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2009-2010 ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

Ministry of Natural Resources

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Introduction

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA), sets out the roadmap to make Ontario accessible by 2025. Under this Act, accessibility standards are being developed and implemented to break down barriers in key areas of everyday life.

These standards will increase accessibility for people with disabilities in the areas of customer service, information and communications, employment, transportation, and the built environment.

The Government of Ontario is preparing to lead the way towards an accessible province, beginning in January, 2010, when the first standard, the Accessibility Standard for Customer Service, comes into force.

Each year the government sets the course to prevent, identify, and remove barriers through annual accessibility plans required under the Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001 (ODA).

Building on last year's plan, the 2009-10 accessibility plan will continue moving the Ministry of Natural Resources toward the goal of an accessible province for all Ontarians.

Links to the other ministry plans are available at:
http://www.mcsc.gov.on.ca/mcsc/english/ministry/accessibilityPlans/ministries_accplans10.htm.

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Report on Status of Customer Service Requirements

Accessible Customer Service Policy

Commitment: The ministry will fully adopt the OPS Accessible Customer Service Policy, as well as associated practices and procedures, in accordance with the requirements of the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service (ASCS). The ministry will establish an Operational Accessible Customer Service Policy, as well as associated practices and procedures, in accordance with the requirements of the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service (ASCS).

Status: Completed

Planned Action(s): The MNR's natural resource management and protection mandate is implemented by adherence to a myriad of MNR and broader OPS corporate, strategic and operational policies,

procedures, and practices. Barriers to accessibility may possibly exist within a number of these existing MNR operational policies, procedures, and practices. An overarching OPS Operational Accessible Customer Service Policy, as well as associated practices and procedures, has been developed for the OPS. The MNR Operational Accessible Customer Service Policy will be consistent with and supportive of the broader OPS Accessible Customer Service Policy and address accessibility requirements prescribed in the ASCS. The new MNR policy will build upon and be consistent with previous MNR accessibility policy and program development efforts, as well as the policies and resources available at an OPS enterprise level.

Implementation Timeframe: January, 2010

Results Achieved: MNR has developed an MNR Operational Accessible Customer Service Policy and communicated broadly across the MNR.

Accessibility Procurement Policies and Practices

Commitment: MNR will ensure managers, supervisors and staff are provided with policies and procedural guidance on accessibility for the procurement of goods and services. The ministry will continue to implement the government-wide guidelines for accessibility in procurement.

Status: Ongoing

Planned Action(s): MNR will continue to adhere to the OPS Procurement Directive and the Procurement Operating Policy. The ministry will communicate the policies and guidelines through staff training and will incorporate them in ministry procurement procedures.

Implementation Timeframe: March, 2011

Results Achieved: Managers and staff involved in procurement have been trained in accessibility requirements as per the OPS Procurement Directive.

Ministry Accessibility Network

Commitment: The ministry will support a Service Excellence Working Group vested with providing ongoing input and assistance in accessibility planning and implementation across the MNR.

Status: Ongoing

Planned Action(s): The ministry continues to support the ongoing work of the Service Excellence Working Group, inclusive of managers and staff from all divisions within the ministry. This working group is instrumental in the planning and implementation of service excellence initiatives, including accessibility planning and implementation.

Implementation Timeframe: March, 2011

Results Achieved: The MNR Accessibility Service Excellence Working Group actively participated in the development of the ministry accessibility plan.

Customer Service Standards

Commitment: The ministry will ensure that service standards developed and adopted by MNR will include accessibility considerations, especially as they relate to compliance to the Accessibility Standard for Customer Service.

Status: Completed

Planned Action(s): The MNR Service Excellence Implementation Plan was completed for MNR in Fall, 2009. This plan successfully addresses accessibility considerations as part of the broader array of MNR service standards.

Implementation Timeframe: Fall 2009

Results Achieved: MNR Service Excellence Implementation Plan with accessibility considerations in place.

Accessibility Training and Awareness

Commitment: MNR will develop and implement a staff training strategy in accordance with the training requirements of the ASCS. The ministry will prepare a document describing the MNR training policy in accordance with the ASCS.

Status: Ongoing

Planned Action(s): The ASCS requires the ministry to:

- train staff, volunteers, contractors, and any other people who interact with the public or other third parties on your behalf on a number of topics as outlined in the customer service standard; and
- train staff, volunteers, contractors, and any other people who are involved in developing your policies, practices and procedures on the provision of goods or services on a number of topics as outlined in the customer service standard.

