



JOINT ELGIN/CENTRAL ELGIN  
2008-2009  
ANNUAL MUNICIPAL  
ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

Adopted by County Council – December 11, 2008  
Adopted by Central Elgin Council – December 08, 2008

## INDEX

### JOINT ELGIN/CENTRAL ELGIN MUNICIPAL ACCESSIBILITY PLAN (JAAC)

<b><u>SECTION</u></b>	<b><u>PAGE NO.</u></b>
Executive Summary	1
Mission Statement	1
Aim	2
Objectives	2
Municipal Highlights, Population and Organizational Structure	
County of Elgin	2
Municipality of Central Elgin	2
Establishment of Accessibility Working Group	3
Co-Ordinators	3
Members of JAAC	3
County of Elgin/Municipality of Central Elgin Commitment to Accessibility Planning	4
Achievements from October 2006-September 2007	4
Barrier Identification Methodologies	6
Barriers Identified and Status of Elimination	7
Mandatory Accessibility Standards	12
Focus for 2009	13
Review and Monitoring Process	13
Communication of the Plan	13
Recommendations	14
Signature Page	14
Appendix “A” – Mandatory Provincial Accessibility Standards	15
Appendix “B” – County of Elgin 2008 Summary of Barriers Addressed	18
Appendix “C” – Municipality of Central Elgin 2008 Summary of Barriers Addressed	20
Appendix “D” – Joint County of Elgin and Municipality of Central Elgin 2008 Initiatives	20
Appendix “E” – Photographs of Accessible Locations	21

**JOINT ELGIN/CENTRAL ELGIN  
ANNUAL MUNICIPAL ACCESSIBILITY PLAN  
2008-2009**

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The purpose of the *Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001 (ODA)* is to improve opportunities for persons with disabilities and to provide for their involvement in the identification, removal and prevention of barriers to their full participation in life. To this end, the *ODA* mandates that each municipality with a population of over 10,000 forms a committee to identify accessibility barriers with membership composed of a majority of persons with disabilities and to prepare and publish annual accessibility plans.

An *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA)* became effective June 13, 2005. In addition to requirements of the *ODA*, an Accessibility Standards Advisory Council advises the Province on the process for the development of accessibility standards and the progress made by Standards Development Committees in developing proposed accessibility standards. Legislation includes that Ontario is to be barrier-free by the year 2025. Until repealed, the *ODA* remains in effect as well.

This is the sixth annual plan prepared by the Elgin/Central Elgin Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee (*JAAC*). The report describes: (1) the measures/achievements of the County of Elgin and the Municipality of Central Elgin (Elgin/Central Elgin) over the past year, and (2) the measures committed to be taken during the current year (2008-2009), to identify, remove and prevent barriers to persons with disabilities who use the facilities and services of Elgin/Central Elgin, including employees, volunteers, visitors, and other members of the community.

This year, Elgin/Central Elgin committed itself to the continual improvement of access to municipally-owned or leased premises, facilities and services for employees, volunteers, and visitors with disabilities; the participation of persons with disabilities in the development and review of its annual accessibility plan; and the provision of quality services to all members with disabilities within its jurisdictional community.

The accessibility working group, in its first annual plan, identified 70 barriers to persons with disabilities. The most significant findings were that Elgin/Central Elgin facilities are not fully wheelchair/mobility/vision/hearing accessible. Over the next several years, budgets need to include funds to eliminate these barriers. For 2009, the *JAAC* recommends removing 4 barriers in Central Elgin and 7 barriers in the County of Elgin, or as legislated by Provincial standards.

**MISSION STATEMENT**

The *JAAC* adopted the following as its Mission Statement:

“To identify, remove and prevent barriers to persons with disabilities who use the facilities and services of the County of Elgin and the Municipality of Central Elgin, including employees, volunteers, visitors, and all members of our Community.”

**AIM**

This report describes: (1) the measures that Elgin/Central Elgin have taken in the past, and (2) the recommendations from the *JAAC* for measures to be undertaken by Elgin/Central Elgin during the year 2008-2009, to identify, remove and prevent barriers to persons with disabilities who use the facilities and services of Elgin/Central Elgin, including employees, volunteers, visitors, and other members of the community.

**OBJECTIVES**

This Plan:

1. Recommends the process by which Elgin/Central Elgin can identify, remove and prevent barriers to persons with disabilities.
2. Reviews earlier efforts to remove and prevent barriers to persons with disabilities.
3. Lists the facilities, policies, programs, practices, and services that *JAAC* recommends Elgin/Central Elgin to review in the coming year to identify barriers to persons with disabilities.
4. Describes the measures Elgin/Central Elgin should undertake in the coming year to identify, remove and prevent barriers to persons with disabilities.
5. Describes how Elgin/Central Elgin would make this accessibility plan available to the public.

