Plan Coordinator contacts for this City of London Accessibility Plan are:

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SECTION 2 - PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THE ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

The Ontarians with Disabilities Act received Royal Assent on December 13, 2001. The purpose of this Act is to improve opportunities for people 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. Municipalities of 10,000 or more residents are required to establish or continue an accessibility committee. The majority of its members must be people with disabilities. The committee shall advise Council about the preparation, implementation and effectiveness of an accessibility plan. Municipal governments play a crucial role in the planning and development of our communities. Accessibility plans are intended to address existing barriers to people with disabilities and to prevent new barriers from being established.

This report describes:

- monitoring of the actions that the City of London has taken to remove barriers to persons with disabilities since September 2003 when London's first Accessibility Plan was approved;
- the process by which the City of London is identifying, removing and preventing barriers to persons with disabilities;
- the "continue-to" and "new strategic actions" that the City of London will undertake to remove barriers to persons with disabilities for the year 2009;
- the ongoing review and monitoring process for the Accessibility Plan;
- the communication of London's Accessibility Plan to the staff of the City of London, members of the disabled community and the public; and,
- Accessibilities for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA).

Municipal Departments and Divisions included under the scope of this plan are:

Finance and Corporate Services Department

City Clerk's Office

Technology Services Division

Financial Services (Assessment, Payroll, Purchasing, Revenue, Planning and Policy)

Realty Services

Courts Administration

Planning and Development Department

Planning Division

Building Division

Housing Division

Community Services Department

Social & Community Support Services

Dearness Long-Term Care Division

Parks and Recreation Division

Neighbourhood and Children's Services Division

Environmental and Engineering Services Department
Roads and Transportation Division
Fleet, Facilities and Departmental Resources Division
Administration and Departmental Services Division
Waste Water and Treatment Division
Water, Environment and Customer Relations Division

Chief Administrator's Office

City Solicitor's Office
Corporate Management Support
Corporate Communications Division
Culture Office
Fire Services Division
Human Resources Division
Management Support, Audit and Risk

The City of London Accessibility Plan also includes actions from two (2) of the City's Boards and Commissions who expressed an interest in participating with the City of London's Plan. The London Transit Commission is required by the ODA (2001) to prepare its own Plan.

SECTION 3 - DESCRIPTION OF THE CITY OF LONDON

Accessibility Planning Has Begun

Over the past twenty (20) years, the City of London, with over 350,000 residents located in the heart of south western Ontario, has witnessed an expansion in the number of citizens with disabilities. Today, it is estimated that there are 43,000 people with some form of disability, with this figure expected to increase due to an aging population.

The City of London began accessibility planning back in 1997, when it worked with the Access to Leisure Services in London (ALL Committee) to develop a policy designed to include people with disabilities in recreation facilities, parks and services. Reaching the goal of full inclusion of persons with disabilities is a major challenge for all municipalities including the City of London. Local governments play a vital role in the lives of persons with disabilities because of their broad mandate. It is clear that strong partnerships between persons with disabilities, the City of London Accessibility Advisory Committee and organizations that represent the interests of persons with disabilities in our community are extremely important to developing solutions that will lead to full inclusion.

Mayor's Statement

The following quote was provided to the Ministry of Citizenship's Accessibility Directorate for a success story written about London - "Establishing and approving the Accessibility Advisory Committee's terms of reference was a major initiative," said Mayor Anne Marie DeCicco-Best. "The enthusiasm shown in appointing a diverse Committee committed to the removal and prevention of barriers for persons with disabilities will make London more accessible for everyone. We're aiming to become Canada's most accessible City!"

SECTION 4 - THE CITY OF LONDON ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE AND RESOURCES

The Ontarians with Disabilities Act, (ODA 2001) was passed by the Province of Ontario in December 2001. The ODA requires that municipalities create an Accessibility Advisory Committee to Council (a majority of members must be persons with disabilities).

Accessibility Advisory Committee

The City of London working in partnership with the local ODA Regional Committee established the Terms of Reference for the Accessibility Advisory Committee for approval by Council in June 2002. The scope of the Terms of Reference goes beyond what is outlined in the ODA 2001 as it is intended to suit the needs of the London community.

The Accessibility Advisory Committee has been in place for more than five (5) years and is empowered to look at issues for persons with disabilities in London comprehensively, which may mean that some of the issues or organizations that this Committee may wish to address may go beyond the scope of the City of London Accessibility Plan for the services that are the responsibility of the Corporation of the City of London and its Council.

Voting Members of the Accessibility Advisory Committee

The Accessibility Advisory Committee currently has eleven (11) voting positions filled by members of the community who often had experience with more than one particular type of disability. This Advisory Committee meets on a monthly basis. The members of all City of London Advisory Committees were appointed to coincide with the four (4) year term of the new Council elected on November 13, 2006.

Voting Members
Roger Khouri (Chair)
Bonnie Quesnel (Vice-Chair)
Mark Anderson
Kathleen Higgins
Kash Husain
Avril Rinn
Anne Robertson
Paula Schuck
Joyce Sharpe
Peggy Stewart
Andrew Tankus

Resource Members of the Accessibility Advisory Committee

The Committee also includes eight (8) non-voting members that represent sectors such as school boards, seniors, housing and development, architecture and health care or wellness.

