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AGENDA

OXFORD COUNTY LIBRARY BOARD
BOARD MEETING

Monday, February 28, 2022, 1:00 p.m.
Online via YouTube
www.ocl.net/livestream

1.   **CALL TO ORDER**

2.   **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

3.   **DISCLOSURES OF PECUNIARY INTEREST AND THE GENERAL NATURE THEREOF**

4.   **ADOPTION OF BOARD MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

   4.1.   December 13, 2021

5.   **DELEGATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS**

6.   **CONSIDERATION OF DELEGATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS**

7.   **CONSIDERATION OF CORRESPONDENCE**

   7.1.   Dina Stevens, Executive Director, Federation of Ontario Public Libraries

   RECOMMENDATION

      1.   That the correspondence dated December 14, 2021 and January 24, 2022 be received.

8.   **REPORTS**

   8.1.   Statistics

   RECOMMENDATION

      1.   That the Statistics for the one month ending January 31, 2022 be accepted.

   8.2.   2022-01 Librarian's Report

   RECOMMENDATION

      1.   That the Board receive Report No. 2022-01 for information and discussion purposes.

   8.3.   2022-02 Accessibility in the Library Policy

RECOMMENDATION

1. That the Library Board approve the Accessibility in the Library Policy as presented in Report No. 2022-02;

2. And further, that the Library Board receive the County of Oxford's Accessibility Standards for Customer Service Policy and the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan for information and discussion purposes.

9. **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

10. **NOTICE OF MOTIONS**

11. **NEW BUSINESS / ENQUIRIES / COMMENTS**

12. **CLOSED SESSION**

13. **CONSIDERATION OF MATTERS ARISING FROM CLOSED SESSION**

14. **ADJOURNMENT**

OXFORD COUNTY LIBRARY BOARD

MINUTES

December 13, 2021
Online via YouTube
www.ocl.net/livestream

Members Present	Chair Marcus Ryan
	Vice-Chair David Mayberry
	Councillor Don McKay
	Warden Larry Martin
	Regina Smith
	Julia Harris
	Laura Langford
Staff Present	L. Miettinen, CEO/Chief Librarian
	L. Buchner, Director of Corporate Services
	M. Duben, Chief Administrative Officer
	C. McLaren, Branch Services Librarian

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

    1:01 p.m. with Marcus Ryan in the chair.

2. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

    RESOLUTION NO. 1

    Moved By: David Mayberry
    Seconded By: Larry Martin

    That the Agenda be approved.

    DISPOSITION: Motion Carried

3. **DISCLOSURES OF PECUNIARY INTEREST AND THE GENERAL NATURE THEREOF**

    NIL

4. **ADOPTION OF BOARD MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

    4.1   November 15, 2021

    RESOLUTION NO. 2

    Moved By: Laura Langford
    Seconded By: Julia Harris

That the Library Board minutes of November 15, 2021 be accepted.

DISPOSITION: Motion Carried

5.   DELEGATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

5.1   Brandon Fratarcangeli and Steven Kraus, Ontario Library Service

The consultants facilitated a discussion on Board governance best practices. (presentation attached)

6.   CONSIDERATION OF DELEGATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

RESOLUTION NO. 3

Moved By: David Mayberry
Seconded By: Laura Langford

That the Library Board receive the delegation as information.

DISPOSITION: Motion Carried

7.   CONSIDERATION OF CORRESPONDENCE

NIL

8.   REPORTS

NIL

9.   UNFINISHED BUSINESS

9.1.   Library Board Governance Review – 2021

RESOLUTION NO. 4

Moved By: David Mayberry
Seconded By: Don McKay

That the Library Board receive the briefing note as information.

DISPOSITION: Motion Carried

10.   MOTIONS

10.1   Councillor Ryan

Whereas there have been historical governance difficulties for the Oxford County Library Board, and in order to increase access and amplify the voices of Oxford residents; and increase the efficiency and service delivery potential of the Oxford County Public Library service, staff, and assets;

Therefore be it resolved that the Oxford County Library Board be dissolved and the library service be delivered as a service of Oxford County, with branch specific committees formed to give voice to residents in their services.

Marcus Ryan withdrew his motion on the grounds that it would be a reconsideration of a defeated motion brought forward at the November Board meeting.

11. NOTICE OF MOTIONS

NIL

12. NEW BUSINESS / ENQUIRIES / COMMENTS

NIL

13. CLOSED SESSION

NIL

14. CONSIDERATION OF MATTERS ARISING FROM CLOSED SESSION

NIL

15. ADJOURNMENT

Library Board adjourns at 2:48 p.m.

_____

CHAIR

_____

SECRETARY

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Library Board Governance in Ontario

What's Your Role and How to be Effective?

Stronger libraries. Stronger communities.

Who are we? And why are we experts in library board governance?

- Brandon Fratarcangeli
  - Consultant at Ontario Library Service (previously SOLS) since 2016

- Steven P. Kraus
  - Formally the Skills Development Consultant with Ontario Library Service—North since 2004
  - Current Director of Training & Consulting of the newly formed Ontario Library Service

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Why are we here?

- Brief overview of library governance in Ontario

- Services & programs available to public libraries through the Ontario Library Service

- The Autonomy Paradox

- Common pitfalls and how to get *"unstuck"*

- Provincial Services and Grants
  - Requirements and responsibilities

- How to make it work?

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The *Public Libraries Act*

- Is the key piece of legislation governing Ontario's public libraries
- Supports the provision of equal and universal access to information; and establishes free public library services
- Regulates the governance of public libraries

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Governing under the *Public Libraries Act*

- According to legislation, public libraries in Ontario must be operated under the management and control of a public library board

- The board is:
  - Responsible for the supervision of the operations of the library system
  - The ultimate decision-maker for the library

- Two fundamental principles related to governance are embedded in the legislation and common law:
  - Authority belongs to the board as a whole
  - Each individual board member – appointed and elected – has a fiduciary responsibility to act honestly and in good faith and in the best interests of the library.

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Establishing the Library

- Under the *Public Libraries Act*, municipalities are given the power to establish public library boards
    - A municipal library system is established by municipal **by-law**
    - A county library system is established by county **by-law**
- Once established, a library is a corporation, as specified by the *Public Libraries Act*

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Exceptions to the Rule regarding Library Boards

- Lambton, Elgin, Lennox & Addington (through private member's bills)
- Region of Waterloo (through the *Municipal Act*)

3 Legislated Responsibilities

Responsibility #1

Accountability to Municipal Council

Be accountable to their municipality, submitting budget estimates to council and participating in the municipality's annual audit

Responsibility #2

Reporting responsibilities to the province

Submit statistics, financial information and public library operating and pay equity grant applications to the Government of Ontario.

Responsibility #3

Provision of free public library service

Provide a comprehensive and efficient public library service that reflects the unique needs of the community they serve

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The Library & the Municipality

Independent Legal Entities

+

Totally Dependent Financially

=

The Autonomy Paradox

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Clear Roles :

- between Library and Municipality
- between Board and CEO
- For Board members
- For municipal staff

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Memorandum of Understanding

In the interest of operational and business efficiencies, many public library boards work closely with their municipalities.

Many municipalities provide financial, HR, and facilities services for the public library.

More info

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CONFIDENTIAL

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

BETWEEN:

THE OAKVILLE PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD
(herein referred to as the "Library")

- and -

THE COPRORATION OF THE TOWN OF OAKVILLE
(herein referred to as the "Town")

WHEREAS the Library is a public library board and independent corporation established and operating under the *Public Libraries Act, R.S.O., 1990, c. P.44* as amended ("PLA"), the *Oakville Public Library Board Procedural By-Laws, July 12, 2016* ("Library By-Laws") and has separate charity status under Canada Revenue Agency.

WHEREAS the Town is a municipal corporation and the library is a local board of the municipality pursuant to the provisions of the *Municipal Act, 2001, S.O., 2002, c.25* as amended ("Municipal Act").

WHEREAS the Library and the Town have a shared commitment to work together to deliver efficient and cost effective library services to the residents of the Town of Oakville.

WHEREAS the Town employs staff who have expertise in areas that include financial services, information systems, facility and construction management, committee and board support, legal and other services as required.

WHEREAS the Library would like to utilize the Town's staff expertise in certain functions to benefit the Library.

AND WHEREAS the Library and the Town wish to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding ("MOU") to outline the roles and responsibilities within their partnership in the delivery of library services to the residents of the Town.

In strong board/chief executive relationships,

the partners ask tough questions of each other and encourage creative thinking and learning.

They put policies and disciplined practices in place that truly bring out the best in the other.

They search out fresh perspectives together and continually strive to generate and model balance, cooperation, and excellence in governance and management of nonprofit organizations.

--First Nonprofit Foundation

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Board Member "Job Description"

London Public Library Board Trustee Position Description
June 5, 2017

Library Purpose Statement

London Public Library strengthens people and neighbourhoods by creating connections that enrich lives, inspire discovery, foster creativity, and expand possibilities.

Library Board

Public Library Boards are governing boards, legal corporations with the authority to make policy and to govern the library's affairs under the *Public Libraries Act*, RSO 1990, c. P.44.

A board's duty is to provide comprehensive, effective and efficient public library service that reflects the community's needs and builds community capacity.

The stakeholders of today's libraries expect strong leadership. Consequently modern governance must reach beyond ongoing budget oversight and a regular strategic planning exercise to embrace new ideas, and forge strong relationships that will support the library in its Purpose and community and corporate values.

The primary roles of the London Public Library Board are to:

- Set the vision, mission and strategic direction for the library and, using strategic planning techniques, determine a strategy map to get there;
- Make policy within the framework of government legislation and regulations;
- Oversee the library's finances in accordance with public accounting principles and requirements and within municipal budget policy and procedures;
- Monitor overall effectiveness of the library in meeting community needs in an efficient and effective manner and evaluate progress on the strategic plan;
- Set fees where allowed by the Public Libraries Act;
- Hire and evaluate a qualified Chief Executive Officer to implement the strategic plan and to manage the day-today delivery of public service and daily operations of the library; and

Working with Council/County Admin on Appointments

The recruitment process provides an important opportunity to build a rapport with your municipal or county council.

You can meet with the council to discuss the needs of the library and the qualifications and qualities required for new board members.

You can prepare an information package for council. It might also be helpful to enlist the support of your municipal council representative during the appointments procedure and:

- Share with council the qualities required for new library board members
- Advise the municipal clerk that the library board members and CEO are willing to answer queries from interested citizens.
- Notify those who have expressed interest that applications should be mailed to the town office.

- Encourage councillors who are interested in the library to consider serving on the library board in their options for representation.

