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# **HAMILTON PUBLIC LIBRARY ACCESSIBILITY REPORT 2010-11**

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March 2011

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## BACKGROUND

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The Hamilton Public Library is committed to accessibility with respect to the development of services for people with disabilities, their families and caregivers. This Library system has endeavoured to address access issues in the built environment proactively, meeting and at times exceeding existing standards. Nonetheless, as additional standards are introduced there will be areas for improvement.

Public sector organizations are required to prepare and publicize annual accessibility reports that summarize the previous year's activities and include an accessibility plan for the next reporting year.

This report builds on the baseline description of the Hamilton Public Library and its services for persons with disabilities that was provided to the Board in February 2010 and summarizes Library activities relating to accessibility during the reporting period April 1, 2010 through March 31, 2011. All activities relating to accessibility are designed to support the Board's Strategic Priorities:

### **Strengthening the Community**

The Hamilton Public Library will be a source of civic pride. We will offer welcoming public spaces where ideas are freely explored, events take place and people of diverse backgrounds feel equally at home. The library will make a positive social and economic impact. The library will preserve Hamilton's historic past and help community members to shape out future.

### **Strengthening Individuals**

The Hamilton Public Library will serve people in ways that are relevant to their unique circumstances. The library will make it easy for the user to find what they are looking for and to delight in the discovery of things that are new. We will unite people, information and ideas using technology and personal service. The library will search for exciting ways for community members to become engaged in the development of library services.

### **Strengthening our Organization**

The Hamilton Public Library will be a global leader, helping to ensure that public libraries remain relevant institutions. With a strong culture of leadership, the Hamilton Public Library will be both dynamic and resourceful. The library will embrace change to ensure that we are both relevant and effective. Staff will be encouraged to think, to contribute and to grow as knowledge workers.

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## **OVERVIEW OF LEGISLATION**

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On May 10, 2005, the Provincial Government passed the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA)*. The AODA is a provincial law that recognizes the history of discrimination against persons with disabilities in Ontario and will require the "... development, implementation and enforcement of standards for accessibility to goods, services, facilities, employment, accommodation, buildings, structures and premises for persons with disabilities". The AODA standards apply to private and public sector organizations across Ontario. Persons with disabilities and representatives of the Ontario government, specific industry sectors and various groups to whom the standards will apply have been involved in the development of the accessibility standards.

Legal obligations under the *Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001* remain in force until such time that *Act* is repealed.

The accessibility standards enacted or in development by the Ontario government are described below.

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## **CURRENT ACCESSIBILITY STANDARDS**

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***Accessibility Standards for Customer Service*** – Ontario's first accessibility related regulatory standard came into effect on January 1, 2008. The standard states what businesses and other organizations in Ontario must do to provide their goods and services in ways that are accessible to people with disabilities.

The *Accessibility Standards for Customer Service*, O. Reg. 429/07, is the only regulation, established under the AODA that the Library is required to implement at

this time. Fines for non-compliance under the proposed integrated regulation are up to \$100,000 per day or part of the day, if the Library is found to be non-compliant.

The Library's *Accessibility for Customers with Disabilities Policy* was approved by the Board in November of 2009 to comply with the AODA and this regulation.

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## PROPOSED ACCESSIBILITY STANDARDS

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***Accessible Built Environment Standard*** – From July 14 to October 16, 2009, the Ontario government released the initial proposed *Accessible Built Environment Standard* for public review. The goal of the proposed standard is to break down barriers to access for individuals using buildings and other structures. Hamilton Public Library responded to the public consultation with concerns regarding the proposed retrofit recommendation to apply the standards retrospectively within a five (5) year window. This has major implications for the Hamilton Public Library and other public institutions. After the review, the committee revised the initial proposed standard to reflect the public's input. This resulted in a final proposed *Accessible Built Environment Standard* that has been submitted to the government for consideration. The government has reported that it is now considering what will become law and when.

