



2018-2022

LEEDS AND GRENVILLE
ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

(Revision Date 2017)

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CAO's Message

I am pleased to present to you our Multi Year Accessibility Plan for 2018 to 2022. This plan has been prepared to guide Council and staff over the next five years, as well as outlines our commitment to making our public services and programs accessible to everyone.

The United Counties of Leeds and Grenville has been active in removing barriers for persons with disabilities for the past fifteen years. We started with an Accessibility Advisory Committee, represented by local residents and members of Counties Council. This Committee has been active in reviewing Counties' policies, facilities, and practices to ensure they are compliant with legislation, and remove barriers for the users. At the staff and Council level, we have strived to ensure all of our programs and services are available equally to everyone, regardless of whether they have any disabilities or not.

This Multi-Year Accessibility Plan highlights what remaining barriers exist, and how we plan to address these barriers. Whether it is our facilities, our employment practices, our access to information or communications, we are committed to the principles and requirements of the Ontario Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act. Let's ensure Ontario is fully accessible by 2025!

I encourage you to read this plan. If you have any comments, suggestions or questions, please feel free to forward them to me.

Andy Brown, CAO
United Counties of Leeds and Grenville

Introduction

At the United Counties of Leeds and Grenville, providing excellent service to both the public and employees means delivering programs and services that are efficient, effective, responsive and accessible. Accessible services meets people's needs while protecting the dignity and independence of people with disabilities. When services are accessible, people can easily navigate into and around buildings and offices, receive information, communication and services in a format that works. These parts of everyday life are important to inclusiveness, and benefit everyone.

By removing barriers to services and programs across the United Counties of Leeds and Grenville and in the workforce, we will recognize the strength that comes with embracing new ideas and perspectives.

This commitment to inclusion will be realized through processes that engage and support employees and create a satisfying customer experience to those we serve. We do this because a satisfying service experience at the United Counties of Leeds and Grenville improves the quality of life for those we serve and help to secure their trust and confidence in the work that we do.

Accessible service is about providing services to meet diverse needs that is flexible to individuals whenever possible, and makes a satisfying service experience our primary focus. By identifying, removing and preventing barriers to our services, the United Counties of Leeds and Grenville is continuing our commitments to diversity, inclusion and service excellence. The United Counties of Leeds and Grenville is committed to creating inclusive programs and services that meet the needs of our ever changing community.

The United Counties of Leeds and Grenville continuously makes improvements in the accessibility of programs, services and facilities. This Multi-Year Accessibility Plan outlines our approach to achieving accessible and inclusive services in the years to come.

About the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

The United Counties of Leeds and Grenville Multi-Year Accessibility Plan outlines strategies and actions to identify, prevent and remove barriers for residents and visitors to the Counties. The plan also details our strategy for meeting Ontario's accessibility legislation, the **Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) and the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR).**

About the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005

The **Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, (AODA)** was passed in 2005 with the vision of creating a fully accessible Ontario by 2025. The AODA gave the Province the mandate to create sets of standards in accessibility, which will apply to both public and private sector organizations. The Province has since committed to developing and implementing standards in:

- Customer Service
- Information and Communication
- Employment
- Transportation
- Design of Public Spaces (Built Environment)

July 1, 2016 the province combined the Customer Service Regulation into the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR), Ontario Regulation 191/11. As was previously the case with the IASR, Standards listed above, the requirements of the Standards are to be phased in from 2011 to 2021.

There are many factors that influence people's ability to participate in daily activities, including health status, obesity, asthma, and diabetes, all of which have been steadily worsening since 2003.¹

There are many different types of barriers faced by people with disabilities. These include:

- Physical barriers, such as lack of access to ramps, or inaccessible transportation.
- Attitudinal barriers, which includes people who may make judgments and assumptions about what people with disabilities can and cannot do.
- Technological barriers, such as when certain technologies are not useful for people with disabilities, such as a website that does not support screen reading software.
- Information and communication barriers, as when certain formats of information are not useful for people with disabilities, such as print that is too small to read.

¹ Statistics Canada, Participation and Activity Limitation Survey, 2006.

People with disabilities also encounter financial barriers, as many are on fixed or low income and have limited access to socioeconomic opportunities. Many people with disabilities are also at risk of experiencing isolation, particularly if they experience a number of obstacles, such as requiring assistance with putting on a coat, accessing transportation, or requiring personal care in order to attend a program or benefit from a service.