Source (Ontario Library Service Governance Hub)

August 28, 2008

Mr. Kevin Bain
City Clerk
The Corporation of the City of London
300 Dufferin Avenue
London, Ontario N6B 1Z2
519-661-2500 x4937

Dear Mr. Bain:

This letter is written related to the Public Libraries Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. P.44, Sections 11 and 12, regarding where a vacancy arises in the membership of a library board.
Thank you for initiating the steps required to give public notice of the vacancy and to hold office of Trustee, London Public Library Board. We were pleased to see that the process has been expedited.

In order to assist in this matter, the Library Board has prepared a document that can be used to provide information to individuals interested in applying for the vacancy; you and your staff in answering questions from interested people and in reviewing applications; and the Controllers and Councillors in making an appointment. Please find this document attached.

The document includes a section on core competencies and qualifications designed to support the selection and appointment of an individual who can make a difference in our community by being an effective London Public Library Board Trustee. The essential core competencies and qualifications are:

- Conviction that the public library is essential and uniquely important to the life of all Londoners and communities within London;
- Commitment to London and Londoners through active service to the community;
- Leadership experience;
- Business acumen;
- Ability to seek and listen to input from all stakeholders;
- Ability to approach people and problems with an open mind;
- Ability to actively participate in discussion and deliberation and to attain positive outcomes; and
- Time and energy.

We have also provided highly desirable qualifications, based on status of the **London Public Library Strategic Plan: Imagine!** and the current/emerging economic environment. The Library requires a well connected, credible community leader who brings:

- A large network of varied community contacts including the business/corporate, education, public and not-for-profit sectors; and
- Success in advocating for funding and political support.

Experience in the area of fund development would be an asset given that this will be a significant strategic emphasis for the Library Board the next few years.
Again, please accept our thanks for all of your attention to this matter. Please do not hesitate to contact me should you require further information.
Sincerely,

Report to Library Board   Page 2 - 8/28/2008 3:53 PM

Purpose of the Board (let's talk practicalities)

Oversight!

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Finances

What are the main statutory and common law responsibilities?	
• Budget Estimates	• Duty of Care
• Property	• Duty of Loyalty
• Audit	

Financial Stewardship	
• Protecting Assets	• Translating organizational values into financial decisions
• Long term planning	
• Sustainability	

Where do Library Boards get stuck?

- Lack of understanding
- Not sure what to ask
- "Don't know what we don't know"...?

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Finances

What are the practical things that the Board does?

- Ensure that the budget aligns with priorities (Strategic Plan, for example, is a starting point)
- Checks & Balances by enacting some types of performance measures
- Audited Financial Statements (notes to financial statements)
- Executive limitations on spending

- Important Questions to Ask Staff:
  - How does this support our strategic plan?
  - What is the sustainability of various funding sources?
  - Are there any alterative sources of funding available?
  - Is administration undertaking any cost reduction initiatives
  - For reserves/trust funds: are there any restrictions placed on the use of these funds?
  - Are we in compliance with the ESA/collective agreement?

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Policies

What's the role for the Board?	Where do library boards get stuck?
• Approval of recommendations • Scrutiny of the recommendations • Identify where policies gaps may exist	• Dig too much into the weeds • Focus too little on updating policies in appropriate intervals

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Policies

Why it matters?
• Policies empower staff to make decisions • Address any controversial issues and support staff • A supportive and fair employer • Ensure that the rules in place at the library make sense for your community

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Planning

What's the role for the Board?	Where do library boards get stuck?
• Assist in defining the library's purpose and direction. • Define the library's values • Providing inspiration through the expression of a vision of library service is part of the stewardship of the mission. • Establish the library's Strategic Plan	• No sense of ownership over the board's direction • Feeling a lack of focused direction • Unsure about community's needs and use of library services

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Planning

It might be time to start the strategic planning process if the Board is asking the following questions:

- Is the library relevant?
- What should the library be doing?
- How do we reach residents we currently don't reach?
- Could we be more effective if we had mobile options?
- As we exit COVID-19, what opportunities exist for us?

Strategic Plan
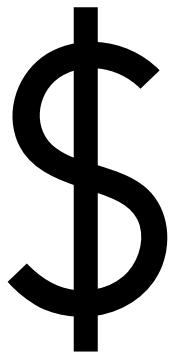
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The Board and the Community

Just as corporate boards are accountable to shareholders, the governing body of a not-for-profit organization has a fiduciary responsibility to **see that the organization is acting in the best interests of the public, and more specifically the "stakeholders" who are served by the organization's mission.**

~ Barry S. Bader – *Great Boards Newsletter*

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Why participate in the provincial framework?

Direct Funding: Annual provincial funding

$

Public Library Operating Grant
$135,675

Pay Equity Funding
$3,229

Special Grants

Provincial Programs & Service through OLS

OverDrive®

eResources

ancestry.com library edition

Interlibrary Loans

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Options presented to the Board

- Status Quo

- Library services included as a division or department within the County's structure

- Library Board with increased public member representation

- Library Board without support from County Staff

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Legislation: Dissolution of Local Boards, *Municipal Act*

Dissolution and Change of Local Boards
Power to dissolve or change local boards
216
Restriction
<mark>(3) Despite subsection (1), a municipality shall not, in accordance with subsection (1), dissolve or change a local board that is,</mark>
- (a) a society as defined in subsection 2 (1) of the *Child, Youth and Family Services Act, 2017*;
- (b) a board of health as defined in subsection 1 (1) of the *Health Protection and Promotion Act*;
- (c) a committee of management established under the *Long-Term Care Homes Act, 2007*;
- (c.1) Repealed: 2017, c. 10, Sched. 1, s. 13 (1).
- (d) a police services board established under the *Police Services Act*;
- Note: On a day to be named by proclamation of the Lieutenant Governor, clause 216 (3) (d) of the Act is repealed and the following substituted: (See: 2019, c. 1, Sched. 4, s. 33 (6))
- (d) a police service board established under the *Community Safety and Policing Act, 2019*;
- <mark>(e) a board as defined in section 1 of the *Public Libraries Act*;</mark>
- (f) a corporation established in accordance with section 203;
- (g) such other local boards as may be prescribed. 2006, c. 32, Sched. A, ss. 90, 91 (2); 2007, c. 8, s. 218 (4); 2017, c. 10, Sched. 1, s. 13 (1); 2017, c. 14, Sched. 4, s. 23 (2).

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Legislation: Dissolution of the Board, *Public Libraries Act*

Dissolution by Minister

42 (1) The Minister may dissolve a public library board, a union board, a county library board or a county library co-operative board where the board has not, during the two year period immediately preceding the dissolution, maintained and operated a library. R.S.O. 1990, c. P.44, s. 42 (1).

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What does this mean?

- Once a municipality decides to establish a library board, there is an obligation to operate it within the framework of the *Public Libraries Act.*

- Moving away from the framework puts provincial funding and services in jeopardy.

- If the Board does decide to recommend not operate a library within the framework, it is recommended that the Board seeks **legal opinion** to fully understand ramifications.

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One more consideration from the *Municipal Act*

474.15 (1) The operating costs of the library system of the County of Oxford shall be raised by a special upper-tier levy under section 311 on the rateable property in its lower-tier municipalities other than the City of Woodstock. 2002, c. 17, Sched. A, s. 91; 2017, c. 10, Sched. 1, s. 82.

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How to make it work?

- What currently isn't working? And what are some solutions?

Some suggestions

- Composition of the Board members: the number of members, fewer councillors

- Renewed focus: Strategic Planning and seeking greater community input

- Clarifying roles: Board member "job description", role for the Board in MoU discussions

Read More about Library/Municipal Relationship
Read More about Library/Municipal Coordination

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My observations...

- The role this Board is playing is typical of other Library Boards in the province

- From the discussion in preparation for this meeting, the Board seems to want to focus on strategic issues. This is appropriate and good use of the Board's energy.

  - For any organization, whether non-profit or for profit, it is important that the Board has a sense of "ownership" over the institution's direction and decisions.

- There is substantial value in pooling resources

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How to make it work?

- What currently isn't working? And what are some solutions?

Some suggestions

- Composition of the Board members: the number of members, fewer councillors

- Renewed focus: Strategic Planning and seeking greater community input

- Clarifying roles: Board member "job description", role for the Board in MoU discussions. Look for areas where there is greater possibilities of integration with the County structure.

Read More about Library/Municipal Relationship
Read More about Library/Municipal Coordination

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Stronger libraries. Stronger communities.

Federation of **La Fédération des**
ONTARIO **BIBLIOTHÈQUES**
PUBLIC **PUBLIQUES**
LIBRARIES DE L'ONTARIO

December 14, 2021

Oxford County Library
c/o Lisa Miettinen
21 Reeve St., PO Box 1614
Woodstock, ON, N4S 7Y3

Sent via email to *lmiettinen@ocl.net*
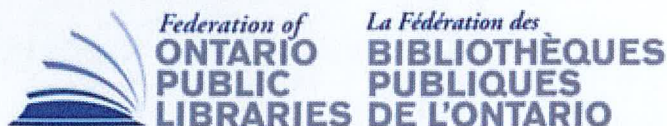
Dear Prospective Member,

I would like to thank you in advance for considering membership with the Federation of Ontario Public Libraries. Your membership is more than that; it is primarily your contribution to the collective goal of furthering the interests of Public Libraries across the Province. As we move into 2022, the year ahead will be crucial as we ramp up our efforts going into the provincial election in June. The municipal elections in the fall will prove to be another important marker for our library members whose library boards and city councils will be largely dictated by those outcomes. FOPL is here to support our library members; not only with our collective provincial advocacy efforts, but as consultants and as a resource for municipal advocacy.

We have three primary goals for advocacy going into 2022 and we need your support in achieving them:

1. Keep local public libraries across Ontario sustainable by **enhancing provincial operating funding** and ensure that this increased support reaches those libraries where it is most needed.
2. Working alongside First Nations Public Library leaders, rapidly implement **a sustainable funding model for First Nations public libraries** to ensure that these important local hubs are fully funded and viable. This includes increasing direct provincial funding support for First Nations public libraries to sustainably fund library operations and ensure a living income for frontline library staff in these communities.
3. Provide fair access to modern, digital resources for all Ontario public libraries through the **creation of an Ontario Digital Public Library**, thereby leveraging the province's significant purchasing power to give all Ontarians access to a common core of high-quality e-learning & online resources and more e-books.

Contributing to the Federation as a Library Member comes with many benefits as well:

- Communications from FOPL, providing updates on important library related issues and progress on our lobbying efforts within the province
- Member services, including access to the Members-Only resources, advocacy, training, and research available on our website
- Access to the annual FOPL Data Report
- Free training sessions and seminars
- A vote at the FOPL Annual General Meeting
- Opportunities to participate in our unique and impactful Working Groups
- Representation on the FOPL Board through your Caucus representatives
- Contributions to our annual advocacy goals and strategies through our bi-annual Caucus Meetings
- Access to FOPL staff for consultation on local advocacy and library related issues
- Membership to the Canadian Federation of Library Associations through FOPL
- Flow-through services for grants such as Trillium
- And much more

Federation of **La Fédération des**
ONTARIO **BIBLIOTHÈQUES**
PUBLIC **PUBLIQUES**
LIBRARIES **DE L'ONTARIO**

Your support via membership is appreciated, but your support is also needed as local library representatives as we advocate for our collective goals. It's clear that the more libraries FOPL represents, the stronger our unified voice will be with the key audiences who influence our success, funding, and role in society.