***Accessible Information and Communications Standard*** – A draft of this standard was released for public review from November 17, 2008 to February 6, 2009. The committee used the feedback received during the review period to shape the final proposed standard, which was submitted to the government for consideration in summer 2009. This standard addresses diverse aspects of the library service such as website access and provision of the collection and reports, *etcetera*, in alternate formats. A number of difficulties with the legislation, including conflicts with other legislation (*e.g.* copyright), resulted in the draft standard being sent back to committee for further review. The consequences of this standard on public library operations would be significant if concerns are not adequately addressed. Some areas included in the draft standard have since been moved to the recently released draft *Integrated Accessibility Regulation*.

***Employment Accessibility Standard*** – A draft *Employment Accessibility Standard* was released for public review from February 18, 2009 to May 22, 2009. The committee used the feedback received during the review period to shape the final proposed standard that was submitted to the government for consideration in fall

2009. Some areas included in the draft standard have since been moved to the recently released draft *Integrated Accessibility Regulation*.

***Integrated Accessibility Regulation*** – This regulation was initially released for public review from September 2, 2010 to October 16, 2010. The committee and the government reviewed public feedback and changes were made to the proposed *Integrated Accessibility Regulation*. It has since been re-released for additional public feedback until March 18, 2011. The *Integrated Accessibility Regulation* initiative combines elements of the information and communications, employment and transportation standards into a single, integrated regulation. It responds to recommendations, received during the feedback process for the earlier draft standards, suggesting that some aspects of the *Standards* be harmonized to avoid duplication, overlap and uncertainty. The *Integrated Accessibility Regulation* attempts to ease this burden by having a body of general requirements that apply to each of the three standards listed above, followed by specific requirements in each area. It also is the first regulation to describe fines and penalties that will be assessed for non-compliance. The Library created a response to the draft *Regulation* and submitted it to the Ministry for consideration.

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## **COMPLIANCE WITH ACCESSIBILITY STANDARDS FOR CUSTOMER SERVICE**

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The Library's *Accessibility for Customers with Disabilities Policy* was approved by the Board in November of 2009 to comply with the *Accessibility Standards for Customer Service*, O. Reg. 429/07. The *Policy* must be reviewed annually and must be considered as the Library develops or revises its other policies, procedures and practices. This report includes the annual review below. As policies and procedures were created or updated in 2010-11, accessibility issues were discussed and addressed.

## **ESTABLISHMENT OF POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND PRACTICES**

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The Library's *Accessibility for Customers with Disabilities Policy* was approved by the Board in November of 2009 to comply with the *Accessibility Standards for Customer Service*, O. Reg. 429/07. The *Policy* must be reviewed annually and must be considered as the Library develops or revises its other policies, procedures and practices. This report includes the annual review below. As policies and procedures

were created or updated in 2010-11, accessibility issues were discussed and addressed.

## **RESULTS OF ANNUAL REVIEW OF POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND PRACTICES**

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The Hamilton Public Library continues to be committed to providing Library services that are accessible to all persons who wish to obtain and use Library services. Library services will be relevant, inclusive and responsive to community needs and will comply with the requirements of the *Ontarians with Disabilities Act* and the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act*. Each member of the community, including persons with disabilities, has an equal opportunity to use Hamilton Public Library services. All library services will be provided in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities. The Library will strive to provide library services in a way that meets the specific needs of persons with disabilities and in a way that is convenient and accessible to persons with disabilities. When communicating with a person with a disability, the Library will do so in a manner that takes into account the person's disability.

**Temporary Service Disruptions:** The Library reviewed its procedures in this area and has improved its practices relating to the provision of notices of planned and unplanned disruptions of library services to the public. Improvements include the development of a standardized notice template that meets regulatory requirements and that ensures that print notices are provided in a large type font. Notices continue to be posted at library locations and on the library website.

No feedback about notice of temporary service disruptions was received from the public during the 2010-11 reporting year.

**Assistive Devices:** The Library reviewed its procedures in this area and improvements were made. During the period we purchased additional equipment for the visually impaired including five (5) enhanced vision vision monitors, one-hundred (100) magnifying sheets and thirty (30) handheld magnifiers to be distributed to library locations.

No feedback about the Library's procedures or practices relating to assistive devices was received from the public during the 2010-11 reporting year.