Non-Voting Resource Members
Dean Astolfi, Western Ontario Therapeutic Community Hostel (WOTCH)
Sarah Doub, Thames Valley District School Board
Terry Grand, Superintendent of Education, London Catholic District School Board
Jean Knight, Council for London Seniors
Naeem Qureshi, Architectural Sector
Stephanie Sams, Ability Awareness Training
Ryan Sanders, Ontarians with Disabilities Act (ODA) Committee
Deb Wilson-Mcleod, Partners in Employment

Accessibility Advisory Sub-Committee Structure

Five (5) Accessibility Advisory Sub-Committees have been created from the Accessibility Advisory Committee and each Sub-Committee is composed of at least two (2) voting members:

- Facilities
- Transportation
- Policy Development
- Education and Awareness
- Non-Visible Disabilities

These Sub-Committees will meet as required in between the regular meeting of the Advisory Committee and they will be responsible as one monitoring mechanism of the City of London Accessibility Plan.

Involvement of the Accessibility Advisory Committee Members

Each of the Sub-Committees is actively involved with the City in developing strategies to assist the City in becoming more accessible.

Sub-Committees may chose to assign specific Sub-Committee teams that are relevant to each Sub-Committees priorities e.g., project teams may be struck on bus passes, website enhancement, development of education material and specific AODA standards review.

Specifically, but not limited to, the members of the Accessibility Advisory Committee will be assisting the City as follows:

- understanding the implications of the AODA, 2005 for persons with disabilities;
- with the testing of new products;
- providing listings of problem areas;
- educating about different types of disabilities and providing this information on the Committee's web page;

- assisting with the annual review of the Facility Accessibility Design Standards (FADS);
- in reviewing particular site plans;
- liaising with other Advisory Committees; and,
- working in collaboration with community groups to address service needs and gaps for persons with disabilities.

The Staff Resource Group

The Staff Resource Group, comprised of a cross-section of senior staff from City Departments, has been formed to co-ordinate the development of the City of London Accessibility Plan in conjunction with the City's Accessibility Advisory Committee – Policy and Development Sub-Committee.

The Accessibility Plan Coordinator is responsible for the co-ordination of the Staff Resource Group.

Members of the Staff Resource Group

Group Member	Department
Robin Armistead Manager of Culture and Municipal Policy	CAO's Office City Hall, Room 1105
Denise Bedard Administrator	Community Services - Dearness Home
Cheryl Gilmour Manager, Community Life	
Bill Campbell Division Manager	EESD - Facilities Design & Construction Division AJ Tyler Operations Centre 633 Bathurst Street
Karen English Procurement Officer	Purchasing 267 Dundas Street, 4 th Floor
Elaine Gamble, Director, Corporate Communications	Corporate Communications City Hall, 3 rd Floor
Brenda Holden Manager, Ontario Works	Social & Community Support Services Market Tower, 2 nd Floor
Suki Kaur-Cosier Staffing Specialist	Human Resources Division City Hall, 5 th Floor
Peter Kokkoros Manager, Plans Examination	City Hall, Building Division Room 706
Tony Kyle Manager, Area Recreation Services	Community Services Parks & Recreation and Neighborhood and Children's Services Divisions Market Tower, 4 th Floor
Andrew Macpherson, Manager Parks Planning & Design	Planning Division City Hall, 6 th Floor

Group Member	Department
Shane Maguire Division Manager	Parking and Traffic Signals 824 Dundas Street, Main Floor
Louise Stevens Director Municipal Housing	Planning & Development/ Housing Division 267 Dundas Street, 2 nd Floor
Betty Mercier Committee Secretary	City Clerk's Office, City Hall, Room 308

SECTION 5 – INITIATIVES - BARRIER IDENTIFICATION, REMOVAL AND PREVENTION PROCESS

In preparation of a municipal accessibility plan, each municipality is required to consult with persons with disabilities or use their Accessibility Advisory Committee for advice and recommendations. Municipalities are not restricted to this minimum requirement and may want to consult more broadly with all sectors of their community.

The initiatives for the development of *the 2009 City of London Accessibility Plan* are outlined below:

- Staff Resource Members participate at Accessibility Advisory Committee Working Group meetings as requested.
- The Ontario Network of Accessibility Professionals meets to share concerns about the implementation of the AODA.
- The Association of Municipal Managers, Clerks and Treasurers (AMCTO) training information session was held February 29, 2008. Members of the Accessibility Advisory Committee and City staff attended.
- The Accessibility Advisory Committee made a presentation during the public participation meeting in February 2008 with respect to advising City Council to adopt increased sidewalk snow removal. This was followed-up with written submissions to City Council and to the Service Review Board.
- The Accessibility Advisory Committee asked for input concerning the priorities for the 2009 Accessibility Plan in August 2008 and a review of the Ministry of Citizenship Quotient Questionnaire needs analysis and survey.
- Staff Resource members monitor the completion of strategies in the 2008 Accessibility Plan, to review the Ministry of Citizenship Quotient Questionnaire Needs Analysis survey of the City's Departments and Divisions and collect new data for inclusion in the 2009 Accessibility Plan (September/October 2008).
- The 14th Annual Empowerment & Action Day, "Decent Work for Persons With Disabilities" was held on October 4, 2008. The Lieutenant Governor of Ontario, the Honourable David C. Onley, gave the key-note address.
- The City of London co-hosted the Age-friendly Communities meeting on October 24, 2008 along with the Alzheimer Society of London and Middlesex, Alzheimer Society of Ontario, London and Middlesex Dementia Network, South West Local Health Integration Network and the University of Western Ontario. Three (3) of the City of London Accessibility Advisory Committee Members, City Officials and City staff were invited to attend.
- The 3rd annual Ability First Conference, "*Employing Ability First Makes Economic Sense*", took place November 5, 2008 and had representation by City of London staff and Accessibility Advisory Committee members.