**MUNICIPAL HIGHLIGHTS, POPULATION AND ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE****COUNTY OF ELGIN**

The County of Elgin is situated along the north shore of Lake Erie and encompasses more than 187,966 Ha. with a population of 44,482 citizens (2008 figures from MPAC). The County is an "upper tier" municipality, which includes seven constituent "lower-tier" municipalities within the County structure, and one separated City. Each of these has their own separate system of governance. Corporate headquarters is located at the County Administration Building, 450 Sunset Drive, St. Thomas, partway between the City of St. Thomas and Port Stanley.

Areas of jurisdiction under the County corporate structure include responsibility for: County Council directives, by-laws, policies and procedures; protection of County assets and expenditures; design and construction of the County Road System; administration of Ontario Court of Justice and Provincial Offences operation; County Libraries (11 branches plus 1 main office); Museum; Archives; operation of three Long-Term Care Homes; emergency services (emergency response, 9-1-1, land ambulance, co-ordination of policing contract for 6 municipalities); a regional approach to Economic Development and Tourism Services; Ontario Works/Social Services (administered through City of St. Thomas); protection of County forest cover; and severing of land.

**MUNICIPALITY OF CENTRAL ELGIN**

The Municipality of Central Elgin is a progressive, dynamic urban and rural municipality, located on the shores of Lake Erie in the heart of southwestern Ontario connected by 370 kms. of municipal roads. The Municipality of Central Elgin encompasses 325 square kms, in area and has a population of 12,042 citizens (2008 figures from MPAC).

The Municipality of Central Elgin is a “lower tier” municipality with its own separate system of governance within the County of Elgin structure. The Administration Office for the Municipality of Central Elgin is located at 450 Sunset Drive, North Wing, St. Thomas.

Areas of jurisdiction under the Municipality of Central Elgin structure include: Council by-laws, policies and procedures; protection of Central Elgin assets and expenditures; Strategic Planning; Building Inspection; By-law Enforcement; Zoning/Committee of Adjustment; Municipal Roads System; Sanitary Sewer; Storm Sewers and Municipal Drains; Potable Water; Parks and Recreation; and Solid Waste.

## **THE ACCESSIBILITY WORKING GROUP**

### **Establishment of the Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee**

In accordance with the *ODA* legislation, the Councils for the County of Elgin and the Municipality of Central Elgin formed an optional joint accessibility advisory committee in 2002, known as the Elgin/Central Elgin Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee (*JAAC*). The Committee is comprised of five persons representing all geographic areas of the County of Elgin with the majority of membership being persons with disabilities.

The responsibilities of the *JAAC* are as follows:

- Identify barriers to persons with disabilities in all facilities, regulations, policies, programs, practices and services offered by Elgin/Central Elgin.
- List facilities, regulations, policies, programs, practices and services that cause or may cause barriers to persons with disabilities.
- Identify barriers that are to be removed or prevented in the coming year.
- Describe and recommend how these barriers should be removed or prevented in the coming year.
- Prepare an annual report on these activities, for approval by the Councils of the County of Elgin and the Municipality of Central Elgin, and make the plan available to the public.
- Review building plans and make recommendations on accessibility issues.

### **Co-Ordinators**

The Deputy Clerk position for the Municipality of Central Elgin and the Building Sciences Technologist position for the County of Elgin were appointed by the respective Councils as the Co-ordinators of the *JAAC* to provide administrative support and assistance.

### **Members of the JAAC**

Elgin/Central Elgin appointed the following members to the *JAAC*

<b>Working Group Member</b>	<b>Municipality/Agency</b>	<b>Department</b>	<b>Telephone/E-mail</b>
Ms. Jenny Phillips	Chair	<i>JAAC</i>	519 762-2862 <a href="mailto:jennyphillips@golden.net">jennyphillips@golden.net</a>
Ms. Sylvia Hofhuis	Vice-Chair – represents Elgin and Central Elgin Councils	<i>JAAC</i>	519 782-3541 <a href="mailto:shofhuis13@yahoo.ca">shofhuis13@yahoo.ca</a>

Ms. Donna Baldwin	Member	JAAC	519 866-3230
Vacant position	Member	JAAC	
Vacant position	Member	JAAC	
Ms. Dianne Wilson	Municipality of Central Elgin	Administration	519 631-4860 <a href="mailto:dwilson@centralelgin.org">dwilson@centralelgin.org</a>
Mr. Cole Aicken	County of Elgin	Engineering Services	519 631-1460 x 4 <a href="mailto:caicken@elgin-county.on.ca">caicken@elgin-county.on.ca</a>

### **ELGIN/CENTRAL ELGIN COMMITMENT TO ACCESSIBILITY PLANNING**

The Councils for the County of Elgin and the Municipality of Central Elgin adopted its first Accessibility Plan on September 23, 2003, and has adopted Annual Accessibility Plans each year thereafter, to identify and eliminate accessibility barriers to disabled persons. Elgin/Central Elgin is committed to:

- The continual improvement of access to Elgin/Central Elgin premises, facilities, and
- services for employees, volunteers, visitors, and other members of the community.
- participation of persons with disabilities in the development and review of its annual accessibility plans.
- provision of quality services to all employees, volunteers, visitors, and other members of the community.

The Councils of Elgin/Central Elgin authorized the JAAC to prepare annual accessibility plans that will enable Elgin/Central Elgin to meet these commitments.