Having an understanding of who is in our community and the types of barriers encountered by people with disabilities helps the staff at the United Counties of Leeds and Grenville plan for and take into account the many needs of people with disabilities.

Accessibility Policies

The Customer Service Standard and the IASR Standards were combined in July 2016. The United Counties of Leeds and Grenville combined its Customer Service policy with its policies under the IASR in 2016.

This policy demonstrates the United Counties of Leeds and Grenville's commitment to inclusion, understanding and meeting the needs of all those we serve, in a way that is free from discrimination, protects the dignity and independence of all people, and provides equal opportunity and integrated services for people with disabilities.

Accountable Governance

All Accessibility planning is based on the following Planning Principles:

- The Leeds Grenville Accessibility Advisory Committee and the Accessibility Coordinator, and appropriate Counties' staff will participate in the development and implementation of the accessibility plan under the IASR.
- Accessibility plans will consider the different impact on both the public and United Counties of Leeds and Grenville employees.
- Accessibility plans will coordinate with, and serve to enhance other Counties' initiatives.
- Accessibility plans will strive to meet the requirements outlined in the IASR in the specified timeframe.
- Actions to improve accessibility will take into consideration the principles of Universal Design, which allow for the design of products and environments that will be useable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design.

- The United Counties of Leeds and Grenville will work in cooperation with the area municipalities and other participating agencies in consideration of common interests.

All employees have a role in creating and enhancing the accessibility of programs and services, and key individuals and groups are responsible for ensuring goals are met:

- **Counties Council** provides oversight on accessibility activities and approves policies and plans required by the legislation.
- **Senior Management Team** monitors accessibility activities, reviews accessibility policies and plans, and are responsible for compliance at the United Counties of Leeds and Grenville.
- **Accessibility Coordinator** provides strategic direction and advice and monitors progress on meeting the AODA standards.
- **Leeds Grenville Accessibility Advisory Committee** provides feedback and advice on implementation of the AODA standards. The committee, comprised of volunteer community members, a majority with disabilities, assists the United Counties of Leeds and Grenville with identifying, preventing, and removing barriers, including site plan reviews.

Meaningful Participation

The United Counties of Leeds and Grenville will ensure that key stakeholders are engaged in the accessibility planning process, in the implementation of the AODA Standards, and in identifying, preventing, and removing barriers for people with disabilities.

Accessibility Improvement Plans

To create an accessible and inclusive United Counties of Leeds and Grenville, we are committed to meeting the AODA standards and to identifying, removing, and preventing barriers for people with disabilities. With these priorities in mind, over the next five years the United Counties of Leeds and Grenville will continue to implement the AODA standards in Customer Service, Information and Communication, Employment, Transportation, Design of Public Spaces and the Built Environment. Every plan and deliverable will contribute to key outcomes, all of which works toward our vision of an accessible and inclusive United Counties of Leeds and Grenville.

Table of Activity

AODA Standards	Deliverables	Actions	Progress	Due Date
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AODA Standards	Deliverables	Actions	Progress	Due Date
General	Policies to be developed	One standard policy for the IASR, including the Customer Service Standard	Complete	Jan 2016
General	Policies to be developed	One standard policy for the Integrated Accessibility Regulation Standard (IASR) is complete	Complete	Jan 2013
General	Accessible design and features shall be considered when procuring or acquiring goods	An accessible procurement statement has been provided to the purchasing department to be utilized in the tendering and RFP processes	Complete Updated in 2017	Jan 2013
General	Training shall occur	Customer Service training and training in the General Requirements shall take place for all employees.	Complete	Jan 2010
General	Ongoing Training to Occur	A schedule has been set up for annual retraining as well as adding the initial training to all new employee orientations.	Ongoing	Jan 2013
General	Training Records to be tracked	All training sessions have been tracked in the employee database. This record shall include name and date of all participants	Ongoing	Jan 2013