- The Accessibility Advisory Committee reviewed the draft 2009 Accessibility Plan at their meeting on November 27, 2008.
- The City of London 2009 Accessibility Plan will be reviewed at the Community and Protective Services Committee meeting on December 8, 2008 and City Council for approval of new actions on December 15, 2008.

The City of London has used the following consultation methodologies to develop the plan:

Methodology	Description	Status
Three (3) year Strategic Plan from Accessibility Advisory Committee	The Accessibility Advisory Committee members provided their top priorities for 2008 - 2010 and these priorities were referred back to the departments for review and consideration.	The whole committee was given the opportunity to review their priorities for 2009.
Contact with General Public Local Agencies	The Accessible Advisory Committee Strategic Plan was posted on internet with a request for comments to accessibility@london.ca and/or seeking delegation status at the Accessibility Advisory Committee November 2008 meeting.	Comments received and incorporated into the Accessibility Plan.
Networking With Other Municipalities and local Accessibility Advisory Committees	The purpose of this exercise is share best practices	The Accessibility Plan Coordinator participates on the Ontario Network of Accessibility Professionals belongs to the Accessibility Advisory Committee Consultation Group of AMO.
Review of Draft Accessibility Plan with Staff Resource Group of City Divisions	The 2008 Accessibility Plan was monitored for completion of actions and notation of actions that would continue into 2009. A new actions template was developed.	The Accessibility Plan Coordinator contacted Division representatives to discuss the contents of the City's Accessibility Plan and obtain new actions for inclusion in the 2009 Plan.

The attached Appendix “A” – Chart of New Strategic Actions to be Approved by Council and Appendix “B” – Chart of Continue-to Follow-Up Actions based on the London 2008 Accessibility Plan identifies how the City of London intends to identify, remove and prevent barriers for the year 2009. Capital projects noted in this action plan will be subject to 2009 Budget approval by City Council. If these capital projects are not funded in the 2009 budget year, they will be re-submitted the following year for budget approval by the City.

The 2009 Plan has used the following Standards Development Areas of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) that received Royal Assent on June 13, 2005 and is now law. The AODA 2005 Act provides for the development of standards that apply to both the public and private sector in order to achieve accessibility for Ontarians with disabilities with respect to goods, services, facilities, accommodation, employment, buildings, structures and premises on or before January 1, 2025. For the purposes of the 2009 Plan, the Plan Coordinator has added an additional Community Services area to ensure that all City areas are included;

Customer Service Standard

Businesses and organizations that provide goods or services to people in Ontario are now legally required to make their customer services operations accessible to people with disabilities. This will be done by identifying and removing barriers to customer service in such areas as operational practices, policies and procedures, communications and staff training.

Information and Communications Standard

Refers to information processing and communication, and could include publications, software applications, and web sites.

Employment Standard

Refers to hiring and retaining employees, and could include employment practices, policies and processes.

Built Environment Standard

Refers to access to, from and within buildings and outdoor spaces, and could include counter heights, aisle/door widths, parking, and signs, as well as pedestrian access routes and signal systems.

Transportation Standard

The proposed Transportation Accessibility Standard will address barriers to accessibility for persons with disabilities in the delivery of public and private transportation services. Public and private transportation services refer to modes of passenger transportation within provincial and municipal jurisdiction (such as municipal transit and taxis).

Community Services Area (additional)

Although not identified as a provincial Standard, it was discovered that not all City areas fit into the Standard Development Areas identified by the Ministry, therefore, this Community Services area was established by the plan coordinator.

SECTION 6 - ACCESSIBILITY PLAN REVIEW AND MONITORING PROCESS

The City of London's Accessibility Plan includes the updated for 2009 Ministry of Citizenship's Accessibility Quotient Questionnaire (See Appendix "C"), which has been modified to permit the addition of a sliding scale of accomplishment instead of the original "yes" – "no" – "don't know" scale. The purpose of the sliding scale is to provide a feel for how far the City needs to go in an area to be considered fully accessible to persons with disabilities (e.g., 5 is fully accessible, 0 is not accessible, 1, 2, are beginnings of being accessible). This questionnaire will be used as an ongoing assessment tool of the City's by-laws, policies, programs, practices and services.

The Accessibility Plan Coordinator is responsible for monitoring the progress of the City of London's Accessibility Plan to determine if established targets are being met. Members of the Resource Group will be responsible for encouraging the implementation of the actions of the Plan within their area of responsibility.

The City of London Accessibility Plan will be updated and approved on an annual basis.