### **ACHIEVEMENTS FROM OCTOBER 2006-SEPTEMBER 2007**

- The JAAC prepared the fifth Annual Joint Elgin/Central Elgin Municipal Accessibility Plan, which was adopted by both Councils.
- Awareness and resolution of accessibility barriers has been promoted throughout the various departmental staff with the importance of addressing these barriers emphasized. Departments are budgeting towards elimination of barriers over the next several years.
- The JAAC reviewed site plans for Elgin/Central Elgin and made recommendations to improve accessibility to the new or renovated facilities. These recommendations were incorporated into plans for renovations to Terrace Lodge for new HVAC units and fire alarm upgrade, Elgin Manor gazebo and sidewalks, Administration Building for construction of new Warden's and Administrative Services offices on the Third Floor and Men's and Women's washroom renovation on the First Floor.

## **ELGIN**

- Administration Building - Men's and Women's washrooms on first floor were reconstructed for accessibility, 1 barrier free toilet in each; 5'-0" turning radius; barrier free sink installed; lever hardware; hands-free water taps; automatic toilet flush valves.
- Administration Building - Women's washroom on second floor had an accessible barrier-free stall added.
- Administration Building - Sit/Stand workstation was purchased for use by any department
- Administration Building - Administrative Services and Warden's Office was relocated to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor - complete renovations for barrier-free access – double entrance doors; wide hallways and doorways; lowered reception desk area; washroom facilities with lever hardware, open area under sink, grab bar etc. – open area under kitchen sink, microwave on movable cart; 5'-0" turning radius in all rooms.
- Bobier Villa - Old Smoking Room was renovated into the new General Store, which included; accessible cupboards and shelving; and 5'-0" turning radius.
- Elgin Manor - 2m wide exterior walkways with curb cuts and shade structure installed to accommodate wheeled equipment, emergency safety and outdoor access – replaced interlock brick with concrete.
- Elgin Manor - Town Square area (front of Building), carpet was replaced with smoother VCT tile flooring.
- Elgin Manor - Tile flooring was installed throughout the core areas of the building providing a continuous floor level.
- Terrace Lodge - The front offices were renovated which included widening doors; lever hardware; new counter lowered for accessibility; chapel door changed to a double door; new library with a lowered counter.
- Terrace Lodge - Pull stations were added at accessible heights when upgraded to the new fire alarm system.
- Terrace Lodge - Tuck Shop seating was redesigned to allow for more wheelchair travel; replaced existing counter with a new lowered barrier free counter.
- Dutton/Dunwich Library - Barrier free circulation desk was installed with lower section and 5'-0" turning radius behind desk.
- West Lorne Library - Reopened after a fire and built to be barrier free. 3'-0" wide doors complete with automatic door openers. Circulation desk has lower section at 32 ¼" high.
- Health Unit - Accessible parking spaces were remarked; lever hardware installed on some doors; panic bars installed on all interior exit doors.

## **CENTRAL ELGIN**

- White Station Garage - Water coolers are barrier free and light switches located 1.2m from the floor.
- Port Stanley Beach - Usage statistics were gathered for future planning purposes.

## **JOINT INITIATIVES**

- AccessElgin Website – JAAC approved proceeding with the design of the AccessElgin website in conjunction with IT staff from the County of Elgin.

## **BARRIER IDENTIFICATION METHODOLOGIES**

The Working Group used the following barrier identification methodologies:

<b>Methodology</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Status</b>
Promotion and awareness of accessibility barriers and JAAC activities	The JAAC will be sending letters to the local Chambers of Commerce and BIAS to increase their awareness of the new Accessibility Standards coming out.	Ongoing
Staff reviewed accessibility barriers in all facilities	Staff inspected owned premises and identified accessibility barriers.	Ongoing
Accessibility website	The JAAC requested establishment of a website, linked from the County of Elgin homepage. The website would house the JAAC Minutes, annual Accessibility Plans, accessibility information and links to sites of interest to visitors. The site would also act as a public forum for input into accessibility issues.	Design and content of the website is in the development stage. The Chair's husband has agreed to design the website. Staff to maintain the site is to be determined. All content is to be reviewed by the JAAC prior to posting on the website.
Plan Approvals	The JAAC reviews renovation/construction plans to ensure accessibility barriers are addressed prior to construction	Plans reviewed were renovations to Suite #307, Administrative Building; Construction of the new Ambulance Base in Aylmer; Site plan for ramps, Port Stanley Beach.
Five -Year review of all County owned buildings	Staff inspected owned premises and identified accessibility barriers.	Ongoing

## **BARRIERS IDENTIFIED**

The JAAC identified 70 barriers in 2003. The Councils of Elgin and Central Elgin adopted the recommendations of the JAAC to begin eliminating these barriers. As well, when new or renewal Leases are discussed, (e.g. Libraries and vehicles) consideration would be given to eliminate accessibility barriers as previously identified.

