



London & Middlesex Heritage Museum Multi-Year Accessibility Plan 2023-2026

Introduction & Organizational Commitment to Accessibility

The London and Middlesex Heritage Museum which operates Fanshawe Pioneer Village is a registered charity, and non-profit organization with fewer than 50 employees. As outlined in our Accessibility Policy, the Museum strives to meet the needs of its employees and customers with disabilities and is working hard to remove and prevent barriers to accessibility. As a museum with a Heritage Village and buildings, we are dedicated to the principle of accessibility to the extent possible, including provision of alternative means of access when necessary.

We are also committed to developing policies that respect and promote the dignity and independence of people with disabilities. Therefore, no changes will be made to our Accessibility Policy before consulting with and considering the impact on people with disabilities.

The London and Middlesex Heritage Museum is committed to fulfilling our requirements under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*. This accessibility plan outlines the steps we are taking to meet those requirements to improve opportunities and the visitor experience for people with disabilities, and shows how we will play our role in making Ontario an accessible province for all Ontarians.

This plan will be reviewed and updated at least once every 3 years.

Past Achievements to Remove and Prevent Barriers

The London and Middlesex Heritage Museum has accomplished the following accessibility initiatives;

Customer Service

- Accessibility Policy approved by the Board in 2011, and amended in 2015.
- Providing AODA customer service training as outlined in the training section of this plan.
- Provided customers with notice in the event of a planned or unexpected disruption in the facilities or services we provide. This notice includes information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated duration, and a description of alternative facilities or services, if available. The notices were placed at all public entrances and service counters on our premises, and posted on our social media accounts.
- Feedback methods are in place for visitor regarding the way the London and Middlesex Heritage Museum (L&MHM) - provides goods and services to people with disabilities. Visitors can provide feedback in-person, by telephone, on-line visitor feedback, comments or direct messages through social media, or using on-site visitor surveys in hard copy.
- Service animals are welcome in any area of the Museum and Heritage Village open to visitors.
- We are committed to welcoming people with disabilities who are accompanied by a personal support person. Our admission policy for persons with disabilities supports complimentary admission for all accompanying support persons.
- Visitors are allowed to use their own personal assistive devices to obtain, use or benefit from the goods, services and programs offered by L&MHM. We also offer courtesy wheelchairs for guests, and a golf cart shuttle service for those who did not bring their own assistive device, and have mobility issues to walk a distance.
- Note: Our organization does not utilize self-service kiosks.

Information and Communication Supports

- The L&MHM communicates with people with disabilities in ways they identify, to best meet their needs. When asked, we provide information and communication material in accessible formats, or with acceptable communication supports based on the individual need, and at no additional cost.

- L&MHM endeavours to provide equal access to all members of the community - to our collection, information, programs, and services.
- We have started to make our artifact collections database accessible online
- Website communication supports;
 - Our website has been tested to ensure it works with screen readers, and its layout is adaptive to different screen sizes.
 - Images on our website include alternate text descriptions.
 - To remove vision or language barriers, an audio tour guide of our Heritage Village is available in three languages through our website
 - There is a virtual tour option and 360 views of building interiors to remove physical or transportation access barriers.

Employment

- The L&MHM is committed to equitable, inclusive and accessible employment practices and meeting the standards outlined in the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act.
- All job postings included:
 - “Accommodation will be provided in all parts of the hiring process as required under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), Integrated Accessibility Standards. Applicants need to make their needs known in advance. The London & Middlesex Heritage Museum is an equal opportunity employer.”
- We work with employees to develop accommodation plans for disabilities, or temporary disabilities and will incorporate that into the workplace emergency response plan as required.