The Sub-Committees of the Accessibility Advisory Committee will continually monitor the success of the implementation of London's Accessibility Plan.

Barrier Prevention

The prevention of barriers to persons with a disability will be accomplished through:

- ongoing education initiatives;
- ongoing monitoring of the implementation of the Plan; and,
- municipal standards development such as was done with the FADS.

SECTION 7 - COMMUNICATION OF THE CITY OF LONDON ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

In 2007, the Public was invited to review the draft 2008 - 2010 Strategic Plan of the Accessibility Advisory Committee, at their November committee meeting, to enable them an opportunity to provide input into the Plan.

Copies of the approved Plan will be made available on the City's web site and will be available in hardcopy format at library branches. On request, this Accessibility Plan will be made available in alternative formats e.g., on computer disk, tape, in larger print or in Braille.

SECTION 8 – THE CITY OF LONDON ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE – STRATEGIC PLAN 2008 – 2010, PRIORITIES FOR 2009 – 2010 AND ACTION ITEMS FOR 2009

a) Strategic Plan 2008-2010

The Accessibility Advisory Committee thought it would be advantageous to plan for the remainder of their term (2008 – 2010). While moving in this direction, they also decided to structure each planning year around a theme. The theme would be the overall consideration for any awareness conferences, seminars and action items.

The City of London looks to the Accessibility Advisory Committee to guide our departments based on their themes and priorities.

Themes for Term

2008 – Decent Work for People with Disabilities

2009 – Public Health

2010 – Innovation

Annual Conference

On October 4, 2008, a one-day forum was held to encourage and empower participants to explore the opportunities and challenges the disabled face on the road to meaningful employment. Group sessions and workshops covered topics such as labour market trends, skill-sets sought by employers, support programs, self-employment, assistive devices, and interview tips. Plus, the Lieutenant Governor of Ontario, the Honourable David C. Onley, gave a key-note address. He believes that the promotion of accessibility can enable a person to achieve their full potential. Attendees also had an opportunity to visit with local organizations and agencies at their respective information tables. This was a collaborative project with the London Public Library.

b) Priorities for 2009 – 2010

	2009 “Public Health”	2010 “Innovation”
<u>Education and Awareness</u>	<p>Create a system to effectively post, update and evaluate our website.</p> <p>Promote Accessibility Advisory Committee to the city at large and to city-staff & elected officials.</p>	<p>Create a guest-speaker database to utilize for educating the committee, the city staff/councilors, and the public at large. Regularly update and verify the contact information in the database and strive to add more guest-speakers in it. Allow it to be published on our website for all to use.</p>
<u>Facilities</u>	<p>Education presentations on accessibility and Universal design into educational institutions, Western University and Fanshawe College.</p>	<p>Introduce accessibility and universal design into the high school Tech programs that cover Construction, Manufacturing, Technical, Transportation, and Communication areas.</p> <p>Investigate how to introduce accessibility to the private sector and how we can assist.</p>
<u>Non-Visible Disabilities (NVD)</u>	<p>Partner with local academic establishment to design survey to identify municipal barriers for those with Non-Visible disabilities.</p> <p>Survey service providers and business community members to identify barriers they face in serving those with Non-Visible disabilities.</p>	<p>Prepare presentation on stigmatization to facilitate education in the community. Present findings of survey and presentation to community members.</p> <p>Investigate how we can work with Intergovernmental Affairs to support programs for those with NVD. Housing, provincial mental health services, law enforcement and the judicial system are all areas that need to be addressed.</p>

	2009 “Public Health”	2010 “Innovation”
<u>Policy and Development</u>	<p>Work with City/Community with AODA standards.</p> <p>Ensure committee is aware of all AODA standards.</p>	<p>Increase Community Involvement with Annual Plan Review.</p> <p>Begin next term planning cycle (5 year).</p>
<u>Transportation</u>	<p>AODA Transportation Standard to continue to recognize opportunities to work collaboratively with the London Transit Commission (LTC), Environment and Transportation Committee (ETC) and the Community and Protective Services Committee (CPSC)</p>	<p>Network with other Accessibility Advisory Committees and regional AODA committees, right up to and including the Provincial Disability Directorate.</p>

c) Action Items for 2009

The following is a listing of the Action Items of the City of London Accessibility Advisory Committee for the 2009 Accessibility Plan.

Education and Awareness Sub-Committee

1. Educate the Service Review Committee on the Customer Service Standards.
2. Educate the Service Review Committee on the challenges faced by persons with Disabilities on our city sidewalks. Invite the members of the committee to participate in a first-hand experience by being in a wheelchair, using a walker, using glasses to distort vision, etc. while attempting to travel on city sidewalks during winter as suggested by Councillor Susan Eagle.
3. Finalize the FAQ sheets for Advisory Committee website and paper distribution.
4. Continue to contact local organizations/agencies to be guest speakers at our full-committee meeting and to establish ties with them. Use resources to invite the members of city council and the general public to all our meetings.
5. Promote the work of the Committee by regularly sending out our Committee's brochure to local libraries, agencies and organizations.
6. Finalize the implementation of the new Committee website. Monitor its traffic and make adjustments if necessary.

Transportation

7. Provide staff with a list of locations where curb cuts or maintenance are required.
8. Provide staff with a list of sidewalks where none exist.
9. Subcommittee members to review and make comments on Engineering Design Standards.

