



Long Point Region Conservation Authority

Long Point Region Conservation Authority
Multi-Year Accessibility Plan
2025 - 2029

Approved by the LPRCA Board of Directors
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Summary

The *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* (AODA) became law in 2005. The purpose of this Act is to improve opportunities for people with disabilities by identifying, preventing and removing barriers that may otherwise limit their abilities to fully participate in society. Accessibility simply means giving all people opportunities to participate fully in everyday life.

The multi-year Accessibility Plan describes measures the Long Point Region Conservation Authority (LPRCA) will take to remove and prevent barriers to people with disabilities who use the facilities and services of the LPRCA, including employees and members of the public and highlights changes and improvements made to date.

LPRCA's updated 2025-2029 Multi-year Accessibility Plan outlines how the LPRCA will continue to remove barriers and improve accessibility for persons with disabilities. It builds on actions already taken to comply with the AODA and actions taken in the previous 2020-2024 Plan. The updated plan outlines the ongoing commitment that the LPRCA has made to create an accessible organization by identifying, removing and preventing barriers for people with disabilities.

This Accessibility Plan will be posted on LPRCA's website, and shall be made available in an alternate format and with communication supports, upon request. The Accessibility Plan reflects the proposed intentions of LPRCA over the next five years for meeting the regulations under the AODA and for identifying, removing and preventing barriers for people with disabilities in communities across the watershed.

1.0 Background

1.1 Legislation

The *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act*, known as the AODA, is intended to develop, implement and enforce mandatory accessibility standards in key areas of daily living. Standards have been developed in Customer Service; Information and Communications; Employment; Design of Public Space and Accessible Design for the Built Environment; and Transportation. The accessibility standards apply to all organizations in Ontario.

The purpose of the AODA is to:

- Develop, implement and enforce accessibility standards in order to achieve accessibility for Ontarians with disabilities with respect to goods, services, facilities, accommodation, employment, buildings, structures and premises by January 2025; and
- Provide for the involvement of persons with disabilities, of the Government of Ontario and of representatives of industries and various sectors of the economy in the development of the accessibility standards.

1.2 Types of Disabilities

Disabilities may be clearly evident, such as physical disabilities, but they may be invisible and are not always apparent. The broad range of disabilities also includes vision impairment, deafness or being hard of hearing, intellectual or developmental, learning and mental health disabilities. The AODA uses the same definition of “disability” as the Ontario Human Rights Code, which includes both visible and invisible disabilities.

1.3 Overview of the Accessibility Standards

The AODA is made up of five Standards, each covering an aspect of daily living.

The **Accessibility for Customer Service Standard** was the first standard to be developed and released. This standard addresses business practices and training needed to provide better customer service to people with disabilities.

The **Integrated Accessibility Standards** brings together four standard areas into one Regulation: Information and Communications, Employment, Transportation and Design of Public Spaces.

- **Information and Communications** addresses the removal of barriers in access to information being provided in person, through print, a website or other means.
- **Employment Accessibility** addresses paid employment practices relating to employee-employer relationships, which include recruitment and hiring and retention policies and practices.
- **Accessible Transportation** addresses aspects of accessible public transportation.
- **Accessible Design of Public Spaces and for the Built Environment** addresses barriers in public spaces and buildings. This will apply to new construction and planned redevelopment beginning January 1, 2016.

The LPRCA does not operate or provide public transportation thus the Accessible Transportation Standard does not apply.

2.0 Objectives and Commitment to Accessibility Planning

The Accessibility Plan describes the measures that the LPRCA has taken and will continue to take to identify, remove and prevent barriers for all people, including those with disabilities who use the facilities and services of the LPRCA.

The LPRCA is committed to:

- Continuous improvement of access to facilities and services for employees and members of the public with disabilities.
- Continuing to comply with the regulatory requirements and to monitor accessibility to ensure compliance with the AODA and its corresponding standards.

- Providing accessible customer service and serving all its customers to the best of its ability.
- Reviewing the accessibility plan and incorporating elements of accessibility into all future projects and activities.
- Addressing existing barriers and preventing future barriers to allow people with disabilities full participation in LPRCA services.
- Providing equal treatment to people with disabilities with respect to the use and benefit of LPRCA services, programs, and facilities in a manner that respects their dignity, independence, integration and is equitable in relation to the broader public.