**Service Animals:** The Library reviewed its procedures in this area and no changes were required.

No feedback about the Library's procedures or practices relating to service animals was received from the public during the 2010-11 reporting year.

**Support Persons:** The Library reviewed its procedures in this area and implemented procedures to facilitate the provision of a duplicate library card, at no charge, to persons with disabilities, for use by a support person.

No feedback about the Library's procedures or practices relating to support persons accompanying persons with disabilities was received during the 2010-11 reporting year.

**Training:** The Library completed staff training relating to its *Policy* and expectations regarding customer service. Training will be provided as part of orientation training for new employees and on a continuing basis to refresh knowledge as required.

The Library provided training to its contracted Security service providers in accordance with regulatory requirements.

The Library provided training to its management team to ensure that as Library policies, procedures and procedures governing the provision of goods or services to members of the public or other third parties are developed or updated, the provisions of its *Accessibility for Persons with Disabilities Policy* are considered and to ensure that the Library remains in compliance with the *AODA*.

In 2010-11 the Library began a review of the policies, procedures and practices relating to its use of volunteers. *AODA* training was identified as an area of focus and has been included in the draft Volunteer Manual. Current volunteers will receive *AODA* training in 2011-12 and then training will be provided as part of orientation for all new volunteers and on a continuing basis to refresh knowledge as required.

No feedback about the Library's procedures or practices relating to staff, vendor or volunteer training about serving customers with disabilities was received from the public during the 2010-11 reporting year.

**Consultation and Feedback:** Following the adoption of the *Accessibility for Customers with Disabilities Policy*, library staff updated publicity guidelines to include standardized messages about how to make requests relating to accessibility and

accommodation and developed procedures to facilitate the provision of sign language interpreters or FM sound systems upon request.

The Hamilton Public Library continued to consult and receive feedback from members of the public and community stakeholders. In July 2010 a public meeting was held to review the design and construction plans for a new Lynden branch library. No concerns relating to accessibility issues were raised at this meeting.

The City of Hamilton Advisory Committee for Persons with Disabilities provides advice to municipal departments, boards and agencies about the elimination of barriers for persons with disabilities. In 2010-11 the Committee visited the Turner Park Branch and provided feedback. Immediately following the Committee's visit the library ordered and installed new signage at the accessible self-service unit and at the two accessible public computer stations that have height adjustable surfaces. Also, as a result of the Committee's feedback, the library in partnership with the YMCA, installed two additional curb ramps near the front entrance. The curb areas adjacent to all of the barrier free parking spaces were already fully accessible. As a follow-up to the Committee visit, staff was also reminded that our proactive customer service approach and availability of staff to assist customers were important ways that we can reduce barriers for persons with disabilities.

**Availability of Documents:** The Library reviewed its publications and practices in 2010-11 and has adopted the City of Hamilton's *Clear and Large Print Guidelines* and now publicizes the availability of documents in large print or alternate accessible formats upon request through a standard statement included in all publications.

- *What's Happening* is available in both Clear Print (twelve (12) point font) and Large Print (eighteen (18) point font) formats and the insert in the *Hamilton Spectator* will note that *What's Happening* is available in both Clear Print and Large Print formats.
- Board *Agendas*, *Minutes* and other publications are now consistently created in Arial or Verdana twelve (12) point font.
- PDF versions of library documents published by the Library now include simple instructions that provide the information customers need in order to magnify the document online to read in larger print.

Additionally, the Library is continuing to monitor the standards suggested in the *Accessible Information and Communications Standard* and is striving to adhere to these proposed additional standards in relation to contrast, type colour, leading, font family, font style, font heaviness, upper case, italics, letter spacing, margins, columns, paper finish, watermarks, clear design and simplicity.

This Policy, related procedures/forms and the Library's annual *Accessibility Report* and *Plan* are maintained on the Library's website and will be made available in alternate accessible formats upon request.

No requests for documents in alternate, accessible formats were received from the public during the 2010-11 reporting year.

**Inquiries:** Hamilton Public Library uses Comment Forms to encourage and receive comments from customers regarding services. More recently AskHPL allows customers to provide feedback through e-mail. Feedback related to access and disabilities is collected and analyzed to ensure that issues are addressed and responses to customers are tracked.