As an effort to become more inclusive and considerate of the unique challenges all of our libraries face, we are offering a new fee structure for County Libraries. For Oxford County Library, we have calculated a dual rate based on the rates that would apply the to individual municipalities versus a total population rate by fee band. As Executive Director, I want to ensure that our County Libraries are represented by the Federation and your unique interests are included in our priorities.

Library Name	Resident Pop Served	Municipal Total (new Rate)	Fee Band Rate
Oxford County Library	**69,790**	**1800**	**3250**
	(does not include separated)		
Muncipalities	**Population**		
City of Woodstock* (separated)	40,902		
Town of Ingersoll	12,587	150	
Town of Tillsonburg	15,872	900	
Township of Blandford Blenheim	7,399	150	
Township of East Zorra-Tavistock	7,129	150	
Township of Norwich	11,001	150	
Township of South-West Oxford	7,664	150	
Township of Zorra	8,138	150	

The rate for Oxford County Library by Fee Band would be $3250 per year. By adding the fees by municipality, we have come to the fee of $1800 per year. We are happy to offer the lower rate.

FOPL has gone through many changes in the past six months, from our governance to our Strategic Plan, with more changes to come in the new year. I hope that our revitalized organization has you excited about the potentials of what we can accomplish together.

Kind Regards,

Dina Stevens, MLIS
Executive Director
Tel: 416-873-8139
dinastevens@fopl.ca

Federation of ONTARIO PUBLIC LIBRARIES
La Fédération des BIBLIOTHÈQUES PUBLIQUES DE L'ONTARIO

January 24, 2022

Prospective Boards and Members,

I would like to offer some information regarding the Federation of Ontario Public Libraries that will hopefully influence your decision to support us. Thank you for taking the time to learn more about our organization.

What is FOPL?

The Federation of Ontario Public Libraries (FOPL) represents Ontario's over 320 public library systems, including First Nations Public Libraries, exceeding 1,100 branches in virtually every Ontario community. Of these public library systems, 247 of them are members. We are also supported by our association members such as the Ontario Library Association, Library Services Centre, the Ontario Library Service, to name a few. Our primary function is to advocate for the collective interests of the library sector.
FOPL is governed by a 23-member Board made up of representatives from the following caucuses:

- First Nations Caucus – 2 members
- Francophone Caucus – 2 members
- Large Urban Caucus – 6 members
- Northern Caucus – 2 members
- Rural Caucus – 2 members
- Small / Medium Caucus – 4 members
- Toronto (no caucus required) – 4 members

The Executive Director of the Federation of Ontario Public Libraries sits on the board as a non-voting member. As each Caucus is represented, we ensure that we are representing the interest of EACH public library in Ontario. Large, small, rural, northern, francophone or First Nation, we want to ensure that your best interests and needs are taken forward to our Provincial Government.

Our Mandate

FOPL's strategic focus includes Advocacy, Marketing, and Research & Development.

Advocacy

As ONE VOICE, FOPL ensures issues facing public libraries are presented in a consistent manner benefiting all public libraries across Ontario. FOPL provides various levels of government with a view of public libraries as a united, relevant and integral component for economic and community development worthy of strong and continued support.

Marketing

To market and promote the services provided by public libraries in Ontario, to highlight the economic and social value public libraries contribute to the development of our communities, and to strengthen the support of funding bodies and the community at large.

Research and Development

Engage in research that provides insight into present and future environments, issues and developments facing public libraries. This reliable data can be used by public libraries as a base for strategic and operational planning and decision making, and to support advocacy efforts and marketing.

Accomplishments: 2020/2021

Highlights of the 2020 work include:

1. FOPL effectively communicated with the MHSTCI regarding the needs of Libraries during the pandemic, achieving:
   - Formal ability for libraries to hold virtual Board meetings
   - The inclusion of Libraries in the early stages of re-opening, and inclusion of essential in-person library services through all scenarios from Green to the Grey "lockdown"
   - The early release of the PLOG and other funding streams
   - Entering the second Shutdown in December, we continued to advocate for the necessity of library services in supporting the community during the pandemic, as well as the longer-term role of libraries in facilitating province-wide access to digital infrastructure
2. Throughout 2019-20, we successfully defended the continued inclusion of libraries in Bill 108, resulting in an *increase* in the amount of money that can be collected for libraries through development charges from 90% to 100%. The new regulations also preserve libraries' ability to use development charge funds for IT and collection development purposes, maintaining the flexibility and usefulness of the funds.
3. With a Trillium Grant, piloting a project called MINE: Mobile Information for Newcomer Employment. This project seeks to find new ways to connect libraries with New Canadians and facilitate improved employment and economic growth.
4. The Open Media Desk has continued as a sustainable e-learning project for Library marketing staff to grow their storytelling & social media skills, as well as a shared resource for pandemic-related information, ensuring that libraries have current information to share with their users without duplicating efforts.
5. FOPL has continued to work collaboratively with OLA and the OLSs, for maximum effect.

Work from 2021 continues into 2022:

1. Expert guidance and training for members on development charges to come in 2021. Training and education on Provincial-level topics is part of FOPL's current strategic plan and increased knowledge about development charges is essential for the many new CEOs to be able to advocate for their libraries when their municipalities draft new DC by-laws.
2. With the release of the 2019 Annual Survey of Public Libraries data in December 2020, FOPL will be completing another entry in the FOPL Open Dataset series. Underpinning all our advocacy work with Province-wide data describing the trends, successes, and gaps in Ontario's Public Libraries, this is a valuable report for all libraries. Statistical comparison reports for individual libraries available on request.
3. Budget advocacy for 2021 continues; having avoided cuts in 2020, in partnership with OLA and our government relations firm we are focusing on increasing spending on an Ontario Digital Public Library and broadband infrastructure. We are also keeping a close eye on any budgetary items related to ServiceOntario, OLS, schools, and digital initiatives.

Why Join FOPL?

While the Ontario Library Service provides essential services to our public libraries, they are funded through the Ministry of Finance and are governed by the Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism, Culture Industries. This prohibits them from lobbying/ advocating to the provincial government for things like increases to the grants that they administer. All our advocacy work is done in conjunction with the

Federation of *La Fédération des*
ONTARIO BIBLIOTHÈQUES
PUBLIC PUBLIQUES
LIBRARIES DE L'ONTARIO

Ontario Library Association to present a strengthened and united front on behalf of our library members. The OLA is broadly focused and is a membership organization based on individuals and therefore does not represent libraries as a whole. They rely on FOPL and our board to influence our government relations priorities, budget asks and overall advocacy initiatives. Instead, FOPL and OLA meet regularly with OLS to understand the needs of the sector and work together to bring about change.

Our Caucus representatives influence and give feedback on our priorities and the direction we need to take our advocacy initiatives. The funds from our membership fees are used directly for our advocacy initiatives, research, data reports and marketing, for example, in April of this year we contracted Hemson to write a white paper that was successful in reclaiming 100% of development charges for public libraries, which came with a subsequent presentation and training for all of our member libraries.

We have three primary goals for advocacy going into 2022 and we need your support in achieving them:

1. Keep local public libraries across Ontario sustainable by **enhancing provincial operating funding** and ensure that this increased support reaches those libraries where it is most needed.
2. Working alongside First Nations Public Library leaders, rapidly implement **a sustainable funding model for First Nations public libraries** to ensure that these important local hubs are fully funded and viable. This includes increasing direct provincial funding support for First Nations public libraries to sustainably fund library operations and ensure a living income for frontline library staff in these communities.
3. Provide fair access to modern, digital resources for all Ontario public libraries through the **creation of an Ontario Digital Public Library**, thereby leveraging the province's significant purchasing power to give all Ontarians access to a common core of high-quality e-learning & online resources and more e-books.

Contributing to the Federation as a Library Member comes with many benefits as well:

- Communications from FOPL, providing updates on important library related issues and progress on our lobbying efforts within the province
- Member services, including access to the Members-Only resources, advocacy, training, and research available on our website
- Access to the annual FOPL Data Report
- Free training sessions and seminars
- A vote at the FOPL Annual General Meeting
- Opportunities to participate in our unique and impactful Working Groups
- Representation on the FOPL Board through your Caucus representatives
- Contributions to our annual advocacy goals and strategies through our bi-annual Caucus Meetings
- Access to FOPL staff for consultation on local advocacy and library related issues
- Membership to the Canadian Federation of Library Associations through FOPL
- Flow-through services for grants such as Trillium
- And much more

Federation of ONTARIO PUBLIC LIBRARIES / La Fédération des BIBLIOTHÈQUES PUBLIQUES DE L'ONTARIO

FOPL has gone through many changes in the past six months, from our governance to our Strategic Plan, with more changes to come in the new year. I hope that our revitalized organization has you excited about the potentials of what we can accomplish together.