The Barriers were prioritized into categories as follows:

- #1 – High Importance – measures to be undertaken to address the barrier as soon as possible
- #2 – Medium Importance – measures to be undertaken to address the barrier within the next five years
- #3 – Low Importance – measures to be undertaken to address the barrier when renovations occur.

The following list contains the barriers completed during 2008 and those remaining:

### **INFORMATION/COMMUNICATION/POLICY BARRIERS**

<b>CATEGORY</b>	<b>BARRIER AND RESOLUTION</b>	<b>STATUS ELGIN</b>	<b>STATUS CENTRAL ELGIN</b>
1	Signage throughout all buildings to be in Braille or routed letters no higher than 4 feet (1.22 m) from the floor, and in a standardized location.  <b>Note: Acquisition of signage was delayed pending possible criteria for lettering etc. from the new Provincial standards committees</b>	Planned but delayed	Planned but delayed
1	Elevator floor buttons and selection panel to include Braille and be positioned no higher than 4 feet (1.22 m) from the floor. Emergency telephone to be positioned no higher than 4 feet (1.22 m) from the floor.	Temporary Braille signage installed in Admin. Bldg. and Terrace Lodge. Redesign of these elevators and other buildings ongoing	Temporary Braille signage installed in Port Stanley Arena. Redesign of interior of elevator in this and other buildings ongoing
1	Voice or chime enunciators for floor positions to be installed in elevators	Planned 2010 – Admin. Bldg. Other areas ongoing	Ongoing
1	Create website version for persons with visual loss	Resources may be available through web browsers	Resources may be available through web browsers
1	Re-mark suitably sized accessible parking spaces and install signage worded to include the fine amount	Ongoing – Admin. Building(Complete)	Ongoing – Beach Area's and Arena (Completed)
2	Voice or buzzer indicators at traffic lights to be installed in built-up, urban areas where pedestrians may cross the street	To be investigated and planned for 2012	To be investigated and planned for 2012

**INFORMATION/COMMUNICATION/POLICY BARRIERS (cont'd.)**

<b>CATEGORY</b>	<b>BARRIER AND RESOLUTION</b>	<b>STATUS ELGIN</b>	<b>STATUS CENTRAL ELGIN</b>
1	Hiring and interviewing policies to include accommodation procedures for persons with disabilities	Completed	Ongoing
2	Human Resources and Health & Safety reading material, policies, warnings, notices, to be in multi-formats.	Policy Manual is available in large font. Other formats will be provided over the next few years	Ongoing – is available in large font
2	Fire pull station and extinguishers to be lowered to no higher than 4 feet (1.22 m) from floor	Planned 2010 – Eng. Serv., Cultural Serv., IT. Other areas ongoing.	Under discussion
2	PC's for public use to be compatible for Braille translation software. Purchase screen readers (e.g. Job Access With Screen Reading). Purchase Braille software and keyboard (e.g. Dragon Dictate) that a person uses to dictate information and it writes it down. Install Braille embosser and soundtrack on narrative	Libraries (except Vienna) installed Zoom Text Magnifier/Reader program to assist patrons with vision loss. Neo Speech voice recognition is being investigated. Windows XP has accessibility options for users	n/a
2	Investigate computers to communicate with persons with hearing/vision loss	JAAC concluded front counter staff could handle situations appropriately	JAAC concluded front counter staff could handle situations appropriately

**PHYSICAL/ARCHITECTURAL BARRIERS**

<b>CATEGORY</b>	<b>BARRIER AND RESOLUTION</b>	<b>STATUS ELGIN</b>	<b>STATUS CENTRAL ELGIN</b>
<b>General</b>			
1	When new/renewal Leases are discussed, consideration to be given to barriers identified throughout Plan	Ongoing	Ongoing
1	All interior exit doors require panic bars	Ongoing	Ongoing
1	Investigate book drop off zones for libraries	Ongoing	n/a
1	Lower shelving in libraries or ask for staff assistance in interim	Ongoing – Dutton 80% Completed.	n/a

**PHYSICAL/ARCHITECTURAL BARRIERS (cont'd.)**

<b>CATEGORY</b>	<b>BARRIER AND RESOLUTION</b>	<b>STATUS ELGIN</b>	<b>STATUS CENTRAL ELGIN</b>
<b>General</b>			
1	Portion of bars/rods in coat closets and hooks in lockers to be lowered or purchase hook & rod devices that hang from existing rods to lower level	Ongoing.	Belmont Arena new addition under discussion. Other areas ongoing.
1	Vertical difference in elevation not to exceed 12mm (sidewalks)	Ongoing	Ongoing
1	Require extenders on fans and mini blinds to allow for adjusting	Completed	Ongoing
1	Disabled parking space(s) to be identified, signed and promoted for buildings, shopping, beach areas	To be discussed at Joint Administrators' meeting	To be discussed at Joint Administrators' meeting
2	Install power operators on exterior main entrance doors	2010 – White Station Garage. Other areas ongoing.	Ongoing.
2	Power door operator control button to be located 3-4 feet (.91-1.22 m) from doorway to allow for opening	Under discussion	Under discussion
2	All access ramps and washrooms to have minimum turnaround radius of 5 feet (1.52 m)	Ongoing	Ongoing
2	All access ramps to be minimum unobstructed width of 3 feet (.91 m) inside railings	Under investigation – Admin. Bldg. Other areas ongoing.	Ongoing
2	All door widths to be minimum of 3 feet (.91 m)	Ongoing	Ongoing
2	All turn-type knobs to be replaced with lever style	Ongoing	Ongoing
2	Lower section of concession counters	n/a	Ongoing
2	Paths to be constructed to provide access to playgrounds/sports fields	n/a	To be considered in 2008.
2	Playground equipment to be barrier free or add on barrier free section	n/a	To be considered in 2008
3	Mailroom in Administration Building to be rebuilt. Mailroom in Central Elgin to be redesigned	Planned - 2010	Ongoing
3	Installation of non-glare/indirect lighting in offices and work stations	Grids on lighting being replaced with grids that reflect light downwards.	Ongoing

