

MINISTRY OF TRANSPORTATION

*2005-2006
Accessibility Plan*



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Introduction

The recent passage of the landmark Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 marks a new era of accessibility in Ontario. This legislation will make Ontario one of the world leaders in improving accessibility for people with disabilities.

While the government is moving forward to implement the new legislation, there will be a transition period during which government and parts of the broader public sector will continue to have planning and other obligations under the Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001 (ODA). These obligations will remain in effect until they are repealed and replaced by standards under the new act.

Under the ODA, Ontario government ministries, municipalities, hospitals, school boards, colleges, universities and public transportation organizations are required to develop annual accessibility plans to make policies, practices, programs, services and buildings more accessible to people with disabilities. These plans must be made available to the public. Accessibility planning efforts to date have developed a strong foundation for the development of accessibility standards that will ensure real and effective change.

This document is the third annual accessibility plan developed by the Ministry of Transportation. It highlights achievements of the 2004-05 plan and outlines commitments for 2005-06 so that no new barriers are created and, over time, existing ones are removed.

This ministry intends to build on its achievements by implementing initiatives that support the government's efforts and commitment to continue to make Ontario an inclusive and accessible province, where people of all abilities have a chance to fully participate and achieve their potential.

Message from the Minister of Transportation



**Honourable
Harinder S. Takhar**

I am pleased to present the Ministry of Transportation's 2005/2006 Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001 (ODA) Accessibility Plan.

We are proud to be building a transit culture, accessible to all Ontarians. The ability to easily travel to and from our home and workplace is key to our quality of life and the prosperity of the province. MTO is committed to ensuring that our transportation system is accessible to everyone.

Our government has put in place a requirement that all new transit vehicles purchased through funding by the province must be fully accessible. Provincial gas tax funding is helping transit systems across Ontario purchase more than 1,800 new buses over the next three years.

My ministry has also conducted an audit of 24 MTO buildings to make sure they are fully accessible to the public.

We are working towards the common goal of increasing accessibility and building a transportation system which supports strong and prosperous communities. That benefits us all.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "H. S. Takhar". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

The Honourable Harinder S. Takhar
Minister of Transportation

Report on Achievements of 2004-2005 Planning Commitments

The Ministry of Transportation (MTO) was successful in achieving, and in many cases, surpassing, commitments outlined in its 2004-05 Accessibility Plan. Tangible and concrete improvements were achieved. Both staff and members of the public contributed significantly to the identification, removal and prevention of barriers. Both public and private sectors provided positive feedback acknowledging this ministry's commitment to improving accessibility. The following section provides a status report.

Commitment: MTO will strive to ensure barrier-free access to ministry buildings with a focus on entrances and points of egress, accessibility to corridors, washrooms and common work areas, and signage related to both interior and exterior entranceways.

Status: Complete

Action and Timeframe: The Ontario Realty Corporation (ORC) barrier-free design guidelines were provided to MTO facility management staff and regional business service managers. Additionally, the guidelines were posted as a resource on the MTO intranet site for easy access and reference by all ministry staff.

Commitment: Continue to assess the various MTO workplaces and emergency evacuation processes to identify accessibility barriers. Request accessibility changes from landlords and their agents including ORC and ProFac.

Status: Complete

Action and Timeframe: During this reporting period, MTO public buildings were audited against the standards in the *Ontario Building Code* and the ORC barrier-free design guidelines. This comprehensive facility audit included 16 head, regional and area office sites consisting of 24 buildings across the province. Results were compiled, improvement costs were calculated, pictures of deficiencies were taken and priority areas were identified. A comprehensive barrier-free database was developed and audit results were provided to each MTO location.