To learn more about FOPL, please visit our website at www.fopl.ca

Kind Regards,

Dina Stevens, MLIS
Executive Director
Tel: 416-873-8139
dinastevens@fopl.ca

OXFORD COUNTY LIBRARY MATERIALS CIRCULATION STATISTICS		JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	TOTAL to Date	2021 TOTAL
									2022						
BROWNSVILLE	2021	246	103	130	220	170	148	151	176	117	81	56	126	246	1,724
	2022	234												234	
BURGESSVILLE	2021	1,177	948	825	1,225	1,067	1,244	1,678	2,055	1,652	1,625	1,628	1,860	1,177	16,984
	2022	2,070												2,070	
EMBRO	2021	630	687	682	566	496	699	600	672	624	479	615	625	630	7,375
	2022	575												575	
HARRINGTON	2021	303	384	398	355	363	395	394	394	285	204	314	435	303	4,224
	2022	419												419	
INGERSOLL	2021	2,941	3,114	4,404	3,556	3,313	2,993	6,905	6,652	5,516	6,075	6,129	7,765	2,941	59,363
	2022	6,167												6,167	
INNERKIP	2021	889	970	1,211	986	1,043	1,050	1,160	1,282	975	1,020	933	1,069	889	12,588
	2022	1,164												1,164	
MOUNT ELGIN	2021	661	667	742	466	682	585	456	611	714	735	729	755	661	7,803
	2022	785												785	
NORWICH	2021	2,749	2,432	2,754	2,956	3,214	3,337	3,350	3,435	3,095	3,317	2,708	2,977	2,749	36,324
	2022	3,418												3,418	
OTTERVILLE	2021	820	685	824	796	892	1,354	1,036	1,373	1,492	1,304	1,346	1,292	820	13,214
	2022	1,097												1,097	
PLATTSVILLE	2021	998	1,236	1,184	1,108	1,094	1,323	1,111	1,457	1,167	1,182	1,066	1,193	998	14,119
	2022	1,466												1,466	
PRINCETON	2021	551	548	710	565	446	654	742	659	534	503	708	773	551	7,393
	2022	742												742	
TAVISTOCK	2021	1,054	1,016	994	984	931	1,321	1,208	1,637	1,349	1,350	1,232	1,408	1,054	14,484
	2022	1,654												1,654	
THAMESFORD	2021	983	871	694	1,021	773	879	1,065	949	894	1,175	1,036	1,128	983	11,468
	2022	963												963	
TILLSONBURG	2021	4,542	3,833	4,951	4,252	4,076	4,281	6,201	5,791	5,066	5,599	5,632	7,632	4,542	61,856
	2022	6,263												6,263	
TOTALS:	2021	18,544	17,494	20,503	19,056	18,560	20,263	26,057	27,143	23,480	24,649	24,132	29,038	18,544	268,919
	2022	27,017	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	27,017	
Annual Change:		45.7%												45.7%	
Digital TV & Movies	2021	407	429	363	412	392	198	331	438	375	246	360	330	407	4,281
	2022	402												402	
Zinio (Magazines)	2021	856	853	815	41	1,210	637	579	622	608	433	626	666	856	7,946
Overdrive as of Apr/21	2022	1,005												1,005	
Tumble Books	2021	667	282	364	402	380	266	168	146	125	288	271	329	667	3,688
	2022	248												248	
Digital Music	2021	2,534	2,447	2,409	2,826	2,479	1,944	1,592	1,456	1,754	1,656	1,777	1,567	2,534	24,441
	2022	1,564												1,564	
Press Reader	2021	655	336	509	574	437	464	436	250	235	924	741	1,530	655	
	2022	1,248												1,248	
Digital Audiobooks	2021	5,983	5,412	5,827	5,730	5,844	5,567	5,835	5,989	5,360	5,937	5,604	5,267	5,983	68,355
	2022	6,170												6,170	
Digital ebooks	2021	7,448	6,630	6,851	6,863	7,225	6,953	7,353	7,262	6,228	6,494	6,099	5,967	7,448	81,373
	2022	6,913												6,913	
TOTALS: Audio and ebooks	2021	13,431	12,042	12,678	12,593	13,069	12,520	13,188	13,251	11,588	12,431	11,703	11,234	13,431	149,728
	2022	13,083	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	13,083	
Annual Change:		-2.6%												-2.6%	

OXFORD COUNTY LIBRARY - COMPUTER USE BY PUBLIC

			JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	TOTAL to Date	2021 TOTAL
BROWNSVILLE		2021	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
		2022	0												0	
	Wireless	2021	1	1	2	4	7	5	2	12	27	17	13	15	1	106
		2022	12												12	
BURGESSVILLE		2021	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	2
		2022	0												0	
	Wireless	2021	78	42	25	43	42	51	31	31	48	42	39	22	78	494
		2022	38												38	
EMBRO		2021	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
		2022	0												0	
	Wireless	2021	32	33	42	45	36	40	52	35	87	109	91	75	32	677
		2022	53												53	
HARRINGTON		2021	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
		2022	0												0	
	Wireless	2021	10	7	6	9	8	11	9	10	16	11	18	16	10	131
		2022	7												7	
INGERSOLL		2021	0	0	118	0	0	0	121	197	156	194	233	226	0	1,245
		2022	33												33	
	Wireless	2021	77	81	123	123	111	243	343	304	229	244	220	157	77	2,255
		2022	53												53	
INNERKIP		2021	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	7	8	9	10	5	0	41
		2022	0												0	
	Wireless	2021	28	26	51	34	51	58	57	39	40	55	63	48	28	550
		2022	37												37	
MOUNT ELGIN		2021	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	1	0	3
		2022	0												0	
	Wireless	2021	3	7	8	2	10	1	7	20	17	23	10	26	3	134
		2022	11												11	
NORWICH		2021	0	0	0	0	0	0	7	13	13	14	9	0	0	56
		2022	0												0	
	Wireless	2021	414	316	311	427	475	453	390	376	378	442	442	377	414	4,801
		2022	345												345	
OTTERVILLE		2021	0	0	37	0	0	0	2	2	0	6	11	8	0	66
		2022	0												0	
	Wireless	2021	14	9	14	88	28	52	55	55	40	17	36	27	14	435
		2022	14												14	
PLATTSVILLE		2021	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	6	5	4	1	0	18
		2022	1												1	
	Wireless	2021	25	110	90	37	38	27	21	19	107	159	154	85	25	872
		2022	38												38	
PRINCETON		2021	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	3	2	0	7
		2022	0												0	
	Wireless	2021	12	6	7	17	31	41	13	16	13	21	15	12	12	204
		2022	14												14	
TAVISTOCK		2021	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	9	10	5	4	0	0	32
		2022	0												0	
	Wireless	2021	78	78	71	85	63	39	11	19	89	147	144	144	78	968
		2022	84												84	
THAMESFORD		2021	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	17	12	3	4	9	0	46
		2022	1												1	
	Wireless	2021	38	32	71	58	37	46	46	75	86	92	60	44	38	685
		2022	37												37	
TILLSONBURG		2021	0	0	187	0	0	0	159	172	271	247	287	301	0	1,624
		2022	150												150	
	Wireless	2021	350	277	373	427	429	537	740	935	664	778	719	584	350	6,813
		2022	338												338	
TOTALS:		2021	1,160	1,025	1,536	1,399	1,366	1,604	2,073	2,365	2,320	2,642	2,591	2,185	1,160	22,266
		2022	1,266	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,266	
Annual Change:			9.1%												9.1%	

OXFORD COUNTY LIBRARY ATTENDANCE STATISTICS		JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	**2022** AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	**TOTAL** to Date	**2021** TOTAL
BROWNSVILLE	2021	16	13	15	18	21	33	33	44	58	30	26	24	16	331
	2022	19												19	
BURGESSVILLE	2021	147	137	152	204	143	175	215	274	248	275	280	176	147	2,426
	2022	169												169	
EMBRO	2021	72	80	92	72	74	91	92	116	115	82	107	84	72	1,077
	2022	72												72	
HARRINGTON	2021	38	41	53	42	34	46	36	61	62	53	86	65	38	617
	2022	58												58	
INGERSOLL	2021	771	851	1,420	870	930	961	2,545	2,330	1,970	2,311	2,543	1,942	771	19,444
	2022	979												979	
INNERKIP	2021	183	197	242	232	204	300	279	318	254	276	260	189	183	2,934
	2022	198												198	
MOUNT ELGIN	2021	68	59	76	63	66	101	93	90	94	88	105	83	68	986
	2022	91												91	
NORWICH	2021	280	253	281	353	316	378	379	544	511	454	418	302	280	4,469
	2022	324												324	
OTTERVILLE	2021	104	107	119	83	109	148	116	204	236	240	230	168	104	1,864
	2022	139												139	
PLATTSVILLE	2021	204	269	274	279	287	367	323	410	329	391	319	287	204	3,739
	2022	294												294	
PRINCETON	2021	76	83	110	105	104	126	113	140	83	122	125	107	76	1,294
	2022	88												88	
TAVISTOCK	2021	229	222	228	232	210	243	270	448	428	398	414	376	229	3,698
	2022	302												302	
THAMESFORD	2021	140	164	152	180	171	202	203	278	251	278	287	210	140	2,516
	2022	178												178	
TILLSONBURG	2021	806	1,364	2,104	1,935	1,699	1,897	2,799	3,005	4,088	1,808	1,706	2,756	806	25,967
	2022	2,323												2,323	
TOTALS:	2021	3,134	3,840	5,318	4,668	4,368	5,068	7,496	8,262	8,727	6,806	6,906	6,769	3,134	71,362
	2022	5,234	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5,234	
Annual Change:		67.0%												67.0%	

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To: **Oxford County Library Board**

From: **CEO/Chief Librarian**

Librarian's Report – February 2022

RECOMMENDATION

1. That the Board receive Report No. 2022-01 for information and discussion purposes.

COVID-19 Pandemic Response

On January 5, the province moved into Modified Step Two of the Roadmap to Reopen. Branches moved back to curbside service at that time, largely due to local case counts and exposure rates, staff absenteeism being an issue, and schools remaining closed. Staff continued to be busy assisting people with the printing of vaccination QR codes. Computer use was available by appointment at Ingersoll and Tillsonburg.

Branches reopened to indoor use, browsing, and computer use on February 1, with the exception of Norwich, which remains at curbside due to local mask non-compliance.

Indoor use of library spaces is limited to the number of people that can maintain distancing of two metres with exceptions for day/overnight camps, child care, and social services using library space. During the week of February 21, extra open hours were added at several rural branches to help manage the flow of patrons. The plan is to further increase hours effective March 21, bringing rural branches' open hours up to approximately 70 percent of their pre-pandemic hours.

With regard to in-person programming, adult book clubs and literacy-based programs could occur as of March 1. Community groups that had been reliant on the use of library space are being contacted – examples include Narcotics Anonymous, Big Brothers/Big Sisters. Branch Supervisors are contacting book clubs to invite them back to the libraries for their meetings.

Children's in-person programming may resume after the March Break. EarlyON is eager to return to library branches to provide programs for babies. Our program staff will focus on programming for school-age children -- pre-registration required to control numbers, and held outside of open hours for an added comfort level.

Holly Brown, Tillsonburg's Literacy & Innovation Specialist, has been working with the Town to arrange a library presence in the Town Centre Mall during March Break. During two days of March Break, in-person, pre-registered children's programs will be offered and Make and Take craft kits will be distributed free of charge to families. The Town Centre Mall is allowing us use of a vacant unit that week.

The February 1, 2022 COVID-19 Update document is included in this Report as Attachment 1.

Customer Feedback

Positive feedback is always lovely to receive, but is particularly important now when staff feel tired and sometimes discouraged by poor behaviours. The following messages were received earlier this month:

The staff at Tillsonburg are always pleasant and go out of their way to help. Especially appreciate the curb side service and they offered delivery as I am 89 with few problems, better known as old age. I have always been an avid reader and now appreciate this pastime more than ever. Very well organized and attractive service that I am trying to get my family to make use of and if we ever get over COVID I think they will but my grandkids include a paramedic, critical care nurse, front line social worker and teachers all with young children they are already "OVERBOOKED". Thanks again for a very important part of community.

(Ingersoll patron) I am so thankful for my local library! They are always so pleasant and helpful to my family! They go out of their way to provide activities and books for my kids. Whenever i am looking for a book they are very helpful. The library has become a place where my kids and I can go to learn, explore, relax and connect with others. I brag about how great my local library is all the time. Keep up the great work!