3.0 Barrier Identification

3.1 Barrier-Identification Methodologies

The following methodologies are used to identify accessibility barriers:

Methodology	Description
Staff Meetings	Accessibility legislation and barrier identification is discussed at Management meetings, Department meetings and Joint Health & Safety Committee meetings. These meetings give various departments an opportunity to discuss legislative requirements and brainstorm accessibility initiatives.
Site Visits	All worksites are visited periodically by Managers, Supervisors and other applicable staff to review accessibility barriers. During site visits, staff and supervisors are invited to provide feedback and discuss barriers they, or members of the public, have identified in their work areas.
Checklist for physical barrier identification	A checklist has been provided and completed for all buildings in our various work locations. The checklist pertains to the identification of physical barriers and is provided to the Manager of Corporate Services and the Workshop Supervisor to be considered in capital planning and facility upgrade discussions.
Informal Communication	Any staff member or member of the public who brings forward any potential barriers will be evaluated for potential to upgrade and improve.

3.2 Barriers Identified & Status of Corrective Actions from 2020 - 2024 Plan

The following barriers and status updates on corrective actions taken to date are listed below:

Administration Center

Barrier	Action Items & Status Updates from 2020- 2024
Accessibility throughout buildings	Accessibility improvements have been incorporated into future plans for the renovations of the Administration office.
Procurement of goods, services, or facilities	In 2024, a new POS system was received which offers many accessible formats including; TalkBack, large text, text to speech, captions, and high text contrast.
Training	<p>All current employees have received training in accessibility standards for customer service. Training is ongoing. LPRCA ensures employees and volunteers are provided with the training needed to meet Ontario’s accessibility laws and regulations, specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LPRCA ensures that every person who participates in the development of the policy, practices and procedures is trained appropriately in the AODA and its regulations. • LPRCA ensures that every person who deals with the public on behalf of LPRCA completes training in relation to LPRCA's accessibility for persons with disabilities policies and procedures. • New employees and regular volunteers receive training as soon as practicable, upon hire. • Training records, including the dates when the training was provided, and number of individuals to whom the training was provided is documented. <p>In 2024, a new AODA training procedure was developed and implemented for all employees to better align with the AODA customer service standards.</p>

Customer Services	<p>LPRCA has adopted policies, practices and procedures to ensure that customer service is accessible to persons with disabilities.</p> <p>LPRCA is committed to ensuring:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goods and services are provided in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities. • Persons with disabilities may use assistive devices and/or support persons in the access of goods and services. • LPRCA employees communicate with a person with a disability in a manner that considers the person's disability. <p>LPRCA has continued to ensure that our services are easy to navigate and that our customers are given accessible customer service through phone, email, and in-person if required.</p>
Recruitment Processes	<p>LPRCA's recruitment process invites individuals of all abilities to apply to openings and advises of the availability of accommodation throughout the recruitment process.</p>
Universal Signage	<p>Universal signage is used around the Administrative office and has been made up-to-date.</p>
Public Washrooms	<p>A new Accessible unisex washroom was made in 2014, and remains compliant to AODA standards.</p>
Main Lobby	<p>No upgrades were needed, nor done.</p>

Information Systems, Communication, and Technology

Barrier	Action Items & Status Updates from 2020- 2024
LPRCA Website	<p>All new documents posted to the website are in an accessible format. Older documents have been updated to conform with accessibility requirements or removed from the website and available upon request.</p> <p>The Website was updated in 2020 to be compliant with the WCAG 2.0 Standard.</p>
Readability of printed materials (i.e. brochures,	<p>LPRCA takes the following steps to make sure all publicly available information is made accessible upon request:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notify the public about the availability of accessible formats and

<p>tabloids, minutes, forms)</p>	<p>communication supports.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensures that LPRCA employees receive training on how to make information available in accessible formats. • Educate staff on creating accessible documents. Research alternatives and redesign new printed materials to make them accessible. Provide alternative accessible formats when requested. <p>Accessible document guidelines are followed. To date, no alternate accessible formats have been requested.</p>
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Conservation Areas