The Library updated its response guidelines in 2010-11 to ensure that its e-mailed replies to AskHPL customers comply with the clear print guidelines developed by the City of Hamilton in conjunction with the City of Hamilton Advisory Committee for Persons with Disabilities.

During the 2010-11 reporting year several comments on a variety of accessibility issues were received. All comments are compiled and the following describes the issues identified and actions taken.

After receiving a request for more large print materials, a customer was given a demonstration of the new Enhanced Vision Monitor at the Dundas Branch. The customer was very pleased as this device gives him greater access to the print collection.

At the Turner Park branch a customer was contacted after commenting on the difficulty she had in reaching books on lower shelves. The offer of staff assistance was presented and the customer was told that where possible bottom shelves are kept empty.

A Turner Park customer reported difficulty using the self-service units and was contacted directly. As a result of that discussion the antennae unit was moved

forward to reduce the 'reach' to the touch screen. The customer was also assured that staff assistance was always available to assist with checkout.

At the Central branch an additional accessible self-service unit was installed on the first floor to address concerns.

At the Waterdown branch additional parking lot signage was installed to address a concern about accessible parking.

A customer using the Sherwood Branch reported a physical reaction that he attributed to the wireless access points or RFID gates. Staff met with the customer, investigated and offered suggestions that would still facilitate customer access to materials but minimize time spent in the building, such as telephone service, placing holds remotely and staff assistance with checkout.

## **ACCESSIBILITY AND LIBRARY SERVICES**

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**Information Service:** *The Accessible Canadian Library* provides guidelines for ensuring that customers can access the collection. Staff assistance is recognized as an appropriate solution where the environment cannot be changed to meet the needs of persons with disabilities. Library staff will locate and retrieve materials as part of the information service the Library provides. This offer of assistance is necessary as library material may not always be within reach. Given the space constraints of our buildings, the appropriate collection size could not be accommodated in the building if the top and bottom shelves are not used. In addition, staff has been trained to recognize invisible barriers to access including literacy and to provide alternate or additional services.

Remote information service is available for those who cannot visit our locations in person. Information is delivered through our website, by telephone, by e-mail and by real-time chat. Customers with disabilities often have adaptive technologies in use with personal computing or other devices that make remote information service a desirable option for them.

### **Library Collections:**

**E-books:** These may be downloaded from the Library's website, and are the format that will best meet the needs of a variety of customers with differing disabilities. The font size of the text can be adjusted as required based on customers' needs.

**E-audio books:** These may also be downloaded from the Library's website.

**Large Print:** The forty-five thousand (41,500) item collection will continue to grow to support an aging population. These books have a fourteen (14) point typeface to provide access to recreational reading for adults who find regular print a challenge.

**Talking books:** Full-text talking books are provided under a license agreement with the CNIB. The newest format – Daisy – was introduced in 2007. Daisy readers are available for 3 month loans. CNIB copyright agreements with publishers restrict use to persons registered with the CNIB.

**Books on CD and Playaways:** These recorded books are available for use by visually impaired persons. The copyright agreements permit their use by all customers.

**Electronic Collections:** This collection of databases can be accessed from any computer including those in homes, schools and workplaces. The individual's computer can provide voice and print modifications and persons with vision disabilities with such software can access the Library's electronic collections.

**DVD and CD collections:** These collections are expanding and many items in the collection have captioning.

**Braille Books:** While the library no longer provides Braille materials for adults, because of lack of use, it does have an introductory collection for children at the Central Library.

**Toys:** The library purchases toys that are adaptable for various needs. Circulating toys are available at some library locations.

**Self-Service Check Outs/ Returns:** Self-service options are being introduced to libraries to improve speed and privacy. Installation will be complete by end of 2011 at existing locations. Some smaller locations with limited hours will not have self-service kiosks. Staff will continue to be available to assist individuals who cannot or choose not to use the self-service kiosks. Self-service kiosks are provided at two heights to meet AODA requirements.

**Disability Service Helpline (DISH):** This telephone information and referral service was introduced in 1986 and provides information service to persons with disabilities, caregivers and family. It is now operated jointly with Hamilton Health Sciences' Chedoke Hospital.