Status: Obtain a copy of these standards and undertake a review. Areas of interest include: sidewalk design and layout; curb details; detectable warning surface; traffic pole and accessible pedestrian signals (APS) installations; temporary works during construction; roadway markings; parking areas design; would like more bicycle lanes – Get standard and ongoing.

10. Most new road projects and road widening projects include where possible accessible sidewalk and/or bicycle lanes. To monitor and keep a log of other concerns that might come to this committee – Ongoing
11. Committee members to seek public Input on pedestrian concerns.
 Status: Post pedestrian concern form on the web and distribute to agencies and others (with help from OWU Nursing students). Obtain responses and forward to City for action. ie) sidewalk layouts; curb cuts; traffic signals timing; snow removal – Ongoing
12. Committee members to monitor impact of snow removal reduction in budget.
13. Committee Members in consultation with the CNIB provide a priority list of intersections where accessible pedestrian signals (APS) can be installed.
 Status: 1. Oxford and Cherryhill
 2. Richmond and King
 3. Wellington and Baseline (north leg to Tim Horton's)
 All ongoing
14. Propose upgrades to street signage e.g., larger signs and appropriate placement.
 Status: CNIB and Committee members – obtain standards used in other municipalities and make a proposal to the City to upgrade signage.
15. London Transit Issues.
 Status: Continue to liaise with London Transit Commission (LTC) Specialized Services Transit Committee on issues pertaining to LTC services including calling of all stops on conventional stops. – Ongoing
16. Subsidized Bus Passes.
 Status: Gather names of groups and or individuals who have written or have appeared at City Hall Committee or on the Accessibility Advisory Committee – Completed

 May – Sept 2008 - meeting to discuss and inquire about action plan (as per decision of subcommittee that to bring this forward would not be wise for fares are to be increased late 2008).

17. Involved with Accessible Taxi's.

Status: The City has approved nine (9) additional accessible taxis to operate in the City.

Non-Visible Disabilities

18. To survey each of the London non-visible disabilities agencies (Epilepsy Support Centre; Diabetes Association; etc). The survey will help to identify the recognized needs that are specific to the different disabilities as well as to help identify the needs that are general to all non-visible disabilities.

Status: The survey will be done in person. A representative from each agency will be invited to join the non-visible disabilities committee members in group discussion. An introductory letter and questions to consider will be delivered to each agency in advance. We are going to encourage ongoing participation in our committee from each of the agencies.

19. To establish and develop a "Thumbs Up" Access and Awareness Program in London which will include businesses and services throughout the City.

Status: This program will include a teaching element to the business owners, and an awareness campaign to Londoners. The "Thumbs Up" Program originated in Essex County a few years ago but did not survive. Simcoe County has re-developed the Program and it is working very successfully now. Simcoe County has agreed to help our Non-Visible Disabilities Committee to establish a similar program.

Policy Development and Training

20. Continue to work with the City to assist with the development of the Customer Service Standard procedures, practices and training plan for staff.
21. Continue to educate the Accessible Advisory Committee and others on the AODA.
22. Review all AODA Standards that are to come out in 2009 and act as a resource.
23. Review the Quotient Questionnaire results and Questionnaire's efficient at large.

Facilities

24. Hearing Kit - Work with Tourism London regarding access in marketing document.
25. Maintain contact with Site Plan Division concerning the site planning control by-law.

SECTION 9 - THE CITY OF LONDON SUCCESSES IN 2008

COMMUNITY SERVICES AREA

Neighbourhood and Children Services – Area Services

1. Program

- New specialty fitness program for adults with intellectual disabilities
- Expanded spectrum programming in areas of wheelchair tennis and boccia
- Continue to track special abilities of program registrants and adapt programs as needed
- Increased opportunities for children and youth participating in summer neighbourhood day camps and specialty camps

2. Facilities

Carling Heights Optimist Community Centre (CHOCC)

- Installation of automatic door openers
- New portable/adjustable adult change table
- Purchased new portable sling pool lift to provide access to swimming programs

North London Optimist Community Centre (NLOCC)

- New accessible ground level entrance, reception area, washroom and change room facilities

Kiwanis Seniors Community Centre

- In partnership with Saint Joseph Health Centre Third Age Outreach new computer technology with touch screen and voice activation for persons with disabilities

2. Community Development

CHOCC

- Installation of automatic door openers
- New portable/adjustable adult change table
- Purchased new portable sling pool lift to provide access to swimming programs
- Community Living London located in the South London Community Centre has expanded their program at the Centre
- New partnership with Autism Ontario in the areas of staffing and training resulting in 20 new campers with autism
- New partnership with Reach for the Rainbow to deliver new inclusion training sessions for camp staff
- Enhancing our partnership with Thames Valley Children's Centre which allowed us to plan and deliver a full day of inclusion training for city staff plus eight (8) other community agencies who offer summer camps (YMCA, Boys' and Girls' Club, Children's Museum)

Dearness Home Long-Term Care

- Creation of an on-site Library for Dearness Home residents which is fully wheelchair assessable. The in-house collection includes a significant Large Print and audio book sections as well, the Dearness residents have the ability to request books from The London Public Library collection of works.

