



# County of Lambton Accessibility Plan

2020 - 2025

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## **PREFACE**

The *Ontarians with Disabilities Act 2001* requires the Corporation of the County of Lambton to develop, implement and post a multi-year accessibility plan. The aim of this plan is to describe the process that the County of Lambton will continue to engage in over the next five years to continue to identify, remove and prevent barriers for all in accessing County facilities and services.

In June 2005, the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (2005)* (AODA) received Royal Assent and became law. The new law requires the government to work with the disability community and both the private and public sectors to jointly develop standards of accessibility. Standards have been established for both the public and private sectors to address the full range of disabilities – including physical, sensory, mental health, developmental and learning. The *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (2005)*, is our guiding legislation that assists with identifying and removing any barriers that exist.

## **OBJECTIVES OF THE PLAN**

The objectives of this plan are to:

1. Describe the process that the County of Lambton engaged in over the past year in an effort to identify, remove and prevent barriers for all in accessing County facilities and services.
2. Provide the community an update on the removal of barriers that were identified in past years in the County's Accessibility Plan and inform the public what is being done by the County of Lambton to ensure its services are accessible to all.
3. Identify the facilities and services that the County of Lambton will review in the coming year to identify barriers to people with disabilities.

## **OPERATIONAL REVIEWS**

The County of Lambton's Staff Working Group conducts operational reviews regarding accessibility of programs, services and facilities. The methodology utilized in an operational review includes conducting "Staff Focus Group" sessions and the

completion of a site inspection utilizing a “Facilities Services Checklist” which identifies accessibility standards adopted by the Staff Working Group.

The barrier types examined include:

- Natural
- Architectural
- Communications / Information
- Attitudinal
- Policy & Procedure
- Technological

#### Reviews for 2014 - 2019

The Staff Working group completed seventeen (17) facility reviews, within five (5) County of Lambton Divisions during this time period.

#### Reviews and Goals for 2020 - 2025

In March 2020, the AODA Advisory Committee and Staff Working Group were impacted by the significant changes presented by the COVID-19 pandemic. As a result, this limited the AAC’s ability to meet the expected goals by maintaining that a minimum of 3 site specific reviews occur annually for a total of 15 reviews in the 5-year period. The Advisory Committee will continue to strive to meet these goals when it safe to do.

#### **MONITORING PROCESS**

The County of Lambton’s Accessibility Plan is prepared by the County of Lambton Staff Working Group with advice from the County Accessibility Advisory Committee. Once the Plan is approved, by County Council, management begins implementing the recommendations of the Plan. The County Accessibility Advisory Committee monitors the implementation process throughout the year at their regular meetings to ensure barrier identification and removals occur as scheduled.

A summary of previously identified barriers is forwarded to the appropriate Manager/Supervisor for an update on whether the barrier has been removed. These updates are then recorded on a summary spreadsheet that keeps track of barriers identified and barriers removed on an ongoing basis.

## Public Concerns

The following procedure is followed by the County of Lambton:

- Accessibility issues received by the County from the public are forwarded to the Chairperson of the Staff Working Group. The Chairperson assigns the issue to be investigated to the appropriate Working Group member of the Division in question, and
- A site visit and review is conducted.

A response regarding the results of the review is forwarded by the appropriate County staff or official, to the person who initially notified the County of the accessibility issue.

## New Programs/Services

New programs and service plans are prepared by the Managers and forwarded to the appropriate Committee for approval. For programs that require a bylaw to be in place before implementation a bylaw is prepared and reviewed by the Solicitor.

## Budget

The 2012 Accessibility Plan continues to endorse “a budget line in all departments for the purpose of recording expenses associated with AODA barrier removal”. In 2007, the County of Lambton incorporated a budget line into the chart of accounts. This line is solely used for expenses associated with removing barriers of accessibility that have been identified in the County’s Accessibility Plan.

## Site Plans

The County’s Accessibility Advisory Committee has a responsibility to review site plans under the AODA. In 2006, the Committee adopted a “Barrier-Free Site Plan Approval Checklist” that is utilized by the County’s Planning Department. The Department reviews each site plan ensuring these items are addressed prior to awarding or recommending a permit.

## Previous Plans

Barriers identified in previous Plans are recorded on a continual record. Annually the list is reviewed by the appropriate Manager and updated with information on barriers identified and barriers removed. This continual record is reviewed annually by the County Accessibility Advisory Committee.

## **COUNTY OF LAMBTON ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

### **Purpose of the Committee**

The purpose of the Committee is to advise Lambton County Council on the preparation, implementation and effectiveness of its accessibility plan annually. The Committee shall also provide advice to Council on the accessibility for persons with a disability to a building, structure or premise, or part of a building, structure or premise:

- that the County purchases, constructs or significantly renovates;
- for which the County enters into a new lease; or
- that a person provides as municipal capital facilities under an agreement entered into with the Council in accordance with Section 210.1 of the *Municipal Act*

### **Functions of the Committee**

The Committee reviews, and provides comments on and recommends changes to the annual accessibility plan drafted by the County of Lambton Accessibility Staff Working Group. During the year, the Committee reviews the Focus Group and Operational Reviews completed by the County Staff Working Group. Comments and recommendations are included in the Operational Review spreadsheet.

### **Accessibility Advisory Committee Members**

- Doug Cook – Chairperson, Lambton County Councillor
- Debbie Draganits – City of Sarnia
- Gordon Dingle – City of Sarnia
- Luana Cameron – City of Sarnia
- Sarah Shephard – Corunna
- Greg With – Wyoming
- Chris Veenema, Staff Member, County of Lambton
- Angelo DeCarolis – Staff Member, County of Lambton
- Joe Solinas – Staff Member, County of Lambton

### **Staff Working Group Members**

- Angelo DeCarolis, Chairperson - Corporate Services Division
- Joe Solinas, Chairperson - Corporate Services Division
- Jocelyn Kerrigan - Cultural Services Division
- Chris Veenema - Finance, Facilities and Court Services Division

- Carolyn Hodges- Long-Term Care Division

## **COUNTY OF LAMBTON SERVICES**

The Corporation of the County of Lambton is a municipal entity that is identified as an upper-tier municipality. With a wide range of responsibilities, such as public health, emergency medical services, building inspection services, and the operation of a provincial offences court to name but a few, the Corporation provides valuable services to the area's 126,199 residents. In 2020, the County has a staff level of 1,200 and a budget of \$239 million. County staff delivers programs and services through seven (7) main divisions. Each Division is managed by a General Manager, who reports directly to the Chief Administrative Officer, who in turn reports to Lambton County Council. More information about the various County Departments is [available here.](#)

## **Mission & Vision Statements**

Lambton County is a community dedicated to economic growth, environmental stewardship and an enhanced quality of life through:

- The provision of responsive and efficient services and
- Collaborative efforts with our municipal and community partners.

Lambton County is a caring, growing and innovative community. More information about the County of Lambton Strategic Plan is [available here.](#)