MNR has made the OPS Centre for Leadership and Learning's "May I Help You? Welcoming Customers with Disabilities" e-learning courses mandatory for all staff to undertake and complete by December 10, 2009. The MNR training strategy will include a tracking, monitoring, and reporting process associated with this training.

Training in accessible customer service will be incorporated into the process for new hires as well as for recurring unclassified staff positions. The OPS Accessible Customer Service Policy and associated practices and procedures will be included in ministry training initiatives. Whenever possible, MNR will work closely with other OPS ministries to coordinate training of staff.

The ASCS requires that "every designated public sector organization... shall prepare a document describing its training policy, and the document must include a summary of the contents of the training and details of when the training is to be provided." MNR will develop a training policy in accordance with the ASCS.

Implementation Timeframe: January, 2009, to March, 2011. Initial training of all ministry staff and identified third-party service providers completed by December 10, 2009, the compliance date established by OPS.

Results Achieved: All MNR staff and identified third-party service providers successfully completed mandatory training by compliance date established by OPS. Training policy developed in accordance with the ASCS.

Accessibility Policies and Practices-Service Disruption

Commitment: An operating lead will develop and put in place plans to assist with the evacuation of staff and visitors with a disability and will ensure that the plans are incorporated in the Emergency Procedures Handbook distributed to employees.

Status: Completed

Planned Action(s): A building evacuation plan and booklet in addition to an Emergency Procedures Handbook will be developed. Provisions for the evacuation of people with disabilities will be included in this handbook. The ministry will ensure that the needs of people with disabilities will be considered as new evacuation plans are developed or existing plans and procedures are reviewed and updated.

Implementation Timeframe: March, 2010

Results Achieved: Provision of notice to people with disabilities in times of service disruption.

Ontario Parks Admissions Accessibility Policy

Commitment: The ministry will continue to support the Ontario Parks' policies and practices associated with admission fees to Ontario provincial parks for support persons of a person with a disability.

Status: Ongoing

Planned Action(s): Ontario Parks has an existing policy and associated practices relative to

admission fees for support persons of a person with a disability. Ontario Parks' policy states that, if a person with a disability enters the park for day-use purposes, all of the occupants of the vehicle are granted entry under the discounted disabled vehicle permit. The same approach is in place for camping where all members of the camping party are granted the discounted rate. MNR will continue to support the Ontario Parks policy and associated practices relative to admission fees for support persons of a person with a disability.

Implementation Timeframe: Ongoing

Results Achieved: Ontario Parks provides notice ahead of time on what admission fee would be charged to a support person of a person with a disability.

Accessibility Feedback Processes

Commitment: The ministry has established a number of processes for people to provide feedback on the delivery of goods or services, including persons with a disability or persons who have concerns with MNR services to persons with a disability. The processes include timely response to any feedback and action on complaints. The ministry will develop and implement a strategy to make the information about the feedback process more readily available to the public, and it will review existing processes with the objective to improve the feedback processes.

Status: Completed

Planned Action(s): The ASCS requires the ministry to ensure that there are effective processes available to receive and respond to feedback on accessibility concerns. Additionally, each ministry must make information about the feedback process readily available to the public.

Current MNR feedback mechanisms include:

- corporate and program-specific internet-based contact-us feedback pages with associated internal distribution and response protocols;
- provision of 1-800 and local office numbers for phone channel feedback. This includes an MNR TTY service line;
- the mailing address for written correspondence to the ministry, including corporate correspondence and program area correspondence; and
- contact processes associated with OPS level feedback channels such as internet and government contact telephone lines.

All MNR staff will have been trained in accessibility and are well versed in receiving feedback and providing timely and responsive action to feedback from clients relative to accessibility concerns.

The ministry will review the existing processes to identify potential improvements. MNR will document the processes and make them available upon request.

Implementation Timeframe: Completed by January 1, 2010.

Results Achieved: MNR feedback processes meets regulatory requirements.

Notice to disabled persons in times of service disruption

Commitment: MNR will set out the steps to be taken in the event of a temporary service disruption.

Status: Completed

Planned Action(s): The ASCS requires that "every designated public sector organization... shall prepare a document that sets out the steps to be taken in connection with a temporary disruption...". The ASCS guidelines go further to identify the following four steps:

- the circumstances under which notice about a temporary disruption will be provided and where it will be posted;
- what steps will be taken when an unexpected disruption occurs;
- information that will be included in the notice of a temporary disruption; and
- what alternative facilities or services, if any, can be made available during the temporary disruption to continue to provide service to people with disabilities.