Barrier	Action Items & Status Updates from 2020- 2024
<p>Backus Education Centre</p>	<p>The Gallery Revitalization project has incorporated many accessible upgrades:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2023, 2 newly renovated accessible washrooms were installed within the Backus Education Centre. • In 2023, a new exterior ramp, in accordance with AODA standards, was installed at the entrance to the Backus Education Centre making access to the Centre and its classrooms accessible. • In 2023, new Accessible entrance doors were added to the Backus Education Centre. • In 2024, the display panels information was updated to non-transparent signage with larger font and graphics for better accessibility.
<p>Outdoor Play Spaces/ Trails</p>	<p>No Outdoor Play Spaces or trails were created or purchased.</p>
<p>Parking</p>	<p>No changes to parking were made</p>
<p>Gatehouses</p>	<p>All staff and volunteers are trained in AODA customer service requirements. An updated accessibility training document was introduced for all staff in 2024. This training is ongoing and is completed by all new employees. Additional training was provided when required.</p> <p>All of the park gatehouses were outfitted with lever handles instead of doorknobs.</p>
<p>Washrooms and Showers</p>	<p>Signs posted in parks display pertinent universal symbols that relay information regarding site rules, safety information and identify the location of restrooms and trails.</p>

	All five parks have washrooms that utilize a lever door handle instead of a doorknob for more accessible use.
Picnic Areas	In 2020, one accessible picnic table was made available at each park.
Campsites	No changes to campsites were made.

3.3 Action Items for 2025 - 2029

Organizational

LPRCA will continue to build elements of accessibility into all practices, procedures and policies. All employees, volunteers and persons developing policies for LPRCA are trained on accessible customer service and how to interact with people with different disabilities as well as on the Ontario Human Rights Code as it pertains to persons with disabilities. Persons who provide goods and services on behalf of LPRCA are all to be trained.

LPRCA's Accessibility Policy and Plan will be updated as needed to reflect changes to any of the standards, and training is provided in order to ensure an understanding of any changes. Records will continue to be maintained for training provided on accessibility, including the dates of the training and the number of individuals who attended.

Administration Centre

Potential Barrier	Action Items for 2025-2029
Recruitment Processes	<p>LPRCA will continue to document, monitor and update employment policies and procedures, where required, to provide accommodations in the recruitment, assessment, and selection process, upon request.</p> <p>LPRCA takes the following steps to notify the public and our employees that, when requested, LPRCA will accommodate people with disabilities during the recruitment and hiring process, as well as during their employment with LPRCA.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During the recruitment process, LPRCA notifies employees and the public about the availability of accommodation for applicants with disabilities and/or require accommodation. This information is included in the job postings. • LPRCA notifies job applicants who are invited to participate in the selection process that accommodations are available upon request pertaining to the materials/processes to be used. If the applicant requests accommodation, LPRCA consults with the applicant and provides the most suitable accommodation.

Employee Accommodation	<p>LPRCA will continue to regularly review our policies to prevent or remove systemic employment barriers, ensure they are compliant with legislation and reflect best practices. Policies and processes for recruitment; workplace emergency response; employee accommodation; disability management and return to work; performance management; career development and employee redeployment will be reviewed as the need arises.</p> <p>Any accessible formats and communication supports for information needed to perform the job and any information that is generally available to employees will be available upon request.</p> <p>LPRCA will review its careers development processes/policies for possible barriers and will revise as necessary to incorporate AODA requirements.</p>
Customer Service	<p>LPRCA will continue to provide the required Accessible Customer Service Training for all staff and volunteers, in order to continue to comply with the Accessible Customer Service Regulation, Under the AODA. Records will be kept of all training provided.</p> <p>LPRCA will continue to ensure that our services are easy to navigate and that our customers are given accessible customer service through phone, in person, and e-mail.</p> <p>LPRCA will review the Accessibility training with the Accessibility Policy and identify opportunities to reinforce and promote requirements that enhance accessible customer service.</p>
Training	<p>LPRCA will continue to keep records of the training, including the dates on which the training is provided.</p> <p>Training will be ongoing for new employees or as needed when new practices or policies are implemented.</p> <p>Training records, including the dates when the training was provided, and number of individuals to whom the training was provided is documented.</p>
Procurement of goods, services, and facilities	<p>LPRCA will continue to incorporate accessibility design, criteria and features when procuring or acquiring goods, services or facilities by regularly reviewing procurement policies and procedures and make any updates as required.</p>

	Where it is deemed not practicable to do so, the LPRCA will provide an explanation upon request.
Public Washrooms	Where feasible, make improvements to existing washroom facilities to make them accessible or build accessible washroom facilities in locations that do not have any.
Universal Signage	Universal signage will be updated where necessary.