A print Magnifier, training on computers and a computer terminal with internet access are also available for resident use.

- Creation of new expanded fully accessible entrance to Dearness Home internal courtyard and resident smoking area.
- The Dearness Home in conjunction with the “Communities in Bloom” committee and a local High school designed built and assisted the residents in planting eight (8) raised wheelchair accessible planters.

These planters are now known as the Dearness Community garden and are located in the Gazebo area of the Dearness grounds. They contain a variety of flowers, vegetables and herbs selected by the Dearness Home residents and are maintained (watered / weeded) by the residents in conjunction with Dearness activities staff and volunteers.

- The Dearness “Resident Pub” was relocated from the Courtyard Café to Adult Day Program area. This new space creates room for improved wheelchair and walker access, shorter travel distance to (and more) accessible washrooms. Seating capacity has increased from 46 to 102.
- Upgraded two (2) additional doors of the Adult Day Program doors to provide full wheelchair accessibility.

BUILT ENVIRONMENT STANDARD

Facilities Design & Construction

The following facilities executed accessibility upgrades:

- Centennial Hall – Main Floor Washrooms
- Springbank Park Pumphouse – Washrooms
- Southeast Pond Mills Area - Constructed new spraypad
- Springbank Gardens - Completed planning and construction of new Springbank Gardens facility to meet FADS requirements
- Springbank Park - Completed design of new accessible fieldhouse and concession and construction to begin in 2009
- Oakridge Arena – New entrance and front end improvements
- Labatt Park – Roy McKay Clubhouse – Renovated and upgrades to washroom, showers, entry door and ramp consistent with FADS requirements

Facilities Design & Construction and Aquatic Services

- Southeast Pond Mills Area - Constructed new spraypad

Facilities

- The Accessibility Advisory Committee educated the Planning Committee about universal design issues during municipal discussions that took place on drive-throughs. In addition, information was gathered that was presented with respect to the impact on persons with disabilities.

Housing

- The Housing Division provided a \$5,000 grant per accessible unit (units adapted for wheelchair access) to contractors as incentive to build accessible units in the following affordable housing projects:
 - 2007 Nelms Group/Alice Saddy Association, 12 units
 - 2007 Huron Pines Co-op, 4 units
 - 2008 SDI Builders/Dale Brain Injury Services

TRANSPORTATION STANDARD

- The Accessibility Advisory Committee gathered information and conducted a survey of accessible taxi users and participated in municipal discussions concerning accessible taxis and assisted with the review of the current level of accessible taxis service.

INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION STANDARD

Education

- The Accessibility Advisory Committee reviewed and established a new design and make-up of the committee's website.
- The Accessibility Advisory Committee participated in the Accessibility Expo at the Ministry of Community and Social Services office in May 2008 as part of the National Access Awareness Week.
- The Accessibility Advisory Committee compiled draft versions of FAQ sheets to educate people on disability-related issues.

SECTION 10 – ACCESSIBILITY FOR ONTARIANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT, 2005 (AODA)

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) received Royal Assent on June 13, 2005 and is now law. The AODA 2005 Act provides for the development of standards that apply to both the public and private sector in order to achieve accessibility for Ontarians with disabilities with respect to goods, services, facilities, accommodation, employment, buildings, structures and premises on or before January 1, 2025.

Public sector organizations including Government ministries, municipalities, hospitals, school boards, colleges, universities and public transportation organizations are still legally required under ODA 2001 to prepare annual accessibility plans and to make these plans available to the public.

Major Development

On September 14, 2007 Premier Dalton McGuinty issued a pre-election letter to the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act Alliance stating a number of promises with respect to the AODA. The promises included;

- Ensuring that the membership of the Standard Development Committees (SDCs) is to be comprised of a 50 per cent representation by the disabled or those representing the disability community.
- Waiving the ministries' official roles as committee members.
- Hiring a full-time staff member to help bring the disability community's voice to the table.
- Allowing the SDCs to have presenters come to their meetings.
- Allowing the SDCs to vote on individual clauses, to be put forward for the proposed standards.

The SDCs became aware of this letter in late December/early January of this year. All SDC work was put on hold in order to provide the Ministry of Community and Social Services with time to assess how to best implement the changes which the Premier had committed to, as a number of the commitments would significantly alter the composition of the SDCs and disrupt the standard setting processes as established in the agreed upon terms of reference for the committees.

The adjustments were completed and each of the four affected SDCs (noted below) recommenced their meetings in April/May. In general, the next steps for these SDCs that are currently under development are;

- Forward a recommended standard to the Minister by the end of 2008 (Built Environment will be provided to the Minister in early 2009).
- Distribution of a draft standard by the Minister for public consultation. This public review will likely be for a period of two to three months.

- The public review comments will be compiled, sorted and reviewed by the SDCs who will then vote on a final version of the standard.
- The final version of the standard will be submitted to the Minister.
- The Ministry will issue the standard and associated regulation.

It should also be noted that some of the SDCs may be pursuing an opportunity to review the work of legislative counsel to ensure that the intent of the SDC recommendations are captured in the legal wording of a draft regulation.