AODA Standards	Deliverables	Actions	Progress	Due Date
Information and Communication	Information required from unconvertible documents shall be provided upon request	Any person requesting unconvertible documents will be provided a summary of what is contained in the text and an explanation as to why the document is unconvertible	Ongoing	Jan 2013
Information and Communication	Notify the public of the availability of Accessible formats	A disclaimer exists on the Counties' website stating that information is available in alternative formats	Complete	Jan 2013
Information and Communication	Ensure Accessible Communications are available in a timely manner and at no more than regular cost	Provide upon request Accessible Communications in a timely manner	Ongoing	Jan 2013
Information and Communication		Ensure that the Accessible Communications are suitable for the person making the request	Ongoing	Jan 2013
Information and Communication	Notify the public about available accessible formats and communication supports	A disclaimer exists on the Counties' website stating that information is available in alternative formats	Complete	Jan 2013
Information and Communication	Emergency and Public Safety information shall be provided in an accessible format	Emergency Plan has been formatted to be readable through screen readers. Other information shall be provided upon request	Complete	Jan 2014
Information and Communication	Website and content to conform with World Wide Web Consortium Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 Level A	Website conforms with WCAG 2.0 Level A	Complete	Jan 2014
Information and Communication	Website and Content to conform with WCAG 2.0 Level AA	Work with IT department to ensure as Website is upgraded, it conforms with all requirements in the IASR	Ongoing	Jan 2021

AODA Standards	Deliverables	Actions	Progress	Due Date
Employment	Employees shall be notified about the availability of accommodation	The Human Resources Department provides all employees with accommodation information as well as having information posted on the intranet.	Ongoing	Jan 2013
Employment	During all stages of hiring, candidates shall be notified of accommodation upon request	All recruitment information as well as communication being provided throughout the hiring process shall candidates shall be educated that accommodation is available upon request	Ongoing	Jan 2013
Employment	Notify successful applicants of policy for accommodation upon offer of employment	Successful applicants are provided with the accommodation policy upon offer of employment	Ongoing	Jan 2013
Employment	Employees shall be provided access to policies including but not limited to the policy on the provision of accommodation	Employees shall be trained on the location and ways to access the Accommodation policy	Ongoing	Jan 2014
Employment	Accessible Formats and Communication Supports shall be made available for employees should they request it	Accessible Formats and Communication Supports are provided to employees upon request	Ongoing	Jan 2014
Employment	Create a written process for the development of individual accommodation plans. These plans shall include all requirements set out in O. Reg. 191/11 s. 28.	A policy exists for the development of documented individual accommodation plans	Complete	Jan 2014

AODA Standards	Deliverables	Actions	Progress	Due Date
Employment	Create a documented return to work process shall exist and include the steps the employer will take to facilitate return to work	A return to work process exists which includes the steps Leeds Grenville shall take in facilitating return to work	Complete	Jan 2014
Employment	Performance Management shall take into account the accessibility needs of employees as well as any accommodation plans which exist	The documented Performance Management system used at Leeds Grenville takes into account the needs of all employees as well as any accommodation plans in existence	Complete	Jan 2014
Employment	Career Development shall take into account the accessibility needs of employees as well as any accommodation plans which exist	The Career Development process used at Leeds Grenville takes into account the needs of all employees as well as any accommodation plans in existence	Complete	Jan 2014
Employment	Redeployment of employees shall take into account the accessibility needs of employees as well as any accommodation plans which exist	The Redeployment process used at Leeds Grenville takes into account the needs of all employees as well as any accommodation plans in existence	Complete	Jan 2014
Design of Public Spaces	Recreational Trails and Beach Access Routes shall conform to the parameters placed in O. Reg. 191/11 s 80.1 through 80.15	The IASR shall be consulted in the creation and maintenance of Recreational Trails and Beach Access Routes and conformed to accordingly	In Process	Jan 2016
Design of Public Spaces	Outdoor Public Eating Areas shall conform to the parameters placed in O. Reg. 191/11 s	The IASR shall be consulted in the creation of all Outdoor Eating Spaces and conformed to accordingly	Not Started	Jan 2016