Training

- All staff and volunteers who interact with the public were trained as soon as practicable after being hired and training was provided in respect of any changes to the policies. Training included;
 - The purposes of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 and the requirements of the customer service standard and the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation
 - Accessibility and the Ontario Human Rights Code (Understanding Human Rights)
 - How to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities
 - How to interact with people with disabilities who use an assistive device or require the assistance of a service animal or a support person
 - What to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty in accessing L&MHM’s goods and services
 - L&MHM’s policies, practices and procedures relating to the customer service standard
- Employee and volunteer records were maintained for the training, including the dates on which the training was completed. Training refreshers are complete annually for permanent staff, and returning seasonal employees.
- Staff also receive additional training on; Workplace Violence & Harassment, Gender & Sexual Diversity, Workplace Sensitivity Workplace Diversity and Inclusion, Addressing Racism in the Workplace, and Workplace Health and Safety.
- In 2021-22 all full-time staff and Board Members participated in facilitated Equity and Inclusion training.

Design of Public Spaces

L&MHM will meet the Accessibility Standards for the Design of Public Spaces when building or making major modifications to heritage buildings. Examples notable examples include;

- Addition of the Visitor Admissions Tollgate building with accessible doorways and access ramps in 2010 and an upgrade to a cement entrance ramp into the Village in 2018.
- During building renovations to the SS#19 Schoolhouse in 2011 accessibility ramps were added, and entrance updates were made.

- In 2012 the public washroom facilities in the Heritage Village were fully rebuilt to current accessibility standards. The motors on the push button automatic door openers were replaced in 2021.
- The construction of the new Spriet Family Visitor Center (administration) building in 2013 - public access areas accessible including; automatic entrance doors, washrooms, gender neutral fully accessible washroom with adult-sized change table and automatic door, and addition two adjacent accessible permit parking spaces on a level cement pad.
- Construction/addition of the Rotary Office Annex next to the Denfield General Store – including accessible ramp in 2017
- Restoration of the Fugitive Slave Chapel building in 2023 – doorway width, threshold and incline pathways

Other provisions for persons with disabilities

- All buildings open to the public have had ramps added, or have roll-in barrier free entry to the main level, except the Gazebo, Weaver’s Shed and Peel House (due to space constraints, door width, or small size of the buildings.)
- Public areas of heritage buildings that can not be practically accessed such as Peel House and the second floors of Jury Farm house, Dr. Jones house have 360 degree virtual/video tours accessible to visitors through our website and YouTube channel.
- The text size, height and viewing angle of both standing visitors and those seated in a wheelchair are considered when creating displays, placement of barriers, labels and text panel signage.
- Adequate turning radius and space for wheelchairs movement is planned for during special events, and in exhibitions held in the Trillium Gallery.
- Benches for rest spots are located along pathways between buildings.

Strategies and Actions Planned to 2026

Customer Service

The London and Middlesex Heritage Museum is committed to providing accessible customer service to people with disabilities. This means that we will provide goods, services and facilities to people with disabilities with the same high quality and timeliness as others.

Building on our past achievements noted above, the L&MHM plans to continue the following initiatives, and additional action items in order to comply with the Customer Service Standard.

Planned Strategy/Action/Initiative	Timeframe
Service disruption notices – posted for planned or unexpected disruption in the facilities or services we provide, at all public entrances and service counters, on our website and social media accounts. Notices include the reason for the disruption, anticipated duration, and a description of alternative facilities or services, if available.	Current - ongoing
Service animals are welcome in any area of the Museum and Heritage Village open to visitors.	Current - ongoing
Entrance policy to provide free admission to support persons accompanying people with disabilities.	Current - ongoing
Visitors are allowed to use their own personal assistive devices to access goods and services and programs offered by L&MHM. We offer courtesy wheelchairs for guests, and a golf cart shuttle service for those who have mobility issues to walk a distance. (Operated by trained staff.)	Current - ongoing
Accessible feedback methods in place; in-person, by telephone, on-line visitor feedback, comments or direct messages through social media, or using on-site visitor surveys in hard copy.	Current - ongoing
Review of related policies for ways to improve organizational accessibility, equity and inclusion.	Planned for completion in 2023

Information and Communications

The London and Middlesex Heritage Museum is committed to making our information and communications accessible to people with disabilities.