**PHYSICAL/ARCHITECTURAL BARRIERS (cont'd.)**

<b>CATEGORY</b>	<b>BARRIER AND RESOLUTION</b>	<b>STATUS ELGIN</b>	<b>STATUS CENTRAL ELGIN</b>
<b>General</b>			
3	Workstations to be adjustable	Sit/stand workstation purchased.	Being tested
3	Curb cuts and sidewalk ramps to be included in new construction and others to be retrofitted	Done during new construction.	15% of existing curbs & sidewalks to be retrofitted. Others done during new construction
3	Water coolers to be barrier free	Completed	Ongoing
3	Lifts and/or elevators to other floors or basements to be installed if necessary	Ongoing	Ongoing
3	Provide accessible scooter/storage locations in Homes for Seniors and not-for-profit housing	Ongoing	n/a
3	All thresholds to be level with flooring or entrances	Planned 2012 – Eng. Serv.; Bobier Villa; 2010 – White Station Garage. Others ongoing.	Ongoing C.A. Bell Medical Centre - Completed
3	All light switches to be lowered to no higher than 4 feet (1.22 m) from the floor	Ongoing	White Station Garage – complete. Ongoing for others.
3	Storage of parts and chemicals to be moved to an accessible area	Ongoing	Ongoing
3	Should an employee with physical limitations require the use of a leased vehicle to perform duties, an accessible vehicle will be leased	Policy adopted	Policy adopted
3	Power control panels to be lowered (access to fuses/breakers)	Ongoing – device to reach switches being investigated	Ongoing – device to reach switches being investigated
<b>Kitchens</b>			
2	Lower section of counter, provide accessible sink and cupboard area, and sufficient space for wheelchair access in kitchens available for public or employee use	Planned 2010 – Cultural Services. Other areas ongoing	Port Stanley Arena lower section of counter–alternatives to be reviewed in 2008. Others ongoing.
3	Microwaves to be at an accessible height and placement or purchase moveable carts	Ongoing	Planned 2008 – Belmont Arena Others ongoing.

**PHYSICAL/ARCHITECTURAL BARRIERS (cont'd.)**

<b>CATEGORY</b>	<b>BARRIER AND RESOLUTION</b>	<b>STATUS ELGIN</b>	<b>STATUS CENTRAL ELGIN</b>
<b>Office Ergonomics</b>			
1	Office furniture to be repositioned to allow clear 3' (.91m) access	Ongoing	Ongoing
2	Equipment stands (fax, printer, etc.) to be at accessible height or be adjustable	Planned - 2010 Libraries. Other areas by 2012	Ongoing
2	Reception desks to have lower section or be adjustable	Planned 2010 – Econ. Dev.; Cultural Services. Other areas ongoing; Public Health - Completed	Complete
2	Mailing machines to be at accessible height or adjustable	Completed	Ongoing
3	Replacement desks to be adjustable and with rounded corners	Completed	Upon new purchase.
3	Computer workstations – desks and chairs to be adjustable	Ongoing	Ongoing
3	Photocopiers to have controls at accessible height	Not available on the market yet. Assistance available upon request.	Not available on the market yet. Assistance available upon request.
3	Filing cabinets to be no higher than 4 drawers or purchase revolving side file cabinets	Completed	Ongoing
3	Lower shelving and informational material	Ongoing	Ongoing
3	Grates in floor to be level with flooring material	Ongoing	Ongoing
3	Lower control buttons for garage doors and wash bay	Ongoing	Ongoing
<b>Washrooms</b>			
2	Provide barrier free washroom facilities as per the Ontario Building Code	Not necessary to renovate office washrooms if accessible washrooms are available in close proximity. Ongoing	Not necessary to renovate office washrooms if accessible washrooms are available in close proximity. Ongoing

**PHYSICAL/ARCHITECTURAL BARRIERS (cont'd.)**

<b>CATEGORY</b>	<b>BARRIER AND RESOLUTION</b>	<b>STATUS ELGIN</b>	<b>STATUS CENTRAL ELGIN</b>
3	Showers require a bench, well-anchored grab bars, and handheld showerheads. All controls to be within easy reach	n/a	Ongoing