(Mt. Elgin patron) I went to the Library today for my books that Donna so nicely chose for me. When I got home and opened my bag I got a big surprise. A lovely valentine was in the bag. It was made by Nathaniel. It is beautiful, thank you very much, your message was very thoughtful. Thank you Nathaniel, you made my day.
(Branch Supervisor Donna Arner had organized a Valentines craft for local children. The cards the children made were included with books checked out to older adult patrons of the branch around Valentines Day. We featured this quote and a picture on Facebook on Random Acts of Kindness Day)

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

The Library Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion committee has identified several DEI goals for 2022 and beyond:

1. Develop a year-long strategic marketing plan that honours diversity in the community with activities that include social media and Readers' Advisory. The County of Oxford DEI committee is creating a calendar which will be helpful in achieving this goal.
2. Develop staff capacity for DEI through regular internal communications.
3. Contribute to policy review with a diversity lens.
4. Identify collection needs/issues to address DEI and accessibility for all users.
5. Develop a plan to engage diverse students in co-op experiences with the library.
6. Develop a strategy for increasing staff capacity to promote belonging for all members of the community.

The Committee has completed a review of Indigenous subject headings and work is underway to replace outdated terms with updated terms which have been vetted by Indigenous groups. Our primary vendor, Whitehots, has been most helpful throughout this process.

The Board will recall that a draft Indigenous Awareness and Reconciliation Policy was considered at the June 2021 meeting. It was deferred to allow for more research and to gain feedback from an Indigenous Elder. Since then, staff was successful at engaging the assistance of an Indigenous Elder, and the policy was reworked and much improved. While I had been prepared to bring the revised policy to the Board this month, the County will be hiring a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Coordinator shortly. Involving that person in a review of the library's policy would be advantageous. Therefore, consideration of the Indigenous Awareness and Reconciliation Policy will happen later this year.

The Library's DEI Committee has reviewed the Code of Conduct and is making adjustments for Plain Language. The Code of Conduct will be brought to the Board for review at a meeting this spring.

Staff Training

With 45 seats purchased for the OLA Superconference, OCL front-line staff were able to attend sessions, many for the first time. As access to the session recordings is available for six months, staff will be able to attend additional sessions as time permits. As a reminder, Board members were included in the 45 seat licence. In addition to the OLBA Board sessions held on the Saturday, I would encourage Board members to explore sessions held on the other days as well. Among the highlights for me to date are:
- Keynote speaker Mary Rowe (Canadian Urban Institute) – libraries and the future of our cities (Feb. 5, 11:15 a.m.)
- Workplace violence and incivility (Feb. 4, 2:00 p.m.)
- Social workers in public libraries: meeting the needs of the entire community (Feb. 3, 1:15)
- Keynote speaker Priya Parker and the new era of (re)gathering (Feb. 2, 10:00 a.m.). (Priya Parker is the author of an excellent book The Art of Gathering: how we meet and why it matters.)
- Keynote speaker Cherie Dimaline (Indigenous author) (Feb. 4, 10:00 a.m.)

Several of the librarian staff attended the Dalhousie-Horrocks National Leadership Lecture with the Librarian of Congress, Dr. Carla Hayden, speaking on Library Engagement in a Pandemic & Post-Pandemic World.

Our next Staff Development Day will be held on Monday, March 28.

We recently added Niche Academy to our training toolkit. It is an online training platform for library patrons and staff. We have some experience with it as it is the platform used by the Homeless Librarian training product we subscribe to. In addition to having access to a full catalogue of ready-to-use tutorials, we will be able to create our own Patron Academy and create tutorial content embedded in our website to teach our patrons how to use our online resources.

Staff Activities

Norwich branch staff and County Facilities staff worked quickly to remove from the Program Room all of the soft seating and furniture that had been taken out of the library to facilitate better traffic patterns in the branch during COVID. Wonder Years daycare, which operates out of the library building, needed to find a replacement site for its Before- and After-School program due to major roof issues at the off-site location they had been using. We are allowing the daycare the use of our Program Room for ten weeks.

Staff have been busy responding to patron questions regarding our new public-facing catalogue, Bibliocommons. While the new catalogue offers many user-friendly enhancements, it is a change from the catalogue that has been in place for 15 years, so the need for coaching on its use was expected.

Similarly, the email blast sent out to inactive cardholders resulted in many telephone calls with patrons, eager to get their accounts back up and running. In the first two weeks of January, over 600 accounts were reinstated. Many of the conversations with patrons proved to be a great opportunity to promote online services.

We were able to demo a wireless hotspot product, with the thought that lendable hotspots could be considered at some point. A number of staff took the hotspot with them while driving around the county and at home. Unfortunately, a lack of signal strength occurred in both rural areas of the county and within the towns of Ingersoll and Tillsonburg, so we do not feel that this particular product is worth pursuing. We will continue to investigate other options.

Staff News

Merley Wheaton, our Tillsonburg Community Librarian, left Oxford County Library in mid-February to assume a new position as Manager of two branches of the Mississauga Library System. This is a wonderful opportunity for Merley, but we will miss him. His replacement will not be hired until the new CEO/Chief Librarian is in place. In the interim, Meagan Brennan, our Outreach/Teen Librarian, is providing staff supervision at the branch.

Our new Tavistock Branch Supervisor, Amy Coles, started on February 22. She comes to us with a number of years' experience as a public service librarian, most recently with the Woodstock Public Library and Idea Exchange (Cambridge Public Library).

SIGNATURE

Departmental Approval:

"Lisa Miettinen"

_____

Lisa Miettinen
CEO/Chief Librarian

ATTACHMENT

Attachment No. 1 – February 1, 2022. COVID-19 Updates.

February 1, 2022

COVID-19 UPDATES

COVID UPDATE – February 1, 2022

All Oxford County Library branches are currently open for browsing, except Norwich, Burgessville, and Otterville. At this time, Norwich Library will continue to offer curbside only services to patrons. Burgessville and Otterville libraries are currently closed due to a staffing shortage.

What to expect when you arrive at the library:

⋆ Proof of vaccination is NOT required to use the library at this time.
⋆ Masks are required (3-ply masks are encouraged) to be worn inside the library at all times and food and beverages are not allowed.
⋆ All current COVID-19 health and safety requirements remain in place, including masks, physical distancing, and capacity limits.

FAQs

Are you currently offering in-person programs? We are not currently offering in-person programs but hope to be able to do so in the coming months. When in-person programs, events, and meetings resume, proof of vaccination may be required in order to attend.

Are you still offering curbside service? Library service can still be accessed through curbside service by request. Staff will be happy to select materials and prepare them for you to pick up, or home delivery may be arranged.

I'm not feeling well. Am I still able to come pick up my holds? If you or anyone in your family are experiencing any COVID-19 symptoms, or have tested positive for COVID-19, please refrain from coming into the library and take advantage of curbside service instead.

Do you offer access to free wifi? Free wireless service can be accessed outside of all OCL branches. Wireless speed has recently been increased at all 14 branch locations.

How can I place a hold on an item to pick up at my local branch?

1. Visit search.ocl.net, search for the item you are looking for, click "place a hold" and sign in using your library card and PIN number. Select the branch where you would like to pick up your materials and click on the "place hold" button.
2. Email curbsidebooks@ocl.net with your library card number and the titles you would like placed on hold.

<mark>3. Contact your local branch and ask staff to place your hold (note: staff hours at some of our locations are limited).</mark>

Can I return my books? We are currently accepting returns at all branches. You can return your material directly into our book return. We are, as always, fine free so don't worry if you have to return your items a bit late.

Can I have items printed at my local branch? Wireless printing is available at Ingersoll, Norwich, Plattsville, Tavistock, Thamesford, and Tillsonburg. We recognize that access to the library's printing, scanning, faxing and copying services is a vital service for many people in our communities. During library open hours, staff may not have the time to be able to provide these services. However, OCL will try to help you. Please contact your local branch to arrange a time to drop off your documents or contact curbsidebooks@ocl.net to let us know what you need.

We cannot wait to see you back in our branches and we ask that you:

- Self-screen for COVID symptoms before visiting the library.
  - Wear a mask. If you cannot wear a mask, library services will be provided to you through curbside service.
  - Keep your visits short as we maintain reduced occupancy levels.
  - Limit the number of people from your household if possible.
  - One person only at each computer.

If you can't make it to one of our branches we offer the following options:

- To register for an OCL card or update your account, email us at myaccount@ocl.net along with your name, address, phone number, and date of birth.
- To place a hold on library materials contact your local OCL branch or email curbsidebooks@ocl.net along with your library card number and the title you would like to place on hold.
- For seniors and families without in-person access to an OCL branch call us at 226-232-5092 to register for a card, arrange home delivery of materials, or learn about available library and community services.

As always OCL's E-Library is open 24/7: You can access ebooks, e-audiobooks, streaming music, movies and more anytime you want.

Staff are available by e-mail to help you find books to read and place holds for you. If you cannot attend curbside, and don't have someone who could pick up books on your behalf, don't forget that we can offer home delivery. For more information, e-mail curbsidebooks@ocl.net.

![Oxford County Library logo — connect. discover. share. become.]

To: **Oxford County Library Board**

From: **CEO/Chief Librarian**

Accessibility in the Library Policy

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **That the Library Board approve the Accessibility in the Library Policy as presented in Report No. 2022-02;**

2. **And further, that the Library Board receive the County of Oxford's Accessibility Standards for Customer Service Policy and the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan for information and discussion purposes.**

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

- Establishes a statement outlining the Library's commitment to meet the accessibility needs of persons with disabilities

- Addresses accessibility requirements of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 and applicable standards and regulations introduced under the Act.

Implementation Points

The approved policy satisfies one of the mandatory requirements for provincial reaccreditation.

Any volunteers, including Board members, who have not received the AODA Customer Service training to date will be provided with the opportunity to do so.

Financial Impact

The recommendation as found in this report will have no financial impact beyond what has already been approved in the current year's operating budget.

Communications

Pursuant to Board approval, the policy will be posted on the library website.

Strategic Plan (2020-2022)

![Committed to 100% RE | Zero Waste | Zero Poverty logo]

Report No: 2022-02
CORPORATE SERVICES
Board Date: February 28, 2022

WORKS WELL TOGETHER	WELL CONNECTED	SHAPES THE FUTURE	INFORMS & ENGAGES	PERFORMS & DELIVERS	POSITIVE IMPACT
				5.i.	

DISCUSSION

Background

Beginning in 2010, public libraries were required to provide accessible customer service. The main points of that requirement are:

- Train your staff and volunteers to serve customers of all abilities
- Keep a record of the training
- Welcome service animals and support persons
- Create accessible ways for people to provide feedback
- Put an accessibility policy in place, so your employees, volunteers and customers know what to expect.

