



Burlington Public Library Multi-Year Accessibility Plan – 2026–2029

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Introduction

Burlington Public Library’s (BPL) mission is to inspire imagination, collaboration, and compassion to support an informed and literate society. We provide five core streams of service:

- Library Collections & Resources
- Digital Services & Technology
- Programming
- Spaces
- Staff Expertise

Inclusion is one of BPL’s core values. We develop and deliver services with a universal design mindset and continually seek opportunities to improve accessibility in each of these service streams. Our goal is for people of all abilities to have access to the full scope of library services. This Multi-year Accessibility Plan identifies key improvements we will prioritize under each service stream between 2026-2029 as well as administrative improvements that will increase community engagement and access.



Background

Guided by our Accessibility Policy and BPL Accessibility Principles, Burlington Public Library has implemented many initiatives to improve access for people with disabilities. These include standards to guide accessibility in our facilities and programs, adaptive reading formats and assistive devices to use in BPL branches or borrow, website and communication updates, and staff training. The [Accessibility section of our website, bpl.on.ca](https://bpl.on.ca), identifies key services and supports for people with disabilities.

As required by the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), BPL creates a Multi-Year Accessibility Plan to document accessibility-related initiatives and improvements. This plan guides our accessibility priorities, however it does not capture the full extent of BPL's accessibility work. We believe accessibility is integral, so it is also embedded in our routine practices.

Commitment

Burlington Public Library is actively committed to providing equitable access to all members of the community, including those with disabilities. Accessibility goes beyond physical access—it means ensuring every individual can participate in our programs, resources, and services in a way that:

- respects their dignity
- recognizes their independence
- meets their needs
- and supports integration.

We plan, design, and deliver services to prevent barriers, meet or exceed the requirements of Ontario's accessibility laws and City of Burlington's Corporate Accessibility Policy, and foster an environment where everyone is welcome.



2026-2029 Priorities

These priorities are based on the continuation of in-progress projects, community feedback, and integration with other system-wide initiatives to address barriers to access.

Library Collections & Resources

Connect residents with disabilities to materials that reflect their interests and identity and meet their reading needs.

- Adaptive Reading Support
 - Optimize accessibility features in digital reading technology provided by BPL and help customers learn to use these tools
 - Enhance staff training on digital reading accessibility
 - Providing customer learning opportunities through outreach, programming, and staff support
- Accessible Collections
 - Enhance disability representation and accessibility in our physical book collection, guided by International Board on Books for Young People (IBBY) Outstanding Books for Young People with Disabilities lists
- Borrowing Methods
 - Increase awareness of and access to Handpicked For You custom book bundle service and alternative pickup options
 - Complete needs assessment for borrowers with mobility, cognitive, and technology barriers
 - Develop asset list and map referral pathways for local and regional support service providers offering home delivery and transportation services

Programming

Improve program offerings to foster inclusive participation for customers with physical, cognitive, and developmental disabilities

- Adaptive Participation
 - Seek input from disability advocacy groups and customers with disabilities to identify common barriers
 - Develop processes, purchase supplies, and modify or create programs to provide appropriate support
- Help Customers Plan

- Improve program descriptions to help customers understand what to expect from programs and plan for potential challenges (loud noises or busy spaces)
- Communicate proactively about available supports (audio, sensory, seating)
- Improve timely access to program content such as presentation slides, handouts

Digital Services & Technology

- Self-Check Out Kiosk Pilot & Rollout
 - Evaluate new self checkout kiosks and optimize accessibility features for height adjustment, text size, and voice to text technology integration
 - Introduce new adjustable self-serve kiosks based on evaluation as a part of the life cycle replacement of self-serve kiosks
 - Improve signage and user instructions for self-serve kiosks
- Audiovisual Equipment Management
 - Upgrade large event spaces with new audiovisual system in the Central Branch third floor and Centennial Hall
 - Improve integration with personal assistive devices
 - Create accessibility standards for audiovisual equipment purchasing, replacement, and maintenance

Spaces

- Signage and Wayfinding Upgrades
 - Implement Signage and Wayfinding Standards
 - Train branch supervisors on Signage and Wayfinding Standards and staff expectations
 - Implement planned signage and wayfinding upgrades at Central Branch
 - Review current branch signage against standards and prioritize needs for new or improved signage and wayfinding
- Shared Spaces Optimization & Accessibility
 - Review existing furnishings and fixtures at BPL branches for accessibility
 - Purchase and/or relocate furniture to provide more accessible spaces
 - Identify and communicate accessible workstations
 - Upgrade exterior book return slots at branches
- Accessible Equipment Model



- Create plan to make sure we have the right accessible equipment at our branches for the needs of our community and users at each location
- Integrate accessibility standards into purchasing workflow

Staff Expertise

- Accessibility Refresher Training
 - Implement 2-year refresher schedule for accessibility training of all staff to supplement existing training
- Staff Program Training
 - Update staff programming training to reflect enhanced accessibility standards for programming

Administration and Communication

- Equity Deserving Group Participation
 - Increase proactive outreach to disability advocacy and support groups
 - Increase the number of people with disabilities actively using the library
 - Target to increase participation in our Customer Satisfaction Survey by 25% among customers who identify as having a disability that affects their daily life
- Website Accessibility
 - Improve SiteImprove website accessibility score by two or more percentage points to 93% rating or higher
- Community Engagement Framework
 - Audit existing community engagement tools and feedback processes for accessibility and inclusion
 - Develop Community Engagement Framework that provides accessible methods to receive, capture, review, and action community feedback

MYAP Reporting

Burlington Public Library's Accessibility Coordinator oversees the MYAP and its priorities. They will provide a yearly progress report on BPL's MYAP progress to the public and Library Board.