**TECHNOLOGICAL BARRIERS**

<b>CATEGORY</b>	<b>BARRIER AND RESOLUTION</b>	<b>STATUS ELGIN</b>	<b>STATUS CENTRAL ELGIN</b>
2	Purchase headsets for computer access for persons with vision loss	Funding being pursued for Libraries. Other areas ongoing	Ongoing
3	Outfit telephones with volume control/flashing light and large keypad	Admin. Bldg. telephones have volume control and flashing light. Large keypad phones can be purchased as required. Other areas ongoing	Upon new purchase
3	Install rotational lighting on fire alarm systems	Ongoing	Ongoing
3	Relocate or lower heat thermostats no higher than 4 feet (1.22 m) from the floor	Ongoing	Ongoing

**MANDATORY ACCESSIBILITY STANDARDS**

The first of a group of Standards, the Customer Service Standard, is now law and comes into force on January 1, 2008. Information on the Customer Service Standard (see Appendix "A") can be found at [http://www.mcass.gov.on.ca/mcass/english/pillars/accessibilityOntario/acceson\\_business/customer/index.htm](http://www.mcass.gov.on.ca/mcass/english/pillars/accessibilityOntario/acceson_business/customer/index.htm). Standards for Transportation; Information and Communications; Built Environment; and Employment will be developed over the next several months. Compliance with Standards, once legislated, is mandatory and applies to both the public and private sectors.

The County of Elgin and the Municipality of Central Elgin are preparing a policy as required by the Customer Service Standard for implementation by the end of 2009.

Standards for Transportation; Information and Communication; Built Environment; and Employment will be developed over the next several months. Compliance with Standards, once legislated, is mandatory and applies to both the public and private sectors.

## **FOCUS FOR 2009**

### **By-Laws, Policies, Practices, Services to be Reviewed**

The JAAC will review various by-laws, policies, practices, and services to determine their effect on persons with disabilities as follows:

- Design and development of an accessibility website. The domain name AccessElgin.ca has been reserved and design and development of the website will be undertaken over the next two or three years.
- Planning, building practices, subdivision policies, and development of a criteria list.
- Disabled parking spaces in core business areas. A survey has been returned by local municipalities detailing the number and location of municipal parking spaces for persons with disabilities in their respective municipality.
- Follow up with Elgin and Central Elgin staff to ensure policies and procedures are being developed to comply with the Mandatory Customer Service Standard.
- Promotion and public awareness.

### **REVIEW AND MONITORING PROCESS**

The JAAC will meet regularly to review progress and staff would be reminded, through personal contacts or by e-mail, about their roles in implementing the Plan. The Chair/Vice-Chair will request to attend a meeting(s) with Senior Management Teams to review the progress of accessibility barrier elimination.

### **COMMUNICATION OF THE PLAN**

Copies of the plan are to be available at the County of Elgin Administrative Services front counter, Municipality of Central Elgin front counter, County Libraries, local municipal offices, and on the County of Elgin and on the Municipality of Central Elgin websites. On request, the report can be made available on computer disk, or in large print.

The domain name of AccessElgin.ca has been secured and the website will be developed over the next few years. The website, once in operation, would house JAAC Minutes, annual Accessibility Plans, accessibility information and links to sites of interest to visitors. The site would also act as a public forum for input into accessibility issues.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

THAT the Elgin/Central Elgin Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee recommends to the Council for the County of Elgin and to the Council for the Municipality of Central Elgin that the following barriers to persons with disabilities be addressed during 2009:

1. All barriers identified by departmental staff for elimination in 2009, which are detailed on Pages 7-12 of the Plan, are to be scheduled for completion during 2009, or as legislated by Provincial Standards, within budgetary limitations; and further,

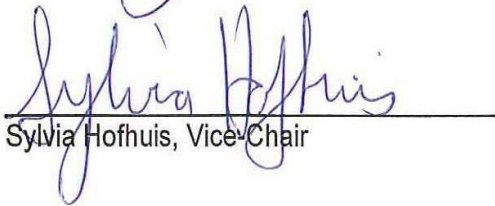
THAT Elgin and Central Elgin staff work toward development and implementation of processes and policies to comply with the new Mandatory Accessibility Standards.

Respectfully Submitted



---

Jenny Phillips, Chair



---

Sylvia Hofhuis, Vice Chair



---

Donna Baldwin, Committee Member

**APPENDIX "A"****INFORMATION FROM  
MINISTRY OF COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL SERVICES WEBSITE  
ON CUSTOMER SERVICE STANDARD****Customer Service Standard Compliance**

- Who has to comply with the customer service standard?
- What businesses and organizations have to do to comply?
- When businesses and organizations have to comply and report
- When businesses and organizations don't meet their accessibility obligations
- Helping businesses and organizations meet their accessibility obligations

Ontario's accessible Customer Service Standard is now the law. It comes into force on January 1, 2008.

Businesses and organizations that provide goods or services to people in Ontario are now legally required to make their customer services operations accessible to people with disabilities. This will be done by identifying and removing barriers to customer service in such areas as operational practices, policies and procedures, communications and staff training.