In June 2016, the Ontario Government announced amendments to Accessibility Standards related to Customer Service and these changes were documented in a new regulation called *Ontario Regulation 165/16*. One important change with the 2016 regulation is that all staff and volunteers and anyone involved in developing the organization's policies, including Board members, must complete the specific customer service training required under *AODA* legislation.

Comments

Library facilities and services are included in the County's multi-year accessibility plan, which is reviewed at least once every five years The Multi-Year Accessibility Plan outlines the County of Oxford's strategy to prevent and remove barriers and to meet its requirements under the *AODA*, the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service (O.Reg.429/07), and the consolidated Integrated Accessibility Standards (O.Reg.191/11). This plan is reviewed and updated in consultation with the Oxford County Accessibility Advisory Committee. This Committee reviews all library new builds and renovations of County-owned facilities.

While a public library need not create its own Accessibility Plan but may use its municipality's plans and policies, the Ontario Public Library Guidelines do require that each library system establish its own Statement of Organizational Commitment to meet the accessibility needs of persons with disabilities. The draft Accessibility in the Library Policy establishes such a Statement.

Conclusions

Approval of this policy ensures compliance with Ontario Public Library Guidelines requirements in regard to accessibility.

SIGNATURE

Departmental Approval:

"Lisa Miettinen"

Lisa Miettinen
CEO/Chief Librarian

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1   draft Accessibility in the Library Policy
Attachment 2   County of Oxford General Policy Manual. Accessibility Standards for Customer Service Policy (2009).
Attachment 3   County of Oxford General Policy Manual. Multi-Year Accessibility Plan (revised 2019).

	OXFORD COUNTY LIBRARY BOARD POLICY MANUAL

Board Motion Number:	2022-02	Date of Review:	2025
Date Approved:	February 28, 2022	Chairperson's signature:	

ACCESSIBILITY IN THE LIBRARY POLICY

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that Oxford County Library provides all library services, resources and facilities in ways that are accessible to persons with disabilities. The policy also serves to meet the standards set out by the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act*, 2005 (AODA) and its regulations.

BACKGROUND

AODA received Royal Assent on June 13, 2005. It applies to public and private sector organizations and mandates the development, implementation, and enforcement of accessibility standards.

STATEMENT OF ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT

Oxford County Library is committed to providing equitable access to library service. The Library will ensure that each employee, volunteer, and patron receive equitable treatment with respect to employment and services without discrimination, and receives accommodation where required in a timely manner, and in accordance with the *Ontario Human Rights Code* and the *AODA* and its regulations.

Oxford County Library meets the obligations set out in the *AODA* and its regulations in partnership with the County of Oxford, including the application of the County's Accessibility Standards for Customer Service Policy and Multi-Year Accessibility Plan.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all persons who interact with customers on behalf of the Library, and all persons who participate in developing Oxford County Library's policies governing the provision of service to the public. This includes employees, volunteers, students on placement, third parties providing services such as programs, contractors, and Library Board members.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The Library Board ensures that the library complies with the spirit, principles and intent of AODA and designates the CEO as the individual accountable for the organization's compliance with the legislation.
The CEO will ensure that policies and procedures comply with the AODA and any regulations made under the AODA.

Oxford County Library connect. discover. share. **become.**	**OXFORD COUNTY LIBRARY BOARD POLICY MANUAL**

Board Motion Number:	2022-02	Date of Review:	2025
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OPERATING PRINCIPLES

Assistive Devices

A person with a disability may provide their own assistive device for the purpose of obtaining or using library services.

Exceptions may occur in situations where the library has determined that the assistive device may pose a risk to the health and safety of the person with a disability or to the health and safety of others on library premises. In these situations, the library may offer a person with a disability other reasonable measures to assist them in obtaining and using library services, where the library has such other measures available.

Accessible Formats

The library provides a range of collection materials in alternate formats such as Large Print, audiobooks, close-captioned and described video DVDs, eBooks and eAudiobooks.

The library is registered with the Centre for Equitable Library Access (CELA).

Upon request, library staff will provide patrons with assistance to retrieve materials.

Accessible Technology

Library branches will provide an accessible public computer station with assistive technologies.

Communication

When communicating with a person with a disability, library staff will do so in a manner that takes into account the person's disability.

Policy documents will be available on the library website. When asked, these documents and other information about the library and its services will be provided in accessible formats or with communication supports.

Feedback Process

Feedback from a member of the public about the delivery of services to persons with disabilities may be given by telephone, in person, in writing, in electronic format or through other methods.

Service Animals

OXFORD COUNTY LIBRARY BOARD POLICY MANUAL			
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Persons with a disability are welcome to enter library premises accompanied by a service animal and the animal can stay with them throughout their visit and in all public areas of the library.

The service animal must be readily identified as being used for reasons relating to a disability, as a result of visual indicators such as the vest or harness worn by the animal. If it is not readily apparent that the animal is a service animal, library staff may ask the customer for confirmation of the animal's accreditation (for example, a letter from a physician or nurse practitioner). If the person with a disability does not have a letter, library staff will request that they provide one at their next visit.

It is the responsibility of the person with a disability to ensure that their service animal is kept in control at all times.

Service Disruptions

In the event of a planned service disruption to facilities, services or systems that are relied upon by persons with disabilities to access Oxford County Library goods or services, notice of the disruption shall be provided in advance.

Notice may be given by posting the information in a conspicuous place on library premises, on the library website or by such other method as is reasonable under the circumstances.

In the event of an unexpected disruption, notice will be provided as soon as possible.

Support Persons

A support person, when assisting a person with a disability to obtain or use library services, will be permitted to attend library programs at no charge where an admission fee is applicable.

Training

The library will ensure that all persons to whom this policy applies receive County training as required under its Accessibility Standards.

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ACCESSIBILITY STANDARDS FOR CUSTOMER SERVICE POLICY

POLICY

Oxford County is committed to providing exceptional customer service and to making programs, services, and facilities accessible, including access to printed and electronic materials for all residents of the County, including people with disabilities. These policy components are consistent with the core principles of independence, dignity, integration and equality of opportunity.

This policy will be made available to the public through printed pamphlets and on the Oxford County website. Other formats, such as large print, will be made available on request.

DEFINITIONS

Assistive Devices   Assistive devices are used by people with disabilities to help with daily living and may include but are not limited to a broad range of products such as wheelchairs, walkers, lifts, canes, oxygen tanks, portable chalk boards, utensils with modified handles, as well as electronic communication devices, real time captioning services, assistive listening systems or services such as the use of sign language interpreters.

Barrier   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 communications barrier, an attitudinal barrier, a technological barrier, a policy or a practice.

Customer   A customer is an individual or group of people who have a business relationship with the organization; those who receive and use or are directly affected by the products and services of the organization. Customers include direct recipients of products and services, internal customers who produce services and products for final recipients, and other organizations and entities that interact with an organization to produce products and services.

ⓞxfordCounty *growing stronger...together*		**GENERAL POLICY MANUAL**	
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Customer Service   Customer or client service refers to efficiently satisfying a customer's needs by providing and delivering professional, helpful, high quality service and assistance before, during and after the customer's requirements are met. A customer can be internal or external to the organization.

Customer Feedback   Comments from customers about services, employees or policies, whether an expression of satisfaction, dissatisfaction or a suggestion on how the delivery of a service can be improved.

Disability   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 impediment, deafness or hearing impediment, muteness or speech impediment, or physical reliance on a guide dog or other animal;

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*; ("handicap").

Service Animal   A service animal is an animal trained to assist a person with disabilities in the activities of Independent living.

Support Person   A support person accompanies a person with a disability to assist with communication, mobility, personal care or medical needs or with access to goods or services.

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BACKGROUND

1.0   Businesses and organizations that provide goods or services to the public or to other businesses in Ontario are required to establish policies, practices and procedures on providing goods and services to people with disabilities by January 1, 2010 in accordance with the *Accessibility Standards for Customer Service (Ontario Regulation 429/07)* which became effective January 1, 2008.

PROCEDURES

2.0   The following procedures have been implemented to enable Oxford County to meet its policy objective of ensuring that people with disabilities who require the services provided by the County are provided the services. Services will be provided within the constraints of available resources.

    2.1   Oxford County shall:

        2.1.1   inform people with disabilities that there is accessible information and communication available;

        2.1.2   charge no more for alternate accessible formats than the regular cost paid by other consumers;

        2.1.3   ensure that individuals with disabilities are not disadvantaged in terms of the timeliness, quality and availability of communication, given or received;

        2.1.4   establish a user request, feedback and complaints process that allows persons with disabilities (whether they are consumers or employees) to identify communication needs and to communicate with the organization;

        2.1.5   provide emergency and public safety information required under existing law (e.g. evacuation procedures) to the public and employees in formats and communication methods that can be used and understood by people with disabilities;

        2.1.6   develop, implement and maintain policies, procedures and practices to comply with the standard for accessible information and communication and write a statement of commitment to accessibility;

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2.1.7 ensure that employees, volunteers and others who are responsible for designing or providing and receiving information and communication on behalf of the organization receive accessibility training.

2.2 Procedures and practices shall strive to reflect or achieve the following:

2.2.1 communication will be considered in a manner that takes into consideration a person's disability;

2.2.2 people with disabilities will be allowed to use their own personal assistive devices to obtain, use or benefit from the services offered by Oxford County;

2.2.3 people with disabilities accompanied by a guide dog or service animal shall be permitted in those areas of the premises owned or operated by Oxford County that are open to the public;

2.2.4 people with disabilities accompanied by a support person will be permitted to be accompanied by that support person in premises open to the public;

2.2.5 admission fees will be waived for a support person who accompanies a person with a disability;

2.2.6 notice will be provided when facilities or services that people with disabilities rely on to access Oxford County services are temporarily disrupted;

2.2.7 staff, including third party contractors shall receive appropriate training on Accessibility Standards for Customer Service and the Policies and Practices regarding this issue;

2.2.8 Oxford County shall allow people to provide feedback on how services are provided to persons with disabilities.

2.3 Should a person with a disability be unable to access the County's services through the use of their own personal assistive device, Oxford County will ensure the following measures:

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2.3.1 determine if service is inaccessible based upon individual requirements, assess service delivery and potential service options to meet the needs of the individual;

2.3.2 notify the person with a disability of alternative service and how they can access the service temporarily or on a permanent basis.

SERVICE ANIMALS

3.0 The County shall allow a person with a service animal into all Oxford County owned and operated public facilities and will ensure that the person is permitted to keep the animal with him or her unless the animal is otherwise excluded by law.

3.1 If a service animal is excluded by law from the premises, Oxford County shall ensure that other measures are available to enable the person with a disability to obtain, use or benefit from the County's goods or services.

3.2 The service animal's owner shall be solely responsible for the service animal which includes, but is not limited to, the care, control and discipline of the service animal at all times.