City of London Involvement

As Civic Administration recognized the significant impact that AODA may have on the citizens of London as well as on all of the departments across the City, City of London and London Transit Commission (LTC) staff became pro-actively involved in the standard development process by serving on the Employment Accessibility Standard Committee, the Built Environment Committee and the Transportation Standard Committee. In addition, City of London staff are either the Chairs or members of AMO Resource Support Groups or AMCTO groups addressing the various Standards noted above. This active participation in all of the standard development teams is critical in terms of;

- keeping current on the development of the actual standards that will ultimately become legislation; and
- influencing the direction of the standards to the extent possible.

Standards Development Areas

As noted above there are five standards development areas;

1. Customer Service Standard
2. Transportation Standard
3. Information and Communications Standard
4. Built Environment Standard
5. Employment Standard

Customer Service Standard

The Customer Service Standard was the least affected by the Premier's letter as Ontario Regulation 429-07 had previously been approved and came into force on January 1, 2008.

This standard requires that designated public sector organizations (including municipalities) with one or more employees have to:

- Comply with the standard starting January 1, 2010
- File accessibility reports starting in 2010.

The Accessibility Directorate issued an Interpretive Guide in January 2008 and the AMCTO in conjunction with the Accessibility Directorate presented a training session on the requirements, interpretation and implications of the Customer Service Standard in February 2008.

The Association of Municipal Managers, Clerks and Treasurers of Ontario (AMCTO) had raised a number of issues with respect to their concerns with the existing Customer Service Standard. However, at

this point the Ministry does not want to take forward any amendments to the standard.

Civic Administration in conjunction with the Accessibility Advisory Committee have developed an Accessible Customer Service Policy with the assistance of Jennifer Miller, a consultant that previously had provided training through AMCTO on the Customer Service Standard. This draft policy is being presented to Board of Control and Council for adoption in October / November.

Civic Administration will concurrently develop the Procedures and Practices documents at the department and divisional levels and identify requirements for training to be performed in 2009 to ensure that the City of London is compliant with the standard by January 1, 2010.

Transportation Standard

The transportation standard development committee was the most affected by the Premier's commitment to change in committee makeup given that prior to the changes, the standard had been distributed for public consultation with over 5,000 responses received and was ready for preparation of a final draft of the Standard.

Subsequent to the changes in Committee makeup, modifications to the guiding principles were discussed and four sub-committees were established to review the comments received during public review namely; Training, Public Transit Services, Taxis and Booked Services and All Other Transportation Services. Meetings were held over the summer to review the public comments and modifications were recommended to the Transportation SDC.

Revised sections of the standard were presented to the Transportation SDC at the September 10th meeting, noting a number of the proposed revisions lack consensus between the disabled community and the services providers;

- **Courtesy Seating** – regarding whether the operator should be required to ask someone to vacate a seat, noting that such a request is not enforceable
- **Advisory Committee Makeup** – pertaining to whether the disabled representatives on the committee must be disabled themselves, or can be representatives of the disabled community.
- **Catchment Area Definition** - identifying where responsibility will lie for extending specialized services to adjoining municipalities given the catchment area definition.
- **Guarantee of Trips for Specialized Services** - whether all trip requests for specialized services should be required to be met by service providers (ie; trip guarantees).
- **Eligibility for Specialized Services** – regarding whether eligibility classifications can be conditional, temporary and unconditional, noting the disability community is not supportive of same and would like eligibility, once granted, to be permanent and all-inclusive.
- **Companion Travel** – relating to whether companion travel should be unlimited, noting same could result in the denial of trips for eligible passengers.

- **Free Support Person Fares** - whether there should be some form of identification or recognition in place to identify individuals requiring a support person.
- **Accessible Stop Percentages** - the determination of a minimum percentage of stops on a route that must be accessible before the route can be “deemed” accessible by the service provider, noting the definition of an accessible stop rests with the Built Environment Committee and has not been drafted yet.

The Transportation SDC is planning to hold a final vote on October 30th and 31st on the contents of the final draft to be submitted to the Minister. Voting will be performed on a “clause by clause” basis. If consensus cannot be reached on specific clauses, the clauses will be removed from the standard that is forwarded to the Minister for consideration. It is not known at this time whether a second public review will be performed.

Information and Communications Standard

The Information and Communications SDC continued to work over the summer and have developed a preliminary draft standard that was recently shared with stakeholders for input. Due to the quick turnaround period provided for review and comment, the City of London convened its City of London Information and Communications team to review the draft standard and provide feedback to Kelly Paleczny who is the Chair of the AMO team for this standard.

During the review, a number of potential issues were raised with respect to the draft standard, which will be incorporated into the feedback provided by AMO to the Information and Communications SDC for consideration prior to forwarding the draft standard to the Minister for public review. The following provides a brief summary of the issues with the potential for the greatest impact on the City of London.

Proposed Requirement: *the provision of all communications in multiple formats including e-text, Braille-ready or Braille printout, accessible audio format, enlarged print version and electronic version with supports for comprehension (plain English).*

- The terms “information” and “communication” are extremely broad and could encompass almost all forms of communication and information that occur in a municipality including all meetings, telephone calls, all files (hardcopy or electronic) and essentially any interaction between two or more individuals whether directly or indirectly or planned or unplanned.
- The standard includes requirements pertaining to all “prepared” print information. This could be interpreted to include such things as employee pay stubs, internal e-mails, court documents, the City’s repository of old records dating back to its inception in the 1800s etc.
- The City of London has almost three dozen permanent Committees with some meeting more than once a month. Each of these committees has agendas and reports generated for them resulting in hundreds of resolutions letters being sent out monthly. There are close to 4,000 agenda items per year varying in length of hard copy background with almost 1,000 associated verbal presentations. The effort, cost and timeliness to make available all of the above in the 5 additional required formats would be very onerous.