The legal requirements of the standard are set out in two Ontario Regulations under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005:

- Ontario Regulation 429/07 (Accessibility Standards for Customer Service), and
- Ontario Regulation 430/07 (Exemption from Reporting Requirements).

The regulations will be reviewed in five years (by 2013) to determine whether any of the requirements should be changed.

The standard is based on the recommendations of the Accessible Customer Service Standards Development Committee, whose membership included people with disabilities or their representatives and people from the private, public and non-profit sectors.

It's the first in a series of standards that will help lead to a fully accessible Ontario by 2025.

**Who has to comply with the customer service standard?**

The standard applies to all businesses and organizations that:

- provide goods or services to the public, and
- have at least one employee.

Businesses and organizations in the following sectors are affected:

- private
- non-profit, and
- public, including provincial and municipal governments, universities, colleges, hospitals, school boards and public transportation organizations.

## **What businesses and organizations have to do to comply?**

Businesses and organizations are required to:

- meet mandatory compliance requirements, and
- file accessibility reports to show that they are meeting the requirements of the standard.

Specifically, businesses and organizations must:

- establish policies, practices and procedures governing the provision of goods or services to persons with disabilities, including a policy about the use of assistive devices.
- use reasonable efforts to ensure that their policies, practices and procedures are consistent with the following principles:
  - the goods or services must be provided in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities
  - the provision of goods or services to persons with disabilities and others must be integrated unless an alternate measure is necessary, whether temporarily or on a permanent basis, to enable a person with a disability to obtain, use or benefit from the goods or services
  - persons with disabilities must be given an opportunity equal to that given to others to obtain, use and benefit from the goods or services
- communicate with customers with disabilities in a manner that takes into account the customer's disability (for example, providing a publication in an alternate format, such as audio or Braille)
- train their customer service staff, volunteers and people responsible for developing the organization's customer service policies, practices and procedures in the provision of accessible customer service
- permit customers with disabilities who have support persons or service animals to use them while accessing goods or services in premises open to the public and, where admission fees are charged, provide advance notice concerning what admission, if any, would be charged with respect to a support person
- provide notice when accessibility to services or facilities for customers with disabilities is temporarily disrupted (for example, posting signs at the entrance of a building to let customers know that one or more elevators is temporarily out of service)
- establish a process for customers to provide feedback respecting the provision of customer services to persons with disabilities and for the organization to take action on complaints.

## **When businesses and organizations have to comply and report**

For purposes of compliance and reporting, the standard divides businesses and organizations into three categories.

1. designated public sector organizations with one or more employees have to:

- comply with the standard starting January 1, 2010
- file accessibility reports starting in 2010.

Designated public sector organizations include:

- provincial ministries
- designated provincial agencies that provide customer services (for a complete list of designated provincial agencies, please refer to Schedule 1 of Ontario Regulation 429/07)

- Legislative Assembly and its offices
  - municipalities
  - universities
  - colleges of applied arts and technology
  - public hospitals
  - school boards and public transportation organizations.
2. private sector and non-profit businesses and organizations with 20 or more employees have to:
- comply with the standard starting January 1, 2012
  - file accessibility reports starting in 2012.
3. private sector and non-profit businesses and organizations with 1 to 19 employees have to:
- comply with the standard starting January 1, 2012.

These organizations are not required to file an accessibility report. The exemption to reporting (Ontario Regulation 430/07) is being done so that smaller organizations, that have limited resources, can focus their efforts on achieving results.

When businesses and organizations don't meet their accessibility obligations Business and organizations must comply with the accessibility standards that apply to them. Failure to do so may result in penalties, such as fines.

For each person that is found guilty of an offence, a fine of up to \$50,000 per day may be levied for each day that the offence continues to occur.

For corporations, a fine of up to \$100,000 per day may be levied for each day that the offence continues to occur.

#### Helping businesses and organizations meet their legal obligations

The Ministry of Community and Social Services will be providing information and tools to help businesses and organizations understand and comply with their legal responsibilities.

Compliance assistance materials, tools and templates will be posted on the Ministry of Community and Social Services website by January 1, 2008.

#### Legislative References

- Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005
- Ontario Regulation 429/07 (Accessibility Standards for Customer Service)
- Ontario Regulation 430/07 (Exemption from Reporting Requirements)

More information can be found at <http://www.mcsc.gov.on.ca/mcss/english/pillars/accessibilityOntario/accesson/business/customer/index.htm>