Planned Strategy/Action/Initiative	Timeframe
When asked, provide information and communication material in accessible formats, or with acceptable communication supports based on the individual need. Materials will be supplied in a timely manner and at no additional cost.	Current – as needed
Make our artifact collections database accessible online	Current - ongoing
Website & digital communication supports; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Website works with screen readers, layout adaptive to different screen sizes ○ Images on our website include alternate text descriptions ○ Audio tour guide of our Heritage Village available in three languages through our website. Work with community groups to identify other languages to translate into. ○ There is a virtual tour option (website & YouTube) and 360 views of building interiors to remove physical or transportation access barriers. Revise to add new building added in 2023 and current displays in heritage buildings. Load 360 views onto tablets available to visitors in buildings with second floors. ○ Update photos of upper floors with current displays ○ Convert the tour guide into braille, and have available upon request. 	Current – ongoing Add new building to audio tour by May 2024, and offer in 2 more languages by May 2025. Complete no later than the start of 2024 season (May 2024) By fall 2023 By December 2024

Employment

The London and Middlesex Heritage Museum is committed to fair and accessible employment practices.

Planned Strategy/Action/Initiative	Timeframe
Continue to notify the public and employment candidates and staff of our commitment to fair and accessible employment practices. Notify applicants that, when requested, that we will accommodate disabilities during recruitment and assessment processes and when people are hired – ensure accommodation statement also included/added in all letters of offer.	Current – Ongoing June 2023 on – include in letter
Provide customized workplace emergency information to employees who have a disability. Develop individual workplace emergency response plans for employees with disabilities, and provide training/orientation to all team members.	Current – as needed
L&MHM is committed to providing individual accommodations to employees with permanent or temporary disability to meet their needs, or identified supports for the workplace. If performance management, career development and redeployment processes is used, we will take into account the accessibility needs of employees with disabilities.	Current – as needed
L&MHM is an equal opportunity employer and committed to employment equity.	Current – Ongoing

Training

The London and Middlesex Heritage Museum is committed to providing training in the requirements of Ontario’s accessibility laws and the Ontario Human Rights Code as it applies to people with disabilities.

Planned Strategy/Action/Initiative	Timeframe
We train every person as soon as practicable after being hired and provide training in respect to any changes made to our policies relating to accessibility. Training will be assigned as outlined in our Personnel and Volunteer Regulations for all staff (and volunteers working with the public) including;	All training completed within two weeks of start date.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The purposes of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 and the requirements of the customer service standard and the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation ○ Accessibility and the Ontario Human Rights Code, Understanding Human Rights ○ How to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities, who use an assistive device, or require the assistance of a service animal or a support person ○ What to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty in accessing L&MHM's goods and services ○ Review of L&MHM's policies, practices and procedures relating to the customer service standard <p>Workplace Violence & Harassment, Gender & Sexual Diversity, Workplace Sensitivity Workplace Diversity and Inclusion, Addressing Racism in the Workplace, and Workplace Health and Safety as assigned.</p>	Annual training updates/refreshers for all permanent and returning seasonal staff.
Training records are maintained for both staff and volunteers, including the dates on which the training was provided/completed.	Completed upon hiring, and annually
Review training methods, and monitor for new topics or improved training resources to offer.	Each year

Design of Public Spaces

The London and Middlesex Heritage Museum will meet accessibility laws (Accessibility Standards for the Design of Public Spaces) when building or making major modifications to heritage buildings, access paths and public spaces.

Planned Strategy/Action/Initiative	Timeframe
Restoration of the Fugitive Slave Chapel building in 2023 – entrance doorway width, threshold and incline pathways	Summer 2023
SS#19 Schoolhouse ramp – decking and railing replacement of rotting materials	2023
Assess condition of all access ramps and repair as needed	Annually
Consider/assess feasibility of adding ramp to kitchen door at Peel House	2024
Assess visitor pathways/roadways in Heritage Village to improve rolling surface	2023-24
Ensure there is always an accessible patio table out with the picnic tables	2023 - ongoing
Add pathways to ramps at heritage buildings (where they don't already exist) to make them easier to locate and access	Complete by end of 2024
Complete an accessibility audit in consultation with people with disabilities to identify additional ways we can remove barriers and improve access and the visitor experience – and update this plan as needed.	Spring 2025

Additional Information

For more information on this accessibility plan, please contact;

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Accessible formats of this document are available upon request.