**Inter-branch Delivery:** The Library delivers materials upon request to a location convenient to the customer. All customers may use this service and holds on materials may be placed remotely through the Library's website.

**Visiting Library Service:** Library materials are delivered to homebound individuals who are unable to come to the library. Library staff selects materials and volunteers deliver and pick up those materials. Customers receive materials monthly.

**Bell Relay Telephone Calls:** When the Bell Relay system was created, the Hamilton Public Library stopped providing direct TTY access. TTY/teletype service was available for twenty-five (25) years and in that time few calls had been received. The Bell Relay service enables individuals who are deaf or speech impaired to call a single TTY number. A specially trained Operator will make the call on behalf of the individual and relay the information. Library staff receive training about how to serve customers using the Bell Relay service.

**Furnishings and Equipment:** The Library adheres to the guidelines of the *Accessible Canadian Library: a resource tool for Libraries Serving Persons with Disabilities* (The National Library of Canada) to ensure that library facilities, furnishings and services are accessible to all. These guidelines, applied since 1985, are more nuanced than the *City Barrier Free Design Guidelines* as they address conflicts between the needs of different disabilities, provide alternate means of meeting needs, and strive to balance needs within the normal space constraints of a public library. These guidelines are used to inform decisions regarding the placement and design of furnishings, shelving, service desks, *etcetera*, as well as when identifying service improvements. Library staff look to the guidelines to help optimize services and balance the needs of persons with differing disabilities. As a rule of thumb, the Library applies the *City Barrier Free Design Guidelines* for the building envelope (entrances, washrooms, parking, *etcetera*) and the *Accessible Canadian Library* guidelines within the building.

**Accessible Programs, Publicity and Public Meetings:** The Library's *Accessibility for Customers with Disabilities Policy* emphasizes its commitment to accessibility including providing accessible publications, programs and public meetings. Library publicity guidelines were updated in 2010-11 to include standardized messages

about how to make requests relating to accessibility and accommodation. The Library will take such actions as making sign language interpreters and FM sound systems available for programs and meetings upon request and can provide publicity in alternate formats and through its website.

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## THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

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The *Facilities Master Plan* outlining the Library Board's strategic directions for its facilities was updated in 2010-11 and adopted by the Board at its February 2011 meeting. The *Plan* in its *Roadblocks/Issues* section notes that the Board does face some significant problems relating to its facilities and specifically notes that "insufficient funds have been set aside to correct the library's accessibility issues" and that "some existing buildings cannot be renovated at a reasonable cost to provide adequate library services or to meet accessibility requirements." Significantly, the *Plan* in its Principles section states that "each branch library must meet all provincial and federal accessibility standards" and each overview of an individual branch provides information about accessibility issues or notes that the branch meets current standards.

Improvements to library built environments this year occurred in a number of locations. The Central Library first (1<sup>st</sup>) floor is fully accessible following the completion of the renovation project. Red Hill and Barton branches had renovations that included elements that improved accessibility. Further work is planned:

- Terryberry, Saltfleet and Kenilworth are scheduled for renovations or modifications in 2011.
- Lynden branch, replacing two inaccessible branches, will open fall, 2011.
- Waterdown branch, replacing two partly accessible branches, is in the development stage, and should open in 2012, or 2013.

In order to reconcile service provision to library customers of all abilities with operational needs, the Library may need to develop its own guidelines where there are differences between the City's *Barrier Free Design Guidelines*, and operational requirements. Library equipment is generally manufactured to meet the requirement of the *Americans with Disabilities Act*, which can vary from the Ontario counterpart.

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## ACCESSIBILITY AND LIBRARY INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITIES

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Activities relating to information and communications include the use of current technologies to facilitate access and the means the Library uses to communicate with its customers.