AODA Standards	Deliverables	Actions	Progress	Due Date
	80.16 and 80.17			
Design of Public Spaces	Outdoor Play Spaces shall conform to the parameters placed in O. Reg. 191/11 s 80.18 to 80.20	The IASR shall be consulted in the creation of all Outdoor Play Spaces and conformed to accordingly	Not Started	Jan 2016
Design of Public Spaces	Exterior Paths of Travel shall conform to the parameters placed in O. Reg. 191/11 s 80.21 to 80.31	The IASR shall be consulted in the creation of all Exterior Paths of Travel and conformed to accordingly	Not Started	Jan 2016
Design of Public Spaces	Accessible Parking shall conform to the parameters placed in O. Reg. 191/11 s 80.32 to 80.39	The IASR shall be consulted in the creation of all Accessible parking and conformed to accordingly	Ongoing	Jan 2016
Design of Public Spaces	Obtaining of Service shall conform to the parameters placed in O. Reg. 191/11 s 80.40 to 80.43	The IASR shall be consulted in the creation of all Accessible parking and conformed to accordingly	Ongoing	Jan 2016

Customer Service

Our commitment

The United Counties of Leeds and Grenville is committed to providing excellent customer service for all. By utilizing inclusion and understanding, we will meet the needs of people with disabilities in a manner that is free from discrimination, and protects dignity, independence, integration, and equal opportunity.

How we will achieve accessible customer service

Policies, Guidelines, and Standards

- Review and update policies, as required, to ensure high quality customer service.

Tasks

- Integrate accessibility requirements into staff training and orientation materials.
- Provide training for all staff, volunteers, and contractors.
- Develop and implement action plans to address barriers identified to services provided by the Counties throughout the year.

Public Awareness

- Consult with advisory groups on emerging and changing requirements.
- Review customer feedback and take appropriate action.

Our Progress

- Developed and implemented the Integrated Accessibility Standard Regulation Policy, combined with the Customer Service Standard Policy in July 2016, outlining how the United Counties of Leeds and Grenville will achieve accessibility through meeting the requirements of the AODA. **Policy revisions to be approved by Counties Council.**
- Developed and implemented a multi-year accessibility plan outlining the Counties' strategy to prevent and remove barriers and meet the requirements under the AODA. **Policy and revisions to be approved by Counties Council.**
- Developed a coordinated process for posting temporary service disruptions to the Counties' website.

Outcomes

- United Counties of Leeds and Grenville customers will receive services appropriate to their needs.
- People with disabilities are engaged for feedback and advice on United Counties of Leeds and Grenville programs, services, and facilities.
- Staff can identify, prevent, and remove barriers for people with disabilities.

Procurement

Our commitment

The United Counties of Leeds and Grenville is committed to integrating accessibility into procurement policies and procedures.

How we will achieve accessible procurement

Policies, Guidelines, and Standards

- Develop and implement accessible procurement practices and procedures and incorporate them into the procurement by-law.

Tasks

- Include accessible procurement guidelines in training material and policies.

Technology

- Incorporate website accessibility guidelines into accessible procedures.

Our Progress

- Developed and implemented procurement sections in the Integrated Accessibility Standard Regulation Policy, to incorporate accessibility features and criteria when procuring or acquiring goods, services, and facilities.

Outcomes

- United Counties of Leeds and Grenville will take accessibility into account when purchasing services or supplies for the Counties.
- Staff can identify, prevent, and remove barriers for people with disabilities.
- Development of a new Procurement By-law (2017) and new procurement software (2016) has assisted in reaching these goals

Information and Communication

Our commitment

The United Counties of Leeds and Grenville is committed to ensuring information and communications are available and accessible to people with disabilities.

How we will achieve accessible information and communication

Policies, Guidelines, and Standards

- Develop guidelines and best practices for creating accessible documents for Microsoft Office applications.
- Ensure website accessibility guidelines are incorporated into website style guides.

Tasks

- Develop and implement training on accessible electronic documents.
- Develop tools and resources to create accessible materials for Counties' staff.

Public Awareness

- Update information to notify customers of the availability of accessible materials.

Technology

- Achieve compliance with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) Level AA to ensure that websites and web content are accessible for all.
- Continue to expand knowledge and use of accessible devices such as text-to- audio and video captioning.

Our Progress

- Confirmed that emergency information, procedures, plans, and public safety information is available in alternate formats when requested.
- Currently transitioning Counties Council correspondence so they are accessible by screen readers
- Staff training course developed on creating accessible electronic documents.

- Developing resources and standards of practice for web content.

Outcomes

- United Counties of Leeds and Grenville customers will be able to communicate with staff appropriate to their needs.
- People with disabilities are engaged for feedback and advice on Leeds Grenville programs, services, and facilities.
- Staff can identify, prevent, and remove barriers for people with disabilities.