The MNR will provide a document that sets out the steps to be taken in connection with a temporary disruption. This process will be implemented by January 1, 2010, within the ministry. This will be implemented across all public-facing facilities where MNR is currently housed. This service disruption notification protocol is consistent with OPS level service disruption protocols.

Implementation Timeframe: Completed

Results Achieved: The MNR has developed and achieved a notice of disruption.

Ontario Parks Signage

Commitment: Ontario Parks will continue to post signage in provincial parks using symbols consistent with internationally recognized standards and in larger print signage.

Status: Ongoing

Planned Action(s): Signage posted by Ontario Parks is presently using symbols consistent with internationally recognized standards and in larger print signage wherever possible.

Implementation Timeframe: September, 2008 to March, 2011

Results Achieved: All signage in provincial parks meet international standards enhancing service for all parks users, including persons with a disability.

General Enhanced Communications with Person(s) with Disability: Commitment to Accessible Meetings

Commitment: MNR will enhance its efforts to organize and host accessible meetings.

Status: New

Planned Action(s): The MNR is committed to enhancing the accessibility of ministry-organized and hosted meetings. The MNR will conduct a thorough review of current best practices within the OPS and other agencies leading to identifying approaches and practices appropriate to MNR.

Implementation Timeframe: March, 2010

Results Achieved: n/a

General Enhanced Communications with Person(s) with Disability: Accessible Publication Format

Commitment: MNR will comply with the guidelines and procedures for meeting requests for accessible formats.

Status: Ongoing

Planned Action(s): MNR will continue to work cooperatively with Publications Ontario to provide publications in an ODA-compliant format. All ministry staff will be provided with ongoing guidance on procedures for responding to requests for publications in accessible formats.

Implementation Timeframe: March, 2011

Results Achieved: MNR continues to provide publications in ODA compliant format. Ministry staff have consistently and satisfactorily responded to requests for publications in accessible formats.

General Enhanced Communications with Person(s) with Disability: Meeting Public-Facing Website Accessibility Standards

Commitment: MNR will comply with accessibility standards associated with the ministry's public-facing website, as defined in the ODA.

Status: Ongoing

Planned Action(s): MNR hosts an ODA-compliant, public-facing website that has been developed and maintained at current OPS web standards. The ministry will continue to comply with ODA standards for all new website additions.

Implementation Timeframe: March, 2011

Results Achieved: MNR's public-facing website is compliant with accessibility standards.

Participation in OPS Accessibility Leads Network

Commitment: MNR will continue to participate in the OPS Accessibility Leads Network in an effort to work cooperatively with other ministries in accessibility planning and implementation.

Status: Ongoing

Planned Action(s): Continued contribution to accessibility leads network.

Implementation Timeframe: March, 2011

Results Achieved: Contribution to OPS Accessibility Leads Network .

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Report on Other Accessibility Commitments

Focus Area: OPS AODA Planning and Implementation

Participation in AODA Planning Forums and Processs

Impact: Act and Regulation

Commitment: MNR will fully participate in OPS AODA Planning Leads Network, all OPS-level Planning Leads meetings and AODA forums.

Status: Ongoing

Planned Action(s): The CAO has been delegated responsibility for accessibility planning and implementation for the MNR. The MNR Corporate Business Management Committee (CBMC) will provide program governance support. The Accessibility Planning Lead for the ministry will participate in all accessibility meetings and forums to March 2010.

Results Achieved: MNR will support OPS accessibility planning.

Support OPS Accessibility Multi-Year Plan

Commitment: MNR will support the implementation of the OPS Accessibility Multi-Year Plan.

Status: Ongoing

Planned Action(s): The OPS Accessibility Multi-Year Plan will align and coordinate initiatives that remove and prevent barriers for persons with disabilities. MNR is committed to supporting the implementation of this plan.

Implementation Timeframe: March, 2011

Results Achieved: MNR will participate in forums, meetings, and processes associated with the development and awareness of the OPS Accessibility Multi-Year Plan.

Focus Area: Built Environment

Barrier-Free Design

Impact: Regulation and Policy

Status: Ongoing

Commitment: MNR will meet the standards for barrier-free design of Ontario government facilities in its facility acquisitions, construction, or significant renovation to existing or leased facilities.

Planned Action(s): The ministry's facility planning, acquisitions, construction, or substantial renovation will adhere to the government-adopted standards for barrier-free design. The ministry will meet this commitment in facility planning and development initiatives undertaken in 2009-10 and beyond.