SERVICE DISRUPTION

4.0 Oxford County will provide customers with notice in the event of a planned or unexpected disruption in the facilities or services usually used by people with disabilities. The notice will include information about the reason for the disruption, anticipated duration and description of alternative facilities or services, if available.

4.1 Responsibilities of County employees:

4.1.1 report any disruption of service or facility immediately to the supervisor;

4.1.2 report a disruption of service or facility to the Customer Service Centre at customerservice@oxfordcounty.ca providing as much notice as possible.

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4.2   Responsibilities of Customer Service Centre employees:

    4.2.1   the Customer Service Centre will prepare notices and communicate the service disruption;

    4.2.2   notification may be provided by any of the following means as determined appropriate:

        4.2.2.1   posted on the County digital signs, located in the main foyer of the County Administration building;

        4.2.2.2   posted at applicable County buildings/facilities;

        4.2.2.3   posted on the Oxford County web-site www.oxfordcounty.ca;

        4.2.2.4   posted on the Oxford County intranet;

        4.2.2.5   arrange radio announcements/local paper advertisements (if necessary).

        4.2.2.6   posted in departmental/divisional newsletters

TRAINING

5.0   Oxford County shall ensure that every person who deals with members of the public on behalf of the County, whether the person does so as an employee, agent, volunteer, third party contractor or otherwise shall receive training about the provision of its goods or services to people with disabilities. All newly hired employees shall receive required training in accordance with the legislation at the level determined appropriate by the employee's supervisor/manager. Staff will also be trained on an as needed basis when significant changes are made to these policies, practices and procedures.

5.1 Training will include the following:

    5.1.1   the purposes of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* and the requirements of the Customer Service Standard;

    5.1.2   how to interact and communicate with persons with various types of disabilities;

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5.1.3   how to interact with persons with disabilities who use an assistive device or require the assistance of a service animal or a support person;

5.1.4   how to use equipment or assistive devices available in Oxford County premises that may help with the provision of goods or services to people with disabilities;

5.1.5   what to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty accessing Oxford County's goods or services;

5.1.6   Oxford County Human Resources will log and retain employee records which will record the details of the training provided, as well as the name of the person, location, and date the training was completed.

5.2   A training manual, outlining the purpose and responsibilities of Oxford County staff, volunteers, and third party contractors, will be provided to all third party contractors/agents providing services on behalf of Oxford County.

5.2.1   Contractors/agents will be required to sign and return an acknowledgment that they have received a copy of the training manual and will comply with all measures included;

5.2.2.   Training files of all third party contractors, agents, volunteers, will be maintained by the department responsible for the service.

CUSTOMER FEEDBACK

6.0   The ultimate goal of Oxford County is to meet and surpass customer expectations while serving customers with disabilities. Comments and feedback regarding the way Oxford County provides goods and services to people with disabilities are welcomed and appreciated.

6.1   Feedback regarding the way Oxford County provides goods and services to people with disabilities can be made verbally, by email, through a suggestion box, written correspondence or on a feedback form. All feedback will be directed to the Customer Service Centre. Customers can expect to hear a response in accordance with Oxford County's Customer Service Communication Guidelines, indicating an explanation how Oxford County is able or unable to implement the suggestion or if further investigation is necessary.

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6.2 Notices in public areas of all Oxford County buildings shall inform customers that feedback and suggestions are welcomed and valued for the continual improvement of services and to avoid inadvertently excluding persons with disabilities from activities or services.

6.3 Should a member of the public wish to provide feedback regarding the service they have received they may have a discussion with a Customer Service Clerk or fill out an Oxford County Feedback Form.

6.4 The Oxford County Feedback Form is available through the customer service desk, the County website and all Oxford County buildings with public access. The Feedback Form shall contain personal contact information, date, who completed the form, a description of the feedback being given, and a suggestion for follow-up. Customer Service Clerks shall provide assistance in filling out the feedback form if needed. Customer Service Clerks will make note of feedback given in person verbally or in writing, on-line, by telephone, or another means.

COMMUNICATION

7.0 Oxford County shall provide any document produced by the County in an alternative format upon request, unless it is not technically feasible to do so and subject to the provisions of the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.* Alternative formats can include, but are not limited to Web access, large print versions of the document, or a text-only electronic file which can then be read by a computer or printed in Braille.

7.1 Requests for information in alternate formats are to be forwarded to the department most responsible for the document. Staff will consult with the requester to determine the most appropriate format, and will make every effort to provide the information in the preferred format as soon as possible.

7.2 If a service, information or document is required from Oxford County by a person with a disability, the employee(s) shall provide the service, document, or information contained in the document, in a format that takes into account the person's disability. Oxford County personnel and the person with the disability will try to agree upon the format to be used for the document or information, subject to feasibility requirements of this policy.

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7.3 Alternative formats shall be considered and may include, but are not limited to:

7.3.1 Print requests;

7.3.2 American Sign Language/Signed Exact English interpreter request.

7.4 Feasibility will be determined based upon cost in relation to the format of the document and time associated with processing document requests.

7.5 Documents will be provided in electronic format if possible.

7.6 The time frame attached to the conversion process varies depending on the media chosen, the size, complexity, quality of source documents and number of documents to be converted. Documents shall be returned in a timely manner depending on the factors previously noted.

7.7 Conversion shall be processed in-house wherever possible. If a member of the public requests a piece of County documentation in multiple formats, the County shall be responsible for the cost of the conversion, materials and distribution, not the public requestor.

7.8 In-house printing, where possible, should adhere to the*: Canadian National Institute for the Blind, Print Clarity Standards June 2006.*

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Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

POLICY

The Multi-Year Accessibility Plan outlines the County of Oxford's strategy to prevent and remove barriers and to meet its requirements under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (AODA) and the *Integrated Accessibility Standards* (O.Reg.191/11). This plan is to be established, reviewed and updated in consultation with the Oxford County Accessibility Advisory Committee. The goal in implementing this plan is to make our community fully accessible by 2025.

DEFINITIONS

Accessible Format   may include, but is not limited to, large print, plain language, recorded audio, or electronic, such as Word, PDF, Rich Text, or HTML formats, Braille, and other formats usable by persons with disabilities.

Barrier   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 communications barrier, an attitudinal barrier, a technological barrier, a policy or a practice.

Disability   (a) 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 impediment, deafness or hearing impediment, muteness or speech impediment, or physical reliance on a guide dog or other animal or on a wheelchair or other remedial appliance or device;

(b) a condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability;

(c) a learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language;

(d) a mental disorder; or

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(e) an injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the *Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997.*

PROCEDURES

1.0 Statement of Organizational Commitment

Pursuant to its mission, the County of Oxford is committed to enriching the quality of life for persons with disabilities by continually identifying, removing and preventing barriers to ensure a fully accessible community exists for all citizens.

The County of Oxford acknowledges that persons with disabilities:

- represent a growing and diverse community that is dramatically increasing due to the demographic trends of a maturing population;

- form part of the work force, and include our families, friends, customers and members of the community at large;

- purchase goods and services and make important financial decisions on where they do business, enjoy recreation and choose to live; and

- are valuable contributors in Canadian society.

The County of Oxford is committed to promoting a barrier-free County for employees, citizens and all who live, work, visit, and invest in the County of Oxford.

2.0 Legislative Authority

The purpose of the *Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001* (ODA) was to improve opportunities for persons with disabilities and to provide for their involvement in the identification, removal and prevention of barriers to full participation. Pursuant to the Act, the County established an Accessibility Advisory Committee to assist in developing an accessibility plan informed by consultation with persons with disabilities.

The *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (AODA) went a step further. It requires the development, implementation and enforcement of new, mandatory accessibility standards to address the most important aspects of the lives of those with

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disabilities. These mandatory standards apply to both public and private sectors with the ultimate goal of having a fully accessible province by 2025.
The legislated accessibility standards are:

1. Information and Communication (Integrated Accessibility Standards, O.Reg.191/11) – aims to identify and consider the nature of barriers experienced by people with a wider range of disabilities in the area of information and communications;

2. Employment (Integrated Accessibility Standards, O.Reg.191/11) – governs how we recruit, hire and accommodate individuals in the workplace;

3. Transportation (Integrated Accessibility Standards, O.Reg.191/11) – aims to remove barriers to public transportation, so people with disabilities can travel more easily in Ontario; and

4. Design of Public Spaces (Integrated Accessibility Standards, O.Reg.191/11) – aims to make outdoor public spaces in Ontario accessible for all new construction and extensive renovations.

The first set of standards to be released was the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service which was to be implemented by December 31, 2009 by all public sector organizations. See the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service Policy No. 9.3 available on the County of Oxford website.

In 2011, the Province of Ontario released the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR), which combined the accessibility requirements for information and communication, employment, and transportation, and included general requirements for policy, planning and training. The requirements of the IASR are to be implemented between 2011 and 2021.

In 2012, the Province amended the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR) to include Design of Public Spaces Standards (Accessibility Standards for the Built Enviroment)which applies to public spaces that are newly constructed or redeveloped, for the purpose of creating accessible exterior spaces for persons with disabilities.

The implementation, distribution and promotion of the Facility Accessibility Design Standards (FADS) have been adopted to create barrier free design guidelines. These guidelines are intended to ensure the level of accessibility for persons with disabilities is equal to or exceeds the level of accessibility required by the *Building Code Act*, 1992 and the regulations made under it and in keeping with the ODA.

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3.0   Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

The IASR requires the establishment, implementation and maintenance of a multi-year accessibility plan which outlines the organization's strategy to prevent and remove barriers. In fulfilling its obligations under the regulation, the County of Oxford commits to the following:

▪ Post the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan on the County of Oxford website and provide the plan in an accessible format upon request;

▪ Review and update the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan at least once every five (5) years;

▪ Review and update the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan in consultation with persons with disabilities and with the established Oxford County Accessibility Advisory Committee;

▪ Prepare an annual status report on the progress measures taken to implement the strategies referenced in the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan; and

▪ Post the annual status report on the County of Oxford's website and provide the report in an accessible format upon request.

The County of Oxford's Senior Management Team, in consultation with the Oxford County Accessibility Advisory Committee, have reviewed the requirements of the legislation in detail and have provided the status of each requirement as well as proposed actions moving forward to achieve compliance and to ensure that our community is fully accessible by 2025.

Appendix 1 sets out the Oxford County Multi-Year Accessibility Plan, including target completion dates identified in the AODA, recommended actions and the current status of compliance for each requirement.

4.0   Review and Monitoring of Plan

Annually, Corporate Services will update the status report in conjunction with the annual business plan/ budget planning process and the County's Annual Accessibility Status Report.

Oxford County Growing stronger together		**GENERAL POLICY MANUAL**	
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5.0   Communication of Plan

The Multi-Year Accessibility Plan will be posted on the County of Oxford website www.oxfordcounty.ca in accessible format. Hard copies, electronic copies or other accessible formats of the Plan will be made available to residents/stakeholders upon request.