Employment

Our commitment

The United Counties of Leeds and Grenville is committed to inclusive employment practices that ensure the processes of recruiting, hiring, communicating, and retaining employees with disabilities fulfills the intent of the *Ontario's Human Rights Code*.

How we will achieve accessible employment

Policies, Guidelines, and Standards

- Create a process for developing individual accommodation plans.
- Update documented return to work procedures to take into account employees with disabilities.
- Review and revise processes for performance management, career development, and redeployment. .
- Review interview questions ensuring inclusivity and use of plain language.
- Ensure that any policy, procedure, or practice at the United Counties of Leeds and Grenville respects and promotes the dignity and independence of people with disabilities.

Tasks

- Train recruitment staff and managers to support the intent and goals of the AODA.
- Train staff and volunteers on accessibility and the *Ontario Human Rights Code*.
- Promote understanding of employer obligations to provide employee accommodations.
- Identify and remove barriers in the workplace.

Public Awareness

- Notify successful applicants, new, and existing employees of policies supporting people with disabilities.

Technology

- Provide accessible formats and communication supports for employees with disabilities.

Our progress

- Created individual emergency workplace response plan policy and form for staff with a disability.
- Revised employment advertisements to include a statement regarding providing accommodations under the Human Rights Code in all aspects of the hiring process.

Outcomes

- Employees with disabilities are supported throughout the employment cycle.
- Staff can identify, prevent, and remove barriers for people with disabilities.

Design of Public Spaces

The following accessibility actions to address barriers in the built environment are based on a preliminary review of a draft Design of Public Spaces Standards, released by the Province in August, 2012.

Our commitment

The United Counties of Leeds and Grenville is committed to identifying, removing, and preventing barriers in accessibility in all Counties' facilities.

How we will achieve accessible design of public spaces

Policies, Guidelines, and Standards

- Create compliance guidelines and standards to address the Design of Public Spaces standards.

Tasks

- Respond to feedback from staff and the public on the accessibility of facilities.

Public Awareness

- Seek feedback and advice from the Leeds Grenville Accessibility Advisory Committee on site plans and other physical spaces.

Infrastructure

- Incorporate the Design of Public Spaces standards,, in the design of outdoor spaces and service counters.

Our progress

- Integration of the Leeds Grenville Accessibility Committee to review site plans for municipal projects.

- Relationship created with Regeneration group and the Leeds Grenville Joint Services Committee to maintain knowledge of the progress of projects.

Outcomes

- People with disabilities are engaged for feedback and advice on United Counties of Leeds and Grenville programs, services, and facilities.
- New buildings and renovations take into account the needs of people with disabilities.

Accountability and Reporting Compliance

The United Counties of Leeds and Grenville will develop a county-wide Compliance Work Plan that will be used to direct actions and support departments to fully meet the AODA standards.

Each department will receive resources and guidance from the Accessibility Coordinator on how to meet, and in most cases exceed the expectations under the AODA standards.

The Accessibility Coordinator will develop a departmental report on compliance. The Accessibility Coordinator annually submits a comprehensive compliance report to the Counties Council. The compliance report will be filed with the Accessibility Directorate of Ontario at its request.

A Final Word

Reviewing and Monitoring the Accessibility Plan

The United Counties of Leeds and Grenville Multi-Year Accessibility Plan will be reviewed and updated at least once every five years. An annual status report will be completed to document the progress and measures taken to implement the United Counties of Leeds and Grenville's strategy and meet the requirements of the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation.

Feedback

The United Counties of Leeds and Grenville welcomes feedback on the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan, and on the accessibility of our programs, services, and facilities. If you have any ideas or suggestions, please contact us.

Telephone: 613-342-3840 ext. 2307

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Availability of the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

The Multi-Year Accessibility Plan is available online (www.leedsgrenville.com/live)

Alternate formats, including paper copies of the Accessibility Plan are available upon request.

_____, Chair
Accessibility Advisory Committee
United Counties of Leeds and Grenville
Date _____

Andrea Bolton
Accessibility Coordinator
United Counties of Leeds and Grenville
Date _____

Andy Brown
Chief Administrative Officer
United Counties of Leeds and Grenville
Date _____