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2011-2012 Accessibility Plan

The Honorable Steve Peters, Speaker of the Legislative Assembly

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Introduction

This annual accessibility plan has been developed by the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to outline its commitments for 2011-2012 to ensure that no new barriers are created and that, over time, existing ones are removed.

The Legislative Assembly continues to build on its achievements by implementing initiatives to make Ontario an inclusive and accessible province where people of all abilities have a chance to fully achieve their potential.

Message from the Speaker

All public sector and broader public sector organizations are required by law to have an annual accessibility plan and to make it available to the public. This is the seventh year in which plans have been written and are being implemented by organizations such as ours across the province.

The Legislative Assembly is committed to improving accessibility through identifying, removing and preventing barriers in key areas of customer service, employment, communications and information, and the built environment.

At the Assembly we continue to build on the success of our previous plans and are continuing to look for ways to better meet the needs of people with disabilities who come into contact with the Assembly, regardless of whether they are staff, members of the general public or Members of the Provincial Parliament.

If you have any comments or concerns, I encourage you to send them using the contact information located at the end of this document.

Sincerely,
Hon. Steve Peters
Speaker, Legislative Assembly of Ontario

Report on Accessibility Achievements for 2009-2010

Focus Area: Built Environment:

Commitment: A plan will be developed to modify the design of the Assembly's entry point security desks to ensure that those with disabilities have proper access to the desks.

Achievement: Completed, with a number of the new desks already installed and operating.

Focus Area: Built Environment:

Commitment: There will be a review of the washrooms in the Pages' quarters in the Legislative Building to ensure that they meet the needs of those with disabilities.

Achievement: The review of the washrooms was completed and the work was done to make them completely accessible.

Focus Area: Built Environment:

Commitment: An elevator will be installed in the west wing of the Legislative Building housing the Office of the Lieutenant Governor.

Achievement: The elevator was completed and installed within a new entrance area that is fully accessible.

Focus Area: Built Environment:

Commitment: Signage throughout the main Legislative Building will continue to be reviewed to ensure that it is appropriate for those with disabilities.

Achievement: New signage formats have been adopted for the interior of the building and new signage is being installed in key areas. The ODA Working Group has provided input into the accessibility requirements for new signage

on the Legislative grounds.

Focus Area: Information and Communication:

Commitment: The Assembly will continue to upgrade its intranet and internet sites and review their content to ensure that they meet accessibility standards.

Achievement: Ongoing. The work continues as the Assembly revamps and redesigns the sites and adds new and additional content.

Focus Area: Information and Communication:

Achievement: Installation of a closed captioning reader in the Speaker's Gallery. All public galleries in the Legislative Chamber now have access to closed captioning.

Report on Accessible Customer Service Requirements

Focus Area: Customer Service

Commitment: The Assembly will establish and publish its policies, practices and procedures relating to the provision of goods and services.

Achievements: The Assembly established and published its policies, practices and procedures relating to the provision of goods and services to people with disabilities and posted them on the front page of the Assembly's website: www.ontla.on.ca. This page also includes information for the public on how to provide feedback on how well the Assembly is doing in meeting its customer service requirements.

Focus Area: Customer Service

Commitment: The Assembly will establish policies, practices and procedures for people to provide feedback on how the Assembly provides goods or services to people with disabilities and how it will respond to any feedback and take action on any complaints.

Achievements: Feedback can be provided to the Assembly in person, via telephone or via email (accessibility@ontla.ola.org) to the Chair of the Assembly's Ontarians with Disabilities (ODA) Working Group. When feedback and/or complaints are received, receipt is acknowledged and the requestor is given a time frame for response if action or information is needed. The proper Assembly staff person is advised and the appropriate response is made.

Focus Area: Customer Service

Commitment: The Assembly will train staff, volunteers and contractors who interact with the public on a number of topics as outlined in the customer services standard.

Achievements: The Assembly established a training program for its staff on providing customer service to people with disabilities. All Assembly staff received this training and a training program has been put into place that ensures that all new Assembly staff members, and any volunteers and contractors, receive customer service training.

Information and Communication Commitments

Focus Area: Information and Communication

The Assembly will investigate how to capture closed captioning (rich media) from its television broadcasts onto the video streaming on the Assembly's internet site in order to improve the accessibility of the internet video stream.

Commitment: New

Planned Action: The Assembly will make recommendations on how best to include the closed captioning feed now available on its television broadcasts on its web broadcasts, with a goal of including it in both the live and archived versions of the broadcasts.

Implementation Timeframe: October 2011.

Focus Area: Information and Communication

The ODA Committee and the Assembly Information Management Office will develop and prepare a workshop on making electronic documents more accessible on the Assembly's website.

Commitment: New

Planned Action: The program will be developed based on the types and formats of documents now made available on the Assembly's intranet site.

Implementation Timeframe: Winter 2011.

Focus Area: Information and Communication

Planned Action: The Assembly will continue to work to ensure that the content on its website is accessible. To do this, it will use tools such as HiSoftware Compliance Sheriff.

Commitment: Ongoing. The work continues as the Assembly revamps and redesigns the sites and adds new and additional content.

Implementation Timeframe: Ongoing

Other Accessibility Commitments

Focus Area: Built Environment

Planned Action: Accessibility railing will be installed in the Speaker's Gallery in the Legislative Chamber.

Commitment: New

Planned Action: The railing has been designed and will be installed.

Implementation Timeframe: January – February 2011

Focus Area: Built Environment

Planned Action: A new portable stage will be designed and purchased. This stage is used for special events and gatherings. It will include an accessibility ramp.

Commitment: New

Planned Action: Working with a vendor a lightweight portable stage will be designed and fitted to the unique features of the centre staircase in the Legislative Building.

Implementation Timeframe: March 2011

Focus Area: Built Environment:

Planned Action: Additional entry point security desks will be installed that ensure proper access to those with disabilities.

Commitment: Completing work begun in 2010-2011.

Implementation Timeframe: 2011-2012

Comments about the Legislative Assembly's accessibility plan are always welcome.

For more information please contact:

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