Annual Accessibility Status Report 2019								
SECTION A - General								
	Barrier or Accessibility Issue	**Type of Barrier**	**Section/Area**	**Recommended Solution**	**Funding Recommendation**	**Resources**	**AODA Deadline**	**Responsibility**	**Status**
1	Statement of organizational commitment.	Admin	Corporate Services	Capture statement of organizational commitment to accessibility in Oxford County Strategic Plan.	None.	Staff time.	January 1st, 2013	Director of Corporate Services	Compliant - statement captured in Multi-Year Plan.
2	Establish, implement and maintain a multi-year accessibility plan outlining the County's strategy to prevent and remove barriers.	Admin	Corporate Services	Review accessibility plan with staff and AAC. Seek Council approval. Communicate to public/ post on website and provide the plan in an accessible format upon request.	None.	Staff time.	January 1st, 2013 and review every 5 years.	Director of Corporate Services	Compliant - Multi-Year Plan posted on website in accessible format. Must review & update at least once every 5 years in consultation with AAC.
3	Prepare annual status report on progress of measures taken to implement strategy in Multi-Year Plan.	Admin	Corporate Services	Review and update status report during annual business plan/budget process. Post on website and provide in an accessible format upon request.	None.	Staff time.	January 1st, 2013. Annual requirement.	Director of Corporate Services	Annual requirement - complete to 2018.
4	Incorporate accessibility design, criteria and features when procuring or acquring goods, services or facilities.	Admin	Corporate Services	Include accessibility criteria and features in Oxford County purchasing policy.	To be determined.	Staff time.	January 1st, 2013	Director of Corporate Services	Compliant - Purchasing Policy No. 6.7 updated May 14, 2014 to include accessibility provisions.
5	Incorporate accessibility features when designing, procuring or acquring self-service kiosks.	Physical	All levels.	Ensure self-serve kiosks are accessible in accordance with the IASR.	Department operating budget.	Staff time.	January 1st, 2013	Senior Management	Compliant. Coin laundry in housing facilities have Braille. Library kiosks accessible.

| 6 | Provide training on the requirements of the accessibility standards and Human Rights Code. | Educational | All levels. | Provide ongoing training re accessibility standards to all employees, volunteers, policy developers and anyone who provides goods and services on behalf of the organization. Training must be appropriate to employee work duties and must be updated as required to incorporate any changes to County accessibility policies. | To be determined. | Staff time. | January 1st, 2014 | Senior Management | Compliant - incorporated into orientation sessions for new employees. |
| 7 | Keep a record of training provided including dates and number of individuals. | Admin | Human Resources | Manage, maintain and monitor all accessible training records. | None. | Staff time. | January 1st, 2014 | Director of Human Resources | Compliant |

SECTION B - Information & Communications									
	Barrier or Accessibility Issue	**Type of Barrier**	**Section/Area**	**Recommended Solution**	**Funding Recommendation**	**Resources**	**AODA Deadline**	**Responsibility**	**Status**
1	Feedback processes must be available in an accessible format and with communication supports upon request.	Admin	All levels.	Develop feedback process and communicate to staff.	Minimal funding.	Staff time.	January 1st, 2014	Senior Management	Compliant
2	Upon request, provide information in accessible formats and with communication supports at the same cost charged to others.	Educational	All levels.	Publicize the availability of accessible formats and communication supports.	N/A.	Staff time.	January 1st, 2015	Senior Management	Compliant
3	Emergency procedures, plans and public safety information must be made available to the public in an accessible manner upon request.	Educational	Public Health and Emergency Services	Ensure plans and public safety information available to the public can be accessed by persons with disabilities (eg. website).	Department operating budget.	Department operating budget.	January 1st, 2012	Chief Administrative Officer	Compliant
4	New Internet websites and web content must conform to WCAG 2.0 at Level A.	Admin	Corporate Services	In-house development of system.	IT budget.	Staff time.	January 1st, 2014	Director of Corporate Services	Compliant

| 5 | Internet websites and web content must conform to WCAG 2.0 at Level AA. | Admin | Corporate Services | In-house development of system. | IT budget. | Staff time. | January 1st, 2021 | Director of Corporate Services | On target |
| 6 | Accessible library materials. | Physical | Library | Oxford County Libraries to provide access to accessible formats where available such as large print, audio books etc. | N/A. | Staff time. | January 1st, 2013 | Director of Corporate Services | Compliant. Oxford County Libraries also has various outreach initiatives which has made programming more accessible. |

SECTION C - Employment Standards									
	Barrier or Accessibility Issue	**Type of Barrier**	**Section/Area**	**Recommended Solution**	**Funding Recommendation**	**Resources**	**AODA Deadline**	**Responsibility**	**Status**
1	Provide and publicize the availability of accommodation in the recruitment and hiring process.	Admin	Human Resources	Develop and implement AODA action plan.	No funding.	Staff time.	January 1st, 2014	Director of Human Resources	Compliant - wording included in Recruitment Policy and job postings. Council has adopted temporary and permanent accommodation policies. Also included in offer letters.
2	Provide individualized workplace emergency response information to employees with a disability.	Admin	Human Resources	Develop and implement workplace emergency response plan.	No funding.	Staff time.	January 1st, 2012	Director of Human Resources	Compliant
3	Provide documented individual job accommodation plans and return to work processes for employees with disabilites.	Admin	Human Resources	Develop and implement AODA action plan.	No funding.	Staff time.	January 1st, 2014	Director of Human Resources	Compliant
4	Accessibility needs of employees considered during performance management, career development and redeployment processes.	Admin	Human Resources	Develop and implement AODA action plan.	No funding.	Staff time.	January 1st, 2014	Director of Human Resources	In progress - 2019 HR Business Plan includes a review of all HR policies - will include where appropriate during that process

SECTION D - Design of Public Spaces								
	Barrier or Accessibility Issue	**Type of Barrier**	**Section/Area**	**Recommended Solution**	**Funding Recommendation**	**Resources**	**AODA Deadline**	**Responsibility**	**Status**
1	Exterior paths of travel, like sidewalks, ramps, stairs, curbs, accessible pedestrian signals, and rest areas must meet accessible design requirements.	Physical	Public Works	Incorporate integrated accessible standard requirements for all new construction and redevelopment.	Public Works budget.	Staff time.	January 1st, 2016	Director of Public Works	Incorporated in all reconstruction and new construction projects. Some building sites that are not AODA compliant will be considered in future business plans and budgets.
2	Accessible parking (eg. employee parking spaces, etc.)	Physical	Public Works	Incorporate integrated accessible standard requirements when constructing all new or redeveloped parking lots/ spaces.	Public Works budget.	Staff time.	January 1st, 2016	Director of Public Works	Complete - Parking lots that are reconstructed or newly constructed incorporate accessible parking. Parking by-law identifies Accessible Parking locations for property owned by the County.
3	Accessible parking signage.	Physical	Public Works	Identify signage deficiencies and ensure compliance with Highway Traffic Act and IASR.	Public Works budget.	Staff time.	January 1st, 2016	Director of Public Works	All accessible parking spots are signed. Facilities is conducting an audit in 2019 with plans to begin to address deficiencies in 2020.
4	Service related elements like service counters, fixed queuing lines and waiting areas (reception and/or waiting rooms).	Physical	Public Works	Incorporate integrated accessible requirements to ensure compliance with IASR.	Public Works budget.	Staff time.	January 1st, 2016	Director of Public Works	Accessibility requirements have been incorporated into construction and renovations, locations that have not been renovated will be addressed in future business plans and budgets.

| 5 | Area zoning by-laws to be updated to incorporate O.Reg.413/12. | Admin | Community and Strategic Planning | Review and amend zoning by-laws to include accessibility standards in accordance with AODA, O.Reg.191/11 as amended by O.Reg.413/12. | Community & Strategic Planning budget. | Staff time. | January 1st, 2016 | Director of Community Planning | Compliant - all Area Municipal By-laws, except EZT, have been modified to incorporate the required accessible standards into their zoning by-laws. Note: approval of zoning by-laws are a lower tier function. |

SECTION E - Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001

	Barrier or Accessibility Issue	Type of Barrier	Section/Area	Recommended Solution	Funding Recommendation	Resources	ODA Deadline	Responsibility	Status
1	Information and directional signage within each facility.	Physical	Public Works	Ensure signage is incorporated into standard guidelines for design and construction. Replace existing signage where required. Ensure compliance with FADS.	Public Works budget.	Staff time.	Long-term	Director of Public Works	Facilities is conducting an audit in 2019 and will begin to address deficiencies in 2020 to ensure signs are replaced according to this policy.
2	Consistent use of directional and descriptive signage for municipal properties and facilities (i.e. signage from parking locations to entrances).	Physical	Public Works	Develop procedure to ensure standard across all facilities and services. Comply with FADS. Implement signage strategy.	Public Works budget.	Staff time.	Short-term	Director of Public Works	Facilities developing a procedure in 2019 that will be considered in future business plans and budgets.
3	County facilities require audio/visual alarms for persons with visual/hearing impairments (staff and clients).	Physical	Public Works	Investigate availability/costs of CSA approved/universal designed alarms.	Public Works budget.	Staff time.	Long-term	Director of Public Works	Audio/visual alarms have been added through new construction and renovations. Remaining sites will be considered in future business plans and budgets.

4	Facilities require automatic doors that are routinely checked for proper functionality - review County Square in particular for location of automation.	Physical	Public Works	Investigate automatic doors for County facilities if feasible. Implement procedures for routine maintenance to ensure continued functionality.	Public Works budget.	Staff time.	Long-term	Director of Public Works	Complete - Automatic doors are checked monthly as part of monthly property inspections. With the exception of 75 Graham Street (only stair access, currently), all buildings on Courthouse Square have automatic door openers.
5	Implementation, distribution and promotion of the adopted Facility Accessibility Design Standards (April 26, 2006).	Admin	All levels.	Encourage application of the FADS within all County departments.	No funding.	Staff time.	Ongoing	Senior Management	Ongoing.
6	Inventory of County-owned accessible features, services and facilities.	Physical/ Admin	Public Works	Develop a tool from existing resources that will indicate all accessible features of municipal facilities. Conduct audit of County-owned facilities.	Staff time, may require external consultant, HRDC funds, Corporate Property Management, $4,000 for student wages.	Staff time. AAC	Short & long-term	Director of Public Works	Through the 2019 audit, an inventory of existing features, services and facilities will be completed. The goal is for the inventory to be integrated into Cartegraph when the Facilities module is available.
7	Social housing buildings.	Physical	Public Works & Human Services	Increase modified/accessible units within social housing portfolio.	To be determined - capitalize on any/all funding opportunities.	Staff time.	Long-term	Director of Public Works & Director of Human Services	Ongoing.