## APPENDIX "B"

**COUNTY OF ELGIN  
ACHIEVEMENTS FROM OCTOBER 2007 TO OCTOBER 2008  
TOWARDS ELIMINATION OF ACCESSIBILITY BARRIERS**

Department/Building	Barrier Addressed
<p>Administration Building</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Topigs Offices</li> <li>- Mainline Office</li> <li>- Avery's Office</li> <li>- Coffee News Office</li> <li>- 1<sup>st</sup> Floor Washrooms</li> </ul>	<p>Moved to new office on 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor - complete renovations for barrier-free access; 3'-0" wide doors throughout office area with barrier-free lever hardware; no switches higher than 48"; 5'-0" turning radius in all rooms.</p> <p>Renovated Office on 2<sup>nd</sup> floor - added 3'-0" wide front entrance door complete with barrier-free lever hardware.</p> <p>Renovated Office on 2<sup>nd</sup> floor - added 3'-0" wide front entrance door complete with barrier-free lever hardware.</p> <p>Renovated Office on 2<sup>nd</sup> floor - added 3'-0" wide front entrance door complete with barrier-free lever hardware.</p> <p>Men's and Women's - added power operators to doors.</p>
Administrative Services	<p>Moved to 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor - complete renovations for barrier-free access - double entrance doors; wide hallways and doorways; lowered reception desk area; no switches higher than 48"; lowered hooks in closets; washroom facilities with lever hardware, open area under sink, grab bar etc. - open area under kitchen sink, microwave on moveable cart; 5'-0" turning radius in all rooms;</p>
Elgin County Museum	<p>4<sup>th</sup> floor - added new 3'-0" wide double entrance doors complete with barrier-free lever hardware.</p>
Human Resources	<p>Renovated - 3'-0" wide entrance door added; kitchen with lever hardware; door handles changed to lever style; fire extinguisher lowered; lowered reception desk area.</p> <p>Health &amp; Safety materials (Orientation package) available in large font.</p>
<p>Libraries</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Dutton/Dunwich</li> </ul>	<p>- All library branches now have public use headphones to assist those with a visual loss. (Technological Barrier)</p> <p>Replaced most of the shelving at the Dutton Library with accessibility compliant replacements. Repositioned information desk for better visibility and lowered a section of the desk to allow better access.</p>

<p>Ambulance Stations</p> <p>- Aylmer</p>	<p>New Ambulance Base - Designed to be totally Barrier-free.</p>
<p>Long Term Care Homes</p> <p>- Bobier Villa</p> <p>- Elgin Manor</p> <p>- Terrace Lodge</p>	<p>Nurses Station Desk - new counter top added with roll under area for wheelchairs.</p> <p>Salon - wall mounted hairdryer installed so residents now can stay in their personal mobility device while drying their hair.</p> <p>Family Room - new phone installed for residents.</p> <p>Front Offices - lowered mailboxes in front office area for better accessibility.</p> <p>Melissa Garden Area (Exterior) - signage at wheelchair level.</p> <p>Front Offices - lowered mailboxes in front office area for better accessibility.</p> <p>Smoking Shelter (Exterior) - replaced damaged cement pad to provide a smoother surface; replaced frosted plastic sheeting with smoked glass for visibility.</p> <p>Activation Room Renovations - 3'-0" wide double entrance doors with barrier-free hardware; added new kitchen cabinetry with roll under area and roll under kitchen sink with lever hardware;</p> <p>Courtyard Sidewalks/ Pads (Exterior) - 2m wide walkways installed to accommodate wheelchairs and scooters.</p>
<p>Public Health Unit</p>	<p>New reception desk with lower section purchased.</p> <p>Doors replaced with lever handles Ongoing.</p>

**APPENDIX "C"**  
**MUNICIPALITY OF CENTRAL ELGIN**

**ACHIEVEMENTS FROM OCTOBER 2007 TO OCTOBER 2008  
TOWARDS ELIMINATION OF ACCESSIBILITY BARRIERS**

<b>Department/Building</b>	<b>Barrier Addressed</b>
Main Beach, Port Stanley	Beach ramps constructed through the Blue Flag Program.
C.A. Bell Medical Centre	Barrier-free accessible doors installed.

Oct/08

**APPENDIX "D"**

**COUNTY OF ELGIN AND MUNICIPALITY OF CENTRAL ELGIN  
2008 JOINT INITIATIVES**

<b>Department/Building</b>	<b>Barrier Addressed</b>
County of Elgin and Municipality of Central Elgin	The domain name AccessElgin.ca has been secured as the web address for joint Elgin/Central Elgin accessibility issues and links. It is anticipated the site would be developed over the next few years.

Oct/08

## APPENDIX “E”

### PHOTOGRAPHS OF ACCESSIBLE LOCATIONS



Picture 1



Picture 2



Picture 3

Photos above were taken at the Port Stanley Beach highlighting the new accessible boardwalk and beach wheelchair. *Picture 1* – Jenny Phillips, JAAC Chair. *Picture 2* – Sylvia Hofhuis, JAAC Vice-Chair and Jenny Phillips, JAAC Chair. *Picture 3* - Sylvia Hofhuis, JAAC Vice-Chair and Tom Marks, Deputy Mayor, Municipality of Central Elgin.

**PHOTOGRAPHS OF ACCESSIBLE LOCATIONS (Cont'd.)**



*Picture 4*



*Picture 5*

Photos above were taken at the C.A. Bell Medical Centre highlighting the new accessible doors installed throughout the building. *Picture 4 and 5* – Dianne Wilson; Administration, Municipality of Central Elgin, Sylvia Hofhuis; JAAC Vice-Chair and Dr. John Hofhuis.