Implementation Timeframe: March, 2011

Results Achieved: Significant completion was reached with the construction of the following offices: Ontario Ranger Camps Capital Repairs, Owen Sound Area Office Relocation, Dryden District Warehouse, various accommodation alterations (FSD), Moosonee Area alterations, Cochrane District Phase 3, alterations to Main Office accommodations (Whitney Block, Peterborough, Timmins & SSM).

All facilities meet the new barrier-free design standards.

Built Environment Standards Development

Impact: Regulation and Policy

Commitment: The MNR Accessibility Lead will participate in the OPS Built Environment Inter-Ministerial Committee (BE-IMC).

Status: Ongoing

Planned Action(s): The OPS has established an Inter-Ministerial Committee to support the development of AODA Built Environment Accessibility Standard. In 2008-09, the Accessibility Lead will be an active participant in the BE-IMC.

Implementation Timeframe: March, 2011

Results Achieved: MNR continues to support and participate in the OPS-level Inter-Ministerial Committee.

Ministry Built Environment Achievements

Impact: Regulation and Policy

Commitment: Capital-funding proposals in the ministry's corporate business plan for 2009-10 will be reviewed for compliance with requirements under Section 9 of the Ontarians with Disabilities Act. Conformity with the standards for barrier-free design of Ontario government facilities will be an important focus.

Status: Ongoing and Completed

Planned Action's): All funding proposals will be reviewed for compliance with accessibility requirements. The reviews will be carried out during Results-Based Planning for 2009-10.

Implementation Timelines: September, 2007 to March, 2010

Results Achieved: The review of capital funding proposals in the ministry's corporate business plan for 2009/10 has been completed. During 2008/09, the following were placed into service to meet accessibility requirements:

- Wasaga Beach – comfort stations (2)
- Rideau River – comfort station
- Killbear – comfort station
- Pinery – comfort stations (4)
- Bon Echo – comfort stations (2)
- Algonquin – East Gate comfort station
- Algonquin – composting toilets (10)

- Blue Lake – shower building
- Inverhuron – comfort station

Focus Area: Employment Standards Development

Impact: Regulation

Commitment: The MNR Accessibility Lead will participate in the OPS Employment Inter-Ministerial Committee (IMC).

Status: New

Planned Action(s): The OPS has established an Inter-Ministerial Committee to support the development of AODA Employment Standard. In 2009-10 the MNR Accessibility Lead will be an active participant in the Employment IMC.

Implementation: March, 2011

Results Achieved: MNR continues to support and participate in the OPS Inter-Ministerial Committee.

Focus Area: Information and Communications Standards Development

AODA Information and Communications Standard Development

Impact: Regulation

Commitment: MNR will provide input where required to support the development and review of the AODA Information and Communications Standard.

Status: New

Planned Action(s): The OPS has established an Inter-Ministerial Committee to develop an AODA Employment Standard. MNR will be informed of the progress of the standard development and will participate in the OPS review process of the standard prior to formal regulation.

Implementation: March, 2011

Results Achieved: n/a

AccessOPS

Impact: Service

Commitment: MNR will increase staff awareness and use of the AccessOPS Intranet Site.

Status: New

Planned Action(s): Continued bolstering of awareness of OPS site across the MNR to keep in touch with accessibility planning and implementation in the OPS via a communications plan.

Implementation Timeframe: March 2011

Results Achieved: MNR staff aware of AccessOPS Intranet Site.

Implementation of Enterprise-Level I&IT Initiatives in Support of New AODA Information and Communications Standard

Impact: Policy

Commitment: MNR will support and implement all OPS enterprise-level initiatives and programs related to the AODA Information and Communications Standard.

Status: New

Planned Action(s): In March, 2007, the OPS Information Technology Executive Leadership Council created the I&IT Accessibility Centre of Excellence to support ministry-level efforts in meeting the requirements of the new Information and Communications Standard. MNR will keep abreast of these initiatives and programs and support implementation where appropriate.

Implementation Timeframe: March, 2011

Results Achieved: n/a

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For More Information

Questions or comments about the ministry's accessibility plan are always welcome.

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Ministry website address: <http://www.mnr.gov.on.ca/>

Visit the Ministry of Community and Social Services Accessibility Ontario web portal at: www.mcass.gov.on.ca/accessibility/index.html. The site promotes accessibility and provides information and resources on how to make Ontario a barrier-free province.

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