### TECHNOLOGIES

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**Computers:** The Library plans to equip all public computers with accessibility options. The standard Windows XP accessibility tools Magnifier and On-Screen Keyboard are enabled on all public computers, however, there are some limitations to those utilities. To address those limitations we have also installed the following tools:

- **NVDA (Screen Reader):** NonVisual Desktop Access (NVDA) is a free and open source screen reader for the Microsoft Windows operating system. Providing feedback via synthetic speech and Braille, it enables blind or vision impaired people to access computers running Windows.
- **DesktopZoom:** DesktopZoom is a zoom/magnify program with lots of options: Completely portable and doesn't need admin privilege. Zoom an area around the mouse, zoom a fixed window or zoom the entire desktop. Use the mouse inside the zoomed window. Use the mouse wheel or arrow keys to adjust the magnification strength.
- **Size of Monitors:** HPL has begun to replace 17" monitors with 19" to improve the viewing experience for all customers, including ones with visual impairments.

As of March 31, 2011 the following locations were completed: Central Library, seventy-one (71) computers, Barton Branch, sixteen (16) computers and Red Hill Branch twenty-four (24) computers.

Additionally, the Library has taken other actions to improve computer accessibility:

- **Accessible Keyboards with Trackballs:** At each service point where public computers are located at the Central Library, a minimum of one accessible

keyboard is available for customers to use. The accessible keyboards are wireless and include a trackball. They can be plugged into any public computer. It is the Library's intention to place accessible keyboards with trackballs at all service points across the system.

- **Accessible Furniture:** Staff are ensuring that there is a combination of stand-up and sit-down furniture for computers, library catalogues and self-service equipment.

## COMMUNICATIONS

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**Website:** A 'Special Needs' web page will be developed to create one place to look for persons that want information about library Policy and Procedures and Services that may be of interest to persons with disabilities. Previously, information was housed in various sections of the website.

In anticipation of the forthcoming regulations which will impact on services such as the website, the Hamilton Public Library has been proactive in improving access to the new Community Portal/ Library Website. The Library recognizes that the accessibility of the Library's (and portal) website is extremely important. Improvements are ongoing and in accordance with AODA guidelines. The new hpl.ca site includes the following accessibility features:

- myHamilton uses css rather than tables for layout. Layout tables can cause problems for some assistive technologies
- myHamilton and its 'subsites' (e.g. Jobs Prosperity Collaborative) are based on the 'zen' subtheme which was developed with accessibility as a priority
- Text alternatives have been provided, wherever possible, for non-text content (e.g. all images have alternate text, this is enforced by our content management system)
- Where possible, we have avoided technologies that require plug-ins or are not part of most standard browsers
- Critical features are built in HTML or using Javascript with an HTML alternative
- Font size can be increased, however, this is a work in progress

- The site is navigation friendly and development efforts have been made to address this including by the addition of a skip navigation link (first tab stop on all pages) that improves the experience for people using screen readers
- The navigation tab order is predictable, making the site easy to navigate with a keyboard
- A minimum colour contrast has been maintained between text and backgrounds

Overall, the Library strives to meet this goal described by the World Wide Web Consortium Accessibility Initiative (W3C WAI) <http://www.w3c.org/WAI/>:

*to create Web content that is perceivable, operable and understandable by the broadest possible range of users and compatible with their wide range of assistive technologies, now and in the future.*

This standard has been widely adopted, including by the Government of Canada and is consistent with goals of the Ontario with Disabilities Act (ODA).

**Publicity and Publications:** Information about the availability of documents and the library's communication practices is provided above in this report's *Annual Review of Policies, Procedures and Practices* section.

**E-Mail:** The Library has adopted the City of *Hamilton's Clear and Large Print Guidelines* and now communicates with customers by e-mail in Arial fourteen (14) point font or Verdana twelve (12) point font.

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## EMPLOYMENT ACCESSIBILITY

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The objective of the proposed employment accessibility standard is to set out policies, procedures and requirements for the prevention, identification and removal of barriers across all stages of the employment life cycle for persons with disabilities. All employees, with the exception of volunteers and interns or co-operative work placements, would be covered. However, the Library does provide field placement opportunities for co-op students with disabilities, as workflow and time permits.