MTO worked diligently with building management to remove and prevent accessibility barriers as they were identified to the ODA planning team.

a) MTO invested \$194,000 in the removal of barriers including: installing 4 automatic door openers at the Downsview and St. Catharines Head Office locations; upgrading a barrier-free ramp; purchasing and installing an elevator to

provide easy access between buildings in the Downsview complex for employees with disabilities.

b) ORC completed a major lobby renovation in Downsview's Building B, which enhanced accessibility and incorporated the new standards.

c) Some examples of barrier prevention included: building management increased their effort in ticketing unauthorized vehicles parked in barrier-free parking spots; yellow hatched lines at some points of entrance were painted to alert drivers to not block ramp entrances; MTO worked with ORC to revise the winter maintenance contract to ensure timely removal of snow and ice on path of travel, and automatic door opener pushbuttons were inspected to ensure barrier-free access.

In collaboration with the building management, the St. Catharines and Downsview MTO buildings emergency evacuation procedures were reviewed. A process was incorporated into the current Emergency Evacuation Procedure to address the safe evacuation of visitors with disabilities. Facilitators using the MTO Learning Center in St. Catharines are now provided with a procedural outline that they communicate to all attendees at their sessions. Fire wardens were retrained on this new revised procedure and emergency evacuation postings were updated. In the Downsview Complex, stairwell identification, as part of the emergency evacuation procedures, was completed.

Commitment: MTO will take steps to ensure that future contractual agreements are consistent with the ODA.

Status: Complete

Action and Timeframe: New Private Issuing Network (PIN) contracts contain a clause to reference ODA requirements.

Improvements to the procurement process were adopted. In particular, various sections of the Request for Proposal (RFP) document, used in establishing issuing offices, were revised to require new procurements to comply with ODA standards as directed by the ministry.

Provisions in the ministry's PIN's manual were revised to reflect preferred language when referring to a disability. Standard response templates addressing general and common ODA inquiries were developed.

In addition, the ministry created a checklist of accessibility standards modelled after the ORC barrier-free design guidelines. Ministry staff conducted a telephone survey of the private issuing offices. A strategy was subsequently developed to improve accessibility awareness through training for both the PINs and those ministry staff who work directly with the private issuers.

Ministry staff also completed an ODA computer-based training program developed by the Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration (MCI). In the spring of 2005, MTO began working with the Ontario Motor Vehicle License Issuers Association (OMVLIA) and MCI to develop a strategy to promote accessibility awareness across the private issuing network and to support the application of existing and anticipated accessibility standards.

Commitment: MTO will continue to consider accessibility in the purchase of goods and services, under section 5 of the ODA.

Status: Complete

Action and Timeframe: Management Board Secretariat (MBS) "*Guidelines for Implementing the Procurement Provisions of the Ontarians with Disabilities Act*" were distributed to the senior management group as well as all ministry staff with procurement responsibilities. This document was posted as a resource on the MTO Intranet site for easy access and reference. Complementary tools subsequently developed by MBS in consultation with the Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration were communicated using the same distribution approach.

The internal procurement guidelines used by ministry staff ("Guidelines for the Procurement of Consulting Services" and "Consulting Services Procurement User's Handbook") were updated to reflect the guidelines developed by MBS and include their definition of both disabilities and barriers.

A statement on ODA requirements was incorporated into the MTO RFP/RFQ template documents found on the MTO Engineering Standards Branch Web site to ensure full compliance.

Nine training sessions on Consultation Acquisition for Engineering Construction and Policy related offices were delivered to 500 project managers across the province by MTO Service Management Office. The training package outlined ODA requirements and participants received a copy of the "Guideline for Implementing the Procurement Provisions of the Ontarians with Disabilities Act".

Commitment: Assess whether new materials posted on the ministry Internet site meet the requirements of ODA, section 6. Continue to provide advice and guidance to MTO web developers on ODA requirements. Attend on an ongoing basis the inter-ministerial GO web committee meetings and workshops. Extend invitations to web developers and content providers to attend sensitivity training on barriers to accessibility. When distributed by the Ministry of Government Services, follow revised web standards for intranets reflecting accessibility development guidelines.

Status: Complete

Action and Timeframe: MTO continues to follow World Wide Web Consortium accessibility guidelines, priorities I & II. Consultation and recommendations to web developers are provided as required.