- Not all documents can be written in plain language, especially legal documents including City by-laws.

Proposed Requirement: *that organizations provide for access to the use of assistive listening devices, real-time captioning and/or supports using Alternative and Augmentative Communication for all spoken communication (i.e. public meetings).*

- This could result in various implications with respect to the numerous public meetings held by Civic Administration. Also, privacy concerns may be raised with the requirement to provide assistive learning devices through the use of a Frequency Modulation (FM) System when dealing with confidential information.

Proposed Requirement: *that all business enterprise systems are upgraded to be compliant with accessibility features within 6 years.*

- The City of London has more than 300 software products, at least five of which are major systems. The standard requires the user interfaces and data formats of all deployed or implemented business enterprise systems to be compliant by 2012. Many issues arise from this including the fact that the software is generally a third party product, the modification of which is beyond the purview of the City and modifications of the product by City staff could impair the support provided by the software vendor.

Proposed Requirement: *that in situations where an organization requires a personal signature, the opportunity must be provided for the use of an alternative to a personal signature.*

- The use of an alternative to a personal signature could have legal ramifications.

Proposed Requirement: *that all municipal and provincial elections be made accessible, including the provision to allow for online and telephone voting.*

- The requirement to provide accessible voting via on-line and telephone methodologies concurrent with in-person voting could impact the integrity of the election regarding the potential opportunity for people to vote multiple times. Also, there will be the potential need for multiple contacts with electors to ensure that voters utilizing on-line or telephone methodologies are assigned special registration numbers.

Proposed Requirement: *that all mayoral candidates be required to provide their election and candidate material in multiple formats including e-text, Braille-ready or Braille printout, accessible audio format, enlarged print version and electronic version with supports for comprehension (plain English).*

- This requirement could be seen as discriminatory based upon the additional costs that would be incurred in running an election campaign as some potential candidates may not be able to afford to run for office.

The next steps for the Information and Communication Standard Development Committee will be to consider the input gathered through the stakeholder review, incorporate any changes as the committee deems necessary, and forward the draft standard to the Minister which will subsequently be released for public review in the fall of 2008.

Built Environment Standard

The Accessible Built Environment SDC last met on August 18th and 19th. The following were discussed at that meeting;

- Recommendations were received from the Design Parameters Task Force. This task force reviewed various source documents including the 2006 Ontario Building Code, the Canadian Standards Association, (CSA) B651-04 Accessible Design for the Built Environment Standard and the 2007 City of London, Ontario Facility Accessibility Design Standards (FADS)
- A consulting team led by the IBI Group provided a proposed approach to their provision of information on the estimated costs of implementing new accessible built environment standards and the estimated state of readiness of organizations to implement accessible built environment standards
- Definitions for retrofit vs renovation were clarified. Decisions were deferred on the extent to which either would apply to the various elements or occupancies within the standard.
 - Retrofit – is when one is not planning for construction on or in their building and is forced to upgrade all or portions of their building.
 - Renovation – is where one voluntarily chooses to have some type of construction on or in their building, which can range from simple, basic and extensive renovation.

Due to the significant scope of this committee, the group had been broken down into several sub-committees to consider various elements of the standard. Subcommittee reports were presented at this meeting including buildings, public and private ways, public parks, trails and playgrounds, housing, heritage properties, transportation facilities.

Draft recommendations from each sub-committee will be presented to the full Standard Development Committee at its next meeting on Oct 15 & 16. A final draft standard is expected to be delivered to the Minister in early 2009.

Employment Standard

The focus of this standard is on paid employment practices (i.e., not governing volunteers) and is related to employee-employer relationships, including recruitment, hiring, and retention policies and practices.

The Employment Standard Development Committee has also broken into sub-committees to address various components of the standard. These groups are recruitment, hiring, retention and accommodation/health and safety and privacy.

Two key issues have been identified;

- **Responsibility for Contractors** – the scope has been clarified to include only those contractors who perform Human Resources services on behalf of the employer and with respect to them, the contractee must ensure that the contractor has appropriate, conforming policies and procedures in place.

- **Employment Equity – Persons with Disabilities** – Reference to numerical objectives have been removed from the Long Term Objectives. This is still being discussed since some representatives of persons with disabilities and some other members have indicated that they want to see the standard include hard numerical objectives that essentially would include numerical target setting.

A first draft of the standard is expected in late September for review with the objective to have a final draft standard available for review by the Minister in December of this year.

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 is intended to substantially improve the life of those individuals with disabilities. However, it will also have significant operational and financial implications for the City of London and the private sector.

As the province has not provided any funding to support the AODA initiative, in order to ensure appropriate transparency to the financial significance of the program, the City of London will be required to fund the costs to implement the standards and subsequently maintain compliance with the standards.