This standard establishes employment accessibility requirements for

- Employment policies and training
- Recruitment, assessment, selection and hiring requirements
- Retention
- Progress indicators
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This standard is not in effect and if it is passed, it will have significant impact on our processes. Currently the ministry has introduced elements of the employment standards in the new integrated standards. These include:

1. Recruitment, assessment, selection and hiring requirements
2. Employment policies and training
  - a. Notification to Employees
3. Employment policies and training
  - a. Workplace emergency response-Every employer shall meet the requirements of this section by January 1, 2012. ,
  - b. Return To Work
  - c. Individual accommodation plans
  - d. Performance management
  - e. Career advancement
  - f. Re-deployment

The Library currently has programs, policies and procedures that address several of the areas that the proposed Integrated Standards sets out in regards to employment. The timelines for implementation of employment accessibility requirements under the integrated standard range from one year to three years and raise concerns because standards that impact the employment accessibility standards including the Built Environment standards are still under discussion and have timelines that do not match those of the proposed Employment Accessibility Standard. Feedback will be provided to the ministry related to the new proposed integrated standard.

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## **BUDGET IMPACTS**

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Many of the budget impacts relating to the implementation of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)* are unknown. In all of the areas reported above, there will certainly be budget impacts to create or change current practices. Without further information, projections of those costs are difficult.

## GRANT FUNDING

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In 2010, the Library received SOLS grant funding in the amount of \$19,139.37 to be directed to AODA compliance and \$78,788.45 for New Technology. The funds were used to purchase equipment for the visually impaired including five (5) Enhanced Vision Monitors installed at Dundas, Redhill, Turner Park, Central and Terryberry branches. In addition, one-hundred (100) magnifying sheets and thirty (30) handheld magnifiers to be distributed to library locations. In addition one-hundred forty (140) AODA compliant computers were purchased and placed in several library locations.

## RESERVE FUNDS

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The library contributes annually to an *Accessibility and Health and Safety Reserve Fund* and in 2010 allocated an additional \$100,000 for AODA initiatives in the library's operating fund.

The *Reserve Fund* allows the library to prepare for possible increased costs in terms of American Sign Language interpreters, conversion of documents to alternate formats and branch improvements. It is difficult to project what operating costs will be incurred as the Library accommodates persons with disabilities making requests for accessible services.

## IMPACT ON CAPITAL BUDGET PROJECTIONS

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The Accessible Built Environment Standard will have significant budget implications for the Library. Currently the magnitude of the budget implications is unknown. As stated in the *Facilities Master Plan* the Library will ensure that our buildings meet all federal and provincial accessibility standards. The Library will continue to review each location and recommend renovation plans to ensure compliance. However, the *Facilities Master Plan* identifies several Library buildings that cannot be renovated at a reasonable cost to provide adequate library services or to meet accessibility requirements.

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# HAMILTON PUBLIC LIBRARY ACCESSIBILITY PLAN 2010-11

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**➤ UPDATE as of March 31, 2011 showing status of projects**

The chart included below provides an overview of library projects with components that address Library Accessibility Goals as described in the *Accessibility Plans* for 2010 – 2011 and achieved during the reporting period.

<b>Completed Projects</b>	<b>Relevant AODA Standard / Area</b>	<b>Location / Impact</b>	<b>Details / Date completed</b>
Board Policy to Comply with AODA Standard	<i>Accessibility Standards for Customer Service</i>	System	<i>Accessibility for Customers with Disabilities Policy</i> approved by Library Board, November 2009. Reviewed annually.
AODA training for staff	<i>Accessibility Standards for Customer Service</i>	System	Managers, full- and part-time staff trained, 2009, 2010, 2011
AODA training for Security Guards	<i>Accessibility Standards for Customer Service</i>	System	Central Security Guards trained , 2010
Storefront Service Point During Central Renovation	Built Environment	Central Branch	Improved accessibility of service desks and collections, 2009/10 [served customers with limited mobility that might have had difficulty entering the library through the 2 <sup>nd</sup> floor entrance]
Sherwood Renovation	Built Environment	Sherwood Branch	Improved accessibility of entrance, service desks, self-service technology and collections, 2010