Commitment: Scheduled review of the Official Driver's Handbook will take into consideration ODA requirements. MTO will support accommodation requests on an as-needed basis. Requests for alternate formats will be actioned through Publications Ontario.

Status: Complete

Action and Timeframe: ODA planning team provided guidance and assistance to the Driver's Handbook Committee to ensure the needs of people with disabilities were considered. ODA planning team attended committee meetings as required and provided support and direction around the application of the ODA.

Commitment: Continue to review alternative communication systems, with a focus on TTY devices, throughout the organization to facilitate accessibility to information by people who are deaf or speech-impaired.

Status: Complete

Action and Timeframe: The ministry continued to update MTO publications as they come up for review by including the TTY numbers. The MTO general inquiry TTY numbers, both local and toll free, were communicated to Drivers and Vehicles Offices and are included on the MTO public site in various locations. The TTY number is also included in the CenterLine publication which is mailed with each Vehicle License Renewal application.

Under the MTO's annual Winter Safe Driving Campaign, MTO and the OPP launched the "Drive with Extra Caution in Winter" tray liner initiative at 55 participating locations – tray liners promote MTO INFO's General Inquiry, Road Conditions and TTY numbers as well as its internet site.

English and French letters promoting MTO INFO's TTY numbers were distributed to the Ontario Association of the Deaf (OAD) and the Canadian Hearing Society (CHS). The CHS in turn, has distributed this information letter to 28 areas and regional offices for posting (approximately 450 staff and walk-in) and will include this information in their fall publication of VIBES (distribution approximately 18,000). MTO Information Counselors continue to respond to Bell Relay and TTY callers. Calls to this service are monitored to ensure that the ministry level of service is appropriate.

In December 2003, under the Winter Road Condition Reporting (which runs between October and April), MTO merged 11 regional 1-800 numbers into one-

window, province-wide, bilingual, TTY accessible service. In 2004/05, the Interactive Voice Response (IVR) system was enhanced with voice recognition that allows the caller to ask for a highway, state a general location or give their start and end locations to obtain road conditions and closure information. Helpful instructions are provided throughout, and will default to touch-tone/keypad operation. Bilingual and TTY service is now extended to the entire province with counselor availability during business hours.

All 30 Bell Directories blue pages are being updated throughout the province as they are reviewed. To date, 20 directories include the TTY numbers.

Government of Ontario Telephone Directory 2005 spring edition now includes the MTO TTY numbers.

Commitment: MTO will continue to review processes for employment competitions to identify areas for improvement in quality of service and accommodation for people with disabilities.

Status: Complete

Action and Timeframe: The MTO Accessibility Planning Team reviewed the processes for staffing to identify areas for improvement in the quality of service related to accommodation for people with disabilities. A report outlining findings and recommendations for improvement in the recruitment process in MTO was submitted to the Human Resources Management team for their review and consideration. Standard language was developed and incorporated into the recruitment process across all regions.

Commitment: MTO will continue to provide individual accommodation for its employees and prospective employees, as the need arises. Will continue to provide accommodation, as requested, to individuals involved in a competitive process. Respond to individual staff requests for accommodation as it relates to their employment.

Status: Complete

Action and Timeframe: As required, MTO provided employment accommodation to its staff. Through standard language incorporated into the recruitment process, the ministry offers accommodation to prospective candidates at each step of the process.

In collaboration with the Niagara InterAgency Network (NIN), a workshop on Employee Accommodation in the OPS was delivered on October 13, 2004 to supervisors, managers and HR professionals. An invitation was extended to other OPS ministries as well as other jurisdictions. The workshop was well attended and well received by the participants.

Business practices regarding accommodations requiring technical devices were reviewed. As part of this assessment, the regions were surveyed regarding their experiences with employment accommodations requiring technical devices. Results of this survey were compiled and areas for improvement were identified. In collaboration with different program areas, a tool was developed to assist both managers and HR professionals to respond quickly and effectively to employment accommodation requests requiring technical devices.