Information Systems, Technology and Communications

Potential Barrier	Action Items for 2025 - 2029
LPRCA Website	LPRCA will ensure all new documents and web content posted are in an accessible format and meets the WCAG 2.0 Level AA Standard. Refresher training for staff about posting on the website will be provided if required. All digital services are designed with accessibility, striving for all users to have equal access to information and functionality. LPRCA will continue to monitor and ensure website and web content posted meet and conform to WCAG 2.0.
Readability of printed materials (e.g. brochures, tabloids, minutes, forms)	LPRCA will continue to monitor the accessibility of communications and will continue to provide a variety of means to access communications such as phone, email, website, mail, and in person. LPRCA will ensure processes for receiving and responding to feedback regarding customer service practices are, upon request, accessible for persons with disabilities.
Compliance Reporting	Every 3 years not-for profit organizations shall file an Accessibility Compliance Report confirming they have met accessibility requirements under the AODA. The Report was last filed December 31, 2023 and will need to be filed again before December 31, 2026.

Conservation Areas and Other Recreational Properties

All five conservation parks will be examined to address potential barriers at public spaces. LPRCA will continue to prioritize accessibility in every element of new infrastructure projects or major renovation projects.

Potential Barrier	Action Items for 2025 - 2029
Gatehouses	<p>Accessible customer service training will continue to be provided to all staff and volunteers.</p> <p>LPRCA will continue to evaluate gatehouses to determine accessibility; make improvements as feasible. Provide exceptional customer service to persons who may not be able to access the gatehouse. Provide accessible customer service training to all staff.</p>
Washrooms and Showers	<p>Identify where washroom upgrades are needed and integrate accessibility into facility planning.</p> <p>LPRCA will continue to review current washroom facilities and provide required updated mapping of public accessible washroom facilities.</p>
Picnic areas	Have two accessible picnic tables available at each campground.
Parking	When upgrading parking at the Conservation Area campgrounds, LPRCA will also identify areas to create accessible parking spaces at each Conservation Area campground.
Campsites	Investigate the possibility of accessible campsites, identify current barriers and develop accessible campsites where feasible.
Outdoor Play Spaces/ Trails	Incorporate the Design of Public Spaces when planning to develop new or significantly alter recreational trails and beach access routes.

4.0 Plan Review and Communication Processes

4.1 Review and Monitoring Process

In 2025 - 2029, LPRCA will continue to identify barriers and review progress on removal and development of barrier prevention strategies annually.

The accessibility plan will be updated at least once every five years and will be made available on LPRCA's website and in an alternate accessible format upon request.

4.2 Communication of the Plan

Copies of this plan are available to staff and members of the public on the LPRCA website. Alternative accessible formats will be available upon request.

APPENDIX

Glossary of Key Terms and Definitions

BARRIER as defined by the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*, means anything that prevents a person with a disability from fully participating in all aspects of society because of his or her disability, including a physical barrier, an architectural barrier, an information or communication barrier, an attitudinal barrier, a technological barrier, a policy or a practice. There are many kinds of barriers. Some are visible, but many are not visible.

Barriers to accessibility	
Type of barriers	Examples
Attitudinal barriers are those that discriminate against people with disabilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • thinking that people with disabilities are inferior • assuming that a person who has a speech impairment cannot understand you
Information or communications barriers happen when a person cannot easily understand information.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • print is too small to read • websites that cannot be accessed by people who are not able to use a mouse • signs that are not clear or easily understood
Technology barriers occur when a technology cannot be modified to support various assistive devices.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a website that doesn't support screen-reading software
Organizational barriers are an organization's policies, practices or procedures that discriminate against people with disabilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a hiring process that is not open to people with disabilities
Architectural and physical barriers are features of buildings or spaces that cause problems for people with disabilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • hallways and doorways that are too narrow for a person using a wheelchair, electric scooter or walker • counters that are too high for a person of short stature • poor lighting for people with low vision • doorknobs that are difficult for people with arthritis to grasp • parking spaces that are too narrow for a driver who uses a wheelchair • telephones that are not equipped with telecommunications devices for people who are deaf, deafened or hard of hearing

BARRIER-IDENTIFICATION METHODOLOGIES are processes or practices used to determine what barriers exist, where barriers exist and any other information.

Examples of barrier identification methodologies may include: customer feedback surveys or questionnaires, and discussions with employees or members of the public.

DISABILITY means:

- any degree of physical disability, infirmity, malformation or disfigurement that is caused by bodily injury, birth defect or illness and, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, includes diabetes mellitus, epilepsy, a brain injury, any degree of paralysis, amputation, lack of physical co-ordination, blindness or visual impairment, deafness or hearing impairment, muteness or speech impediment, or physical reliance on a guide dog or other animal or on a wheelchair or other remedial appliance or device;
- a condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability;
- a learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language;
- a mental disorder; or
- an injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the *Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997*.