Inventory or equipment and Services	<i>Accessibility Standards for Customer Service</i>	System	Inventory of all equipment and services provided by all library locations completed 2010
Comment form review	<i>Accessibility Standards for Customer Service</i>	System	All comment forms regarding AODA are now completed via electronic incident form. Annually these comments are reviewed, reported on and addressed, 2011.
Barton Renovation	<i>Built Environment</i>	Barton Branch	Improved accessibility of entrance, service desks, self-service technology and collections, started December 2010-completed in Jan 2011
Redhill Renovation	<i>Built Environment</i>	Redhill Branch	Improved accessibility of entrance, service desks, self-service technology and collections, started December 2010-completed in Jan 2011
Hpl.ca landing page	<i>Accessibility Standards for Customer Service</i>	System	Website redesign underway in 2010/2011-not complete but will be in the next reporting period.
Purchased of specialized equipment	<i>Accessibility Standards for Customer Service</i>	System	In response to the inventory data gathered, specialized equipment (e.g. Enhanced Vision Monitors) was purchased and placed at library locations across the system.
Central 1 <sup>st</sup> floor Renovation	<i>Built Environment</i>	Central 1 <sup>st</sup> floor	Improved accessibility of entrance, service desks, self-service technology and collections,

			completed December 2010
<i>Facilities Master Plan 2011</i>	<i>Built Environment</i>	Library Board	The report was updated, presented and approved by the board 2011.
Integrated Accessibility Regulation	<i>Integrated Accessibility Regulation</i>	System	Hamilton Public Library submitted a response to the public consultation process for the <i>Integrated Accessibility Regulation</i> March 2011.

# HAMILTON PUBLIC LIBRARY ACCESSIBILITY PLAN 2011-12

## INTRODUCTION

The Hamilton Public Library is committed to accessibility with respect to the development of services for people with disabilities, their families and caregivers. This Library system has endeavoured to address access issues in the built environment proactively, meeting and at times exceeding existing standards. Nonetheless, as additional standards are introduced there will be areas for improvement.

Public sector organizations are required to prepare and publicize annual accessibility reports that summarize the previous year's activities and describe accessibility plan for the next reporting year. The chart included below provides an overview of library projects with components that address Accessibility Goals. It is effectively, the Accessibility Plan for 2011-12.

<b>Project</b>	<b>Relevant AODA Standard</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Details</b>
Terryberry, Saltfleet and Kenilworth Renovations	Built Environment	Terryberry, Saltfleet, Kenilworth	Branch refurbished; Access to collections improved; New entrance, service desks, and self-service technology
New Lynden Branch	Built Environment	Lynden	New branch to be built and will meet all current accessibility requirements.
New Waterdown Branch	Built Environment	Waterdown	New branch to be built and will meet all current accessibility requirements. Expected completion 2012/2013.
Public Computing	Information Communication	System	Key objectives include expanding the number of

	Technology		public computers, providing enhanced accessibility software on all public computers and ensuring special equipment and furniture is available at all locations. The goal for the 2011-12 reporting period is to complete the public computer rollout at all locations. Budget limitation may result in some of the increases in public computers to be phased in later in 2012.
Collections-partnership with CNIB	Information Communication Technology	System	Currently partnership underway to catalogue donated collections from CNIB –restricted use. 2011
Inventory or equipment and Services	<i>Accessibility Standards for Customer Service</i>	System	Continue update Inventory of all equipment and services provided by all library locations annually
Comment form review	<i>Accessibility Standards for Customer Service</i>	System	Annually these comments are reviewed, reported on and addressed.
Prepare for compliance with proposed accessibility standards	<i>Built, Integrated, information and communication, Employment</i>	System	Monitor progress of standards and regulations for development of an implementation plan
Enhance training to volunteers on Customer	<i>Accessibility Standards for Customer Service</i>	System	Provide volunteers additional information and tips on communicating with people with

Service Standards			disabilities via newsletter articles.
Hpl.ca landing page	<i>Accessibility Standards for Customer Service</i>	System	Website redesign underway in 2010/2011- not complete but will be in the next reporting period.
Accessible Keyboards with Trackballs	<i>Accessibility Standards for Customer Service</i>	System	At each service point where public computers are located at all locations across the system.

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## CONCLUSION

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