Following a request to all OPS employees to update their travel profile, an MTO employee noted and reported that the document did not have a field inquiring about employee accommodation needs. The issue was raised with the appropriate program areas along with recommendations for improvement. MTO's suggestion was well received and as a result the OPS travel profile was revised to incorporate improvements regarding accommodation needs.

Commitment: Continue to assess the level of knowledge of accessibility issues among staff and provide employees with an opportunity to assist in identifying and removing barriers.

Status: In progress

Action and Timeframe: An employee questionnaire to measure staff accessibility knowledge was developed and piloted.

Rationale: A decision was made to release the questionnaire no sooner than fall of 2005.

Commitment: MTO will continue to consider public input through consultation with key stakeholders in the identification of barriers in the delivery of our services.

Status: Complete

Action and Timeframe: Public and employee opportunities to provide guidance, recommendations and ideas regarding accessibility issues were numerous and were offered through various methods.

Primarily, MTO continued to maintain an e-mail inquiry web address available to both internal staff and the public. ODA planning team members attended various stakeholders meetings where accessibility concerns were raised in this forum and addressed. Through the Drivers and Vehicles (D&V) Comment Cards process accessibility issues were also identified and dealt with.

MTO held three ODA promotional events where comments and feedback were encouraged and welcomed. Over 500 people visited the ODA display where ODA information packages were distributed. An ODA quiz was given to visitors as a way to educate staff and visitors on ODA requirements. Many visitors to these ODA promotional events provided suggestions for improving accessibility that are under consideration.

Visitors to the ODA promotional events, e-mail inquiries and D&V comment cards also provided valuable comments and suggestions, many of which were either immediately addressed, included in the 2005-06 commitments or incorporated into this current review.

Acts and Regulations

Commitment: Language used in the existing and proposed ministry acts and regulations will be reviewed to ensure appropriate language is used with respect to people with disabilities.

Status: In progress

Action and Timeframe: Twenty-six acts administered by MTO were reviewed for appropriate language. Of these 26 acts, non-preferred language was identified in four acts. Fourteen of the acts have a total of 109 regulations. Of these 109 regulations, 14 were reviewed for preferred language. Non-preferred language was identified in one regulation.

Highway Traffic Act Regulation 629, Vehicles for the Transportation of Physically Disabled Passengers was amended. In February 2005 the Ministry of Transportation adopted the recently revised Canadian Standards Association (CSA) Standard D409-02 as the standard for rear-entry accessible minivans being used as taxis in the province. The amendment gives taxi operators greater flexibility in their choice of wheelchair accessible taxis while ensuring that those vehicles continue to meet modern safety standards.

Rationale: MTO has a completion date of September 2006 for reviewing the acts and regulations (timing subject to priorities of legislature).

Policies

Commitment: MTO continues to work on the Greater Toronto Area Transportation Strategy, one of several initiatives of the government's priority to build strong accessible communities. This strategy will also support the transportation objectives of the government's growth plan, developed by the Ministry of Public Infrastructure Renewal. The Greater Toronto Area Transportation Strategy will make the critical connections between land use and transportation.

Status: In progress

Action and Timeframe: The strategy is now called The Transportation Strategy for the Greater Golden Horseshoe.

Rationale: The target release date to the public and stakeholders is to be determined.

Commitment: MTO will continue to work on highway signing initiatives to improve traveling for highway users, particularly for senior drivers and other people with visual impairments.

Status: Complete

Action and Timeframe: New technology in highway signs and pavement markings are constantly being assessed and tested. As appropriate, standards are being revised and upgraded. The Ontario Traffic Manual (OTM) provides information and guidance for transportation practitioners and promotes uniformity of treatment in the design, application and operation of traffic control devices and systems across Ontario. OTM also provides a set of guidelines consistent with the intent of the Highway Traffic Act. During this reporting period, MTO developed and made available to road authorities across Ontario, Book 2 (sign design, fabrication and patterns), the 7th manual developed under this series.

Programs and Services

Commitment: Consult with program areas on ODA.

Status: Complete

Action and Timeframe: Members of the ODA planning team provided, as required, advice and recommendations to program areas on ODA. Since the team has an active presence in the ministry, members were consulted on numerous occasions on various ODA issues. The team is recognized for its knowledge, willingness to assist and professional attitude. As a result, the team received a Beacon Award from the Corporate Services Division in recognition of their contribution.

Commitment: The ODA planning team will continue to consult with the Accessibility Directorate on the development and implementation of MTO's accessibility plan. The ministry will liaise with other ministries to explore potential cross-ministry initiatives related to ODA.

Status: Complete

Action and Timeframe: Members of the ODA planning team are participating in the development of GO Transit 2006 accessibility plan.

The ODA planning team worked closely with the Accessibility Directorate on many ODA issues. This ministry also assessed cross-ministry initiatives pertaining to ODA. Valuable information was shared and positively affected the

product that was developed. Various members sitting on inter-ministerial committees are on the alert for any ODA activities to which they can contribute.

Commitment: Continue to maintain and improve current translation, interpreter, and sign language, and note-taking services.

Status: Complete

Action and Timeframe: MTO is participating and facilitating the exploration of a workable solution for the provision of driver education services for people who are deaf and hard of hearing and met with stakeholders, including the Ontario Human Rights Commission (OHRC). Research to assess best practices in other ministries/jurisdictions has been initiated.

MTO planning team reviewed public meetings sponsored by this ministry. The initial review was to determine accessibility levels. Findings showed that most public meeting locations are physically accessible. As a first step, the “How to prepare for accessible meetings” developed by MCI was provided to staff with responsibilities in this area. Standard language inviting participants to identify accommodation requirements in advance of the meeting was also provided to be used as a best practice. The ministry made a decision to focus on other accessibility issues normally not considered during the arrangement of these public meeting sessions (e.g. signage, participants that are hard of hearing, etc). As a result, an associate planning team member through an inter-ministerial committee membership is currently assessing other ministries practices.

Commitment: MTO will continue to work with Ontario municipalities to improve and renew their municipal transit systems and ensure that their transit vehicle management plans are consistent with the requirements as set out in the ODA.

Status: Complete

Action and Timeframe: MTO sent program notification (2004 Ontario Transit Vehicle Program) letters to mayors of municipalities that have transit services. MTO worked and liaised with Ontario municipalities as required.

All vehicles purchased using the gas tax funding must be fully accessible as per the 2004/05 guidelines.

Under the Federal/Provincial CSIF program, the province provided one third funding to the Toronto Transit Commission to make one subway station accessible.

Commitment: Continue the review of the disabled person parking permit program (DPPP) eligibility.

Status: Complete

Action and Timeframe: Consultations regarding improvements to the DPPP program were held with more than 50 key ministry stakeholders including representatives from the medical and enforcement communities and organizations representing people with disabilities. Additionally, the ministry consulted with the Association of Municipalities and other ministries including the ministries of Citizenship and Immigration and Municipal Affairs and Housing.

Practices

Commitment: The ODA planning team will continue to develop the annual ODA Plan and will consider its commitments in light of results-based planning priorities to ensure that commitments to accessibility are linked. Additionally, the team will administer and implement commitments stated in the plan, monitor implementation progress, evaluate and provide progress reports to the Chief Administrative Officer and provide updates to ministry staff.

Status: Complete

Action and Timeframe: The ODA planning team continued to consult with the Accessibility Directorate on the development and implementation of MTO's accessibility plan as well as liaise with other ministries to explore potential cross-ministry initiatives related to ODA. ODA planning team recruited new members to ensure that appropriate membership representation is in place. This year's team was very successful and had a broad impact on the organization and the public and is currently moving towards a self-managed team approach. The team is knowledgeable, dedicated to advance the ODA agenda and responsive to ODA issues brought forward. During the course of this year, and in preparation for next year's plan, the team met on a regular basis and recorded progress to date on all 23 commitments. As a pro-active measure they also recorded ODA emerging issues not included under the current Accessibility Plan for future consideration. All team members were also informed on the progress of Bill 118 and followed its development closely. Team members, where appropriate, attended some of the AODA public hearings to ensure the organization was aligned with the disability group concerns and was able to follow closely progress made to the AODA. Ad hoc ODA information sessions were delivered to various groups.

Much of what the team has been able to accomplish is a result of the ongoing support and commitment of the ministry senior executive team.

Commitment: Develop accessibility guideline on best practices for proposed publications for simplified Internet posting and easier conversion to alternate formats.

Status: Complete

Action and Timeframe: In total, 51 MTO public publications were identified and rated against a set of criteria such as format available, distributors, bilingual, etc. Findings showed that most publications can be obtained in various formats and are posted on the MTO Internet site in an HTML format. As part of its planning strategy to ensure current demands were met, MTO consulted with Publications Ontario to find out what MTO publication requests for alternate format were received in the past few years.

Obligations under the ODA were communicated and the *Guide to Multiple Formats for Communications* developed by MCI was distributed to respective areas.

The in-class Senior Education Program delivery format was enhanced to better meet the needs of seniors. The Senior Driver Renewal Program included revising and enhancing the curriculum and slide presentations and distributing an accompanying take-home booklet that summarizes the session content. The materials were improved by better visual design used in new slides based on senior learning needs (bigger fonts, use of colour, illustrations, appropriate reading level, positive tone). Animated traffic scenes are used to illustrate proper driving maneuvers. Slides and a booklet provide updated information on rules of road, traffic laws, traffic signs, high risk situations related to actual senior driver collision risk and more driving tips. Materials are more responsive to seniors' needs and interests with more information on age-related factors affecting driving, ways to compensate, and general information on impact of medications on seniors' driving.

Commitment: Increase MTO staff knowledge and awareness in regards to accessibility issues with a focus on cognitive and attitudinal barriers.

Status: Complete

Action and Timeframe: Several ODA presentations and information sessions were delivered to MTO. Special emphasis by the facilitator was given to invisible disabilities and attitudinal barriers.

Mental Health Works, an initiative of the Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) in partnership with MCI, delivered a one-day mental health workshop. This award-winning workshop offers practical solutions on addressing mental illness in the workplace. Communication promoting, supporting and encouraging the management group to attend was sent by a senior executive to senior management. This increased awareness and demonstrated management's commitment. As a result, it generated interest from other locations in the ministry where similar sessions are being considered.

The lexicon of preferred terms developed by MCI was widely distributed throughout the ministry. As a result, non-preferred language used on a sign was reported and immediately attended to by building and facility management.

Additionally, further internal communications were flagged by Road User Safety Division for using non-preferred language. This demonstrates that awareness and education initiatives undertaken by the ministry have impacted employees at all levels of the organization.

MTO contributed funding to the upcoming Festival of International Conferences on Disability, Aging and Technology (FICDAT) to be held in Toronto in 2007. The ministry communicated its commitment to playing a key role in the government's objective to achieve real, measurable improvements in the removal of barriers for people with disabilities.

Commitment: New managers will receive ODA Workforce Information Network training.

Status: Complete

Action and Timeframe: A process was developed, communicated and implemented across the organization. ODA planning team monitored and reported progress.

Commitments and Strategies for 2005-2006

This section represents the ministry's plan, including new commitments and initiatives for the coming year. MTO is highly committed to making Ontario an inclusive society and will continue to fully support the ODA and is committed to advancing the goals of the AODA.

Customer Service

Commitment: MTO will provide guidance, assistance and direction as needed to its service providers to address accessibility requirements.

Action: Through a collaborative effort and a formal committee structure, MTO will provide education, training, direction, share relevant information and tools with service providers. Where applicable, accessibility issues will be discussed and solutions will be explored, developed and implemented.

Timeframe: Ongoing

Commitment: Together with regional operational coordinators, the ministry will assess current levels of accessibility of the Senior Driver Renewal Program.

Action: Through regular participation on existing committee structures, the ODA Planning Team will educate participants on current requirements under the ODA, 2001, and future applicable requirements under the AODA, 2005. In partnership with the regional operational coordinators, an overview and assessment of the service and overall program will be conducted. Based on the findings, recommendations for improvement will be submitted.

Timeframe: July 2006

Commitment: MTO will continue to assess various MTO workplace emergency evacuation processes.

Action: MTO will also continue to update emergency training, policies, and procedures as applicable to enhance emergency evacuation processes for people with disabilities.

Timeframe: Ongoing

Commitment: MTO will support the Accessibility Directorate of Ontario to implement the AODA, 2005.

Action: As required, MTO will actively participate in transportation sector related activities.

Timeframe: Ongoing

Commitment: MTO will continue to consider public input in the identification of barriers in the delivery of our services.

Action: MTO will continue to be responsive and will effectively follow up with accessibility issues raised through various channels.

Timeframe: Ongoing

Commitment: The ODA planning team will administer and implement commitments stated in the plan, monitor implementation progress, evaluate and provide progress reports as required. The team will support the Accessibility Directorate of Ontario in its effort to implement the AODA, 2005.

Action: The ODA Planning team is building on last year's success and is reviewing ways of improving its effectiveness and efficiency. It is moving towards a self-managed approach and will revise its Terms of Reference to appropriately reflect their new roles and responsibilities. They will continue to meet on a regular basis. Each divisional representative will update their senior management team as required. Processes will be implemented to assist the team in providing reference materials as well as additional relevant ODA and AODA information. The team will assist its ministry's AODA representatives in implementing AODA requirements.

Timeframe: Ongoing

Commitment: MTO customer service front line staff will receive training on serving customers with disabilities.

Action: MTO front line customer service staff will be identified. Senior management support will be secured. Training curriculum developed by MCI will be delivered.

Timeframe: June 2006

Commitment: Introduce program improvements to the disabled person parking permit (DPPP) program.

Action: Complete the comprehensive review of the DPPP program to ensure it effectively serves its clients. This review considers eligibility criteria for the program, opportunities to improve permit security and business process changes.

Timeframe: Ongoing

Commitment: MTO will continue to consider accessibility in the purchase of goods and services.

Action: MTO will continue its guidance to MTO managers on accessibility in procurement as required.

Timeframe: Ongoing

Commitment: Continue to assess the level of knowledge of accessibility issues among staff and provide employees with an opportunity to assist in identifying and removing barriers.

Action: Distribute the employee questionnaire to measure accessibility knowledge. Analyze results of the questionnaire.

Timeframe: Fall 2005

Commitment: Continue to provide, as required, advice and consultation to program areas on ODA and AODA requirements.

Action: ODA planning team members will be timely in responding to ODA requests. Through participation, education and information sharing, the team will assist program areas to meet their requirements under both the ODA and AODA. As required, they will review proposals and provide recommendations. Additionally, they will liaise with the Accessibility Directorate and/or other ministries as appropriate.

Timeframe: Ongoing

Employment

Commitment: Increase both management and Human Resource professional knowledge and promote awareness regarding employment accommodation for its current and future employees.

Action: Management group and HR community will receive relevant employment accommodation information, expert advice, tips and tools through a newsletter.

Timeframe: December 2005

Commitment: Assess what tools can be developed to assist with the application of the employment accommodation process.

Action: Solicit ideas and recommendations from the HR community regarding the development of tools to support the employment accommodation process.

Timeframe: April 2006

Commitment: New managers will receive ODA online training delivered through MyOPS.

Action: ODA planning team will monitor and report progress. Follow up as required.

Timeframe: Ongoing

Communications and Information

Commitment: MTO will explore the improvement of the accessibility of ministry-sponsored public meetings.

Action: In a collaborative effort with other ministries, a common corporate approach regarding the manner in which government addresses ODA requirements when sponsoring public meetings will be developed.

Timeframe: April 2006

Commitment: Continue to provide advice and guidance on web content to MTO staff on ODA requirements.

Action: MTO will continue to follow World Wide Web Consortium accessibility guidelines, priorities I & II. Consultation and recommendations will be provided to MTO staff as required. Attend the inter-ministerial GO web committee meetings and workshops as required.

Timeframe: Ongoing

Commitment: In consultation with public and private stakeholders, explore enhancements to the Beginner Driver Education program for people with disabilities.

Action: Assist in exploring workable solutions for the provision of appropriate driver education services for people with disabilities.

Timeframe: Ongoing

Commitment: Enhance Road Construction Information services.

Action: Add voice recognition to the Interactive Voice Response (IVR) system to mirror the improvements to the Winter Road Condition reporting ensuring consistent, province wide, bilingual and TTY accessible service.

Timeframe: September 2006

Commitment: MTO will continue to work on the Transportation Strategy for the Greater Golden Horseshoe. This strategy also supports the transportation objectives of the government's growth plan, developed by the Ministry of Public Infrastructure Renewal.

Action: Support and assist in the development of short, medium and long-term strategies for the future development of inter-regional transit and the various transportation corridors that support growth of the GTA that is safe, efficient and provides reasonable choice and accessibility.

Timeframe: Ongoing

Commitment: MTO will continue to work on highway signing initiatives to improve traveling for highway users, particularly for senior drivers and other people with visual impairments.

Action: MTO will continue to generate and update current books under the Ontario Traffic Manual (OTM) series, which provide traffic practitioners current best practices and industry standards in the application of traffic operations.

Timeframe: Ongoing

Built Environment

Commitment: Enhance knowledge of MTO staff that work directly with the landlord on facility-related projects such as renovations with regards to the new ORC barrier-free guidelines.

Action: The ministry will develop and provide training to MTO Accommodation Officers and Regional Business Service Managers.

Timeframe: June 2006

Commitment: MTO will continue to strive to ensure barrier-free access to ministry buildings with a focus on entrances and points of egress, accessibility to corridors, washrooms and common work areas, and signage related to both interior and exterior entranceways.

Action: MTO will continue to work in collaboration with the landlords to improve accessibility at various facilities.

Timeframe: Ongoing

Commitment: MTO will continue to work with Ontario municipalities to assist in improving and renewing their municipal transit systems and assist them in assessing whether their transit vehicle management plans are consistent with the requirements as set out in the ODA.

Action: MTO will liaise with Ontario municipalities as required. MTO will ensure that all vehicles purchased using provincial gas tax funding will be fully accessible. As part of the Federal/Provincial Canada strategic infrastructure fund (CSIF) program, the province will provide one third funding to the Toronto Transit Commission to make three subway stations accessible.

Timeframe: Ongoing

Acts and Regulations

Commitment: Continue to review language used in existing and proposed ministry acts and regulations to ensure appropriate language is used with respect to people with disabilities.

Action: Complete language appropriateness review of remaining acts and regulations. In consultation with appropriate program office, develop recommendations identifying appropriate amendments.

Timeframe: September 2006 (subject to timing priorities of legislature).

For More Information

Questions or comments about the ministry's accessibility plan are always welcome.

Please phone MTO INFO General Inquiry Service at:

GTA area: (416) 235-4686

1-800 number: 1-800-268-4686

TTY number: (905) 704-2426 (St. Catharines area)

TTY 1-866 number: 1-866-471-8929

E-mail: oda@mto.gov.on.ca

Ministry website address: www.mto.gov.on.ca

Visit the Ministry of Community and Social Services Accessibility Ontario web site at: <http://www.mcass.gov.on.ca/accessibility/index.html>. The site promotes accessibility and provides information and resources on how to make Ontario a barrier-free province.

Alternate formats of this document are available free upon request from:

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