

City of Mississauga

# Multi-Year Accessibility Plan 2019 Accessibility Annual Status Update

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City of Mississauga

# 2019 Accessibility Annual Status Update

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## Executive Summary/Background

Almost one in four people in Ontario has a disability, which equates to about 173,600 Mississauga residents or approximately 24 per cent of the population. It is expected that this number will continue to rise given the aging population. To increase sustainability and enhance the quality of life in Mississauga, the City is committed to an inclusive community where all residents and visitors have access to City services, programs and facilities in a manner that is integrated and promotes dignity and independence.

The goal of the [Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 \(AODA\)](#) is to identify, prevent and remove barriers to make Ontario accessible by 2025. To meet this goal, the Act outlines accessibility requirements so people of all abilities can participate in all areas of daily life. The requirements are applied under the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR) which has five standards:

- Customer Service
- Information and Communications
- Employment
- Transportation
- Design of Public Spaces

One of the City's requirements under the IASR is to develop a multi-year accessibility plan that outlines how the City will meet its obligations under the legislation and remove barriers for people with disabilities. The 2018-2022 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan is a roadmap that shows how the City will continue to identify, remove and prevent accessibility barriers through the City's policies, programs, services and facilities.

This five-year plan was developed with feedback from the City's Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC), Staff Accessibility Resource Team (StART), persons with disabilities, accessibility stakeholders and staff and is organized around the AODA's accessibility standards.

The 2019 Annual Status Report demonstrates ways the City is helping to make the community more accessible and inclusive for everyone. It is not meant to be an inventory of accomplishments. It highlights key areas of progress made in 2019.

The multi-year accessibility plan achievements translate into improved accessibility in City programs, services and facilities for residents, visitors and employees. As our

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population ages, a more accessible City is more inclusive for everyone, including seniors and people with disabilities.

The City continues to encourage local businesses and organizations to meet accessibility requirements and prevent and remove barriers, however, the City has no official role in enforcing these requirements. Ensuring these requirements are met is the responsibility of the Ontario government.

## **Mississauga Accessibility Advisory Committee**

The Mississauga Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC) is a citizen committee that acts as an advisory body for Council. Its mandate is to advise on the identification, removal and prevention of barriers to people with disabilities in municipal programs, services, initiatives and facilities. City staff works with the AAC to review initiatives and promote awareness about accessibility and celebrate inclusion.

Each member of the AAC is a volunteer with the exception of Council representatives. The majority of AAC membership is held by persons with disabilities. The AAC is supported by the Accessibility Planning team and the Clerk's Department.

The AAC's term coincides with Council's term. Following the 2018 Municipal Elections, a new AAC was formed and will work within its mandate until 2022. The 2018-2022 AAC members bring a wide range of personal and professional experiences and perspectives related to the challenges faced by people with disabilities. They provide invaluable advice and support as we continue to work toward a barrier-free Mississauga. For more information about the AAC, its initiatives and members, please see the City of Mississauga's [AAC page](#).

In 2019, the AAC received several presentations and provided feedback on the following key initiatives:

- 2018 annual status update to the City's Multi-Year Accessibility Plan
- MiWay Annual Accessibility Report
- Review of the Information and Communications Standards – 2019 Initial Recommendations
- 2018-2022 AAC Work Plan
- Mississauga Moves update
- Digital Modernization Project
- Smart City Master Plan
- Council Chamber Renovation – new handrails
- MiWay Training Video
- Accessibility Services and CELA at the Library
- Accessible Parking Signage

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- Smart Cities Idea Jam
- Mobility Devices on MiWay

Additionally, the AAC's Facility Accessibility Design Subcommittee (FADS) met three times to review capital projects with an emphasis on the built environment. The subcommittee provides feedback to ensure facilities and public spaces are accessible and inclusive. The FADS reviewed the following initiatives in 2019:

- Accessible Garden Initiatives
- City Centre Transit Terminal Accessibility Upgrades
- Pheasant Run Park Expansion
- Civic Centre Great Hall In-fill
- Bicycle Bypass Lanes at Skymark Drive and Explorer Drive Roundabout
- Development of Parks 524 and 525
- Accessible Beach Routes
- Lakefront Promenade Park

City staff and the committee members continued to seek out opportunities to increase community awareness in 2019 through hosting or participating in the following events:

- **National AccessAbility Week:** with the support of the AAC, the City hosted a number of free, accessibility-focused events to highlight the accessible programs and services the City offers to make the community more accessible and inclusive. The events also helped to raise awareness of the types of barriers people with disabilities face and ways to help remove them
- **International Day of Persons with Disabilities – Inclusion by Design Conference:** Staff and the AAC hosted a booth and promoted programs and services the City has to offer people
- **Smart City Idea Jam – Accessibility and Inclusion:** the City hosted this collaborative brainstorming event that focused on engaging the community to develop creative ideas using technology to make the City's services more accessible and inclusive. The event featured a variety of speakers and a brainstorming workshop open to the public
- **Coalition for Persons with Disabilities – Connections Resource Fair:** The City and the AAC hosted a booth and were one of 50 organizations to participate in the fair, promoting the programs and services for people with disabilities in the community

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- **Councillor Saito's Annual Senior's Fair:** Councillor Saito commemorated Senior's Month by hosting her 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Senior's Fair at the Meadowvale Community. The fair included 40 exhibitors highlighting the various programs, services and organizations that support seniors throughout the City

## Accessibility Governance

The Accessibility Planning and Compliance (APC) team provides policy and strategic advice to City Departments and facilitates compliance with the AODA. To ensure the City continues to meet or exceed the requirements of the AODA, APC continues to stay informed about legislation and participates in accessibility networks such as the Ontario Network of Accessibility Professionals (ONAP) and other Accessibility Coordinators in Peel and Halton region through attendance at regional coordinators meetings and events.

The APC provided legislated, mandatory training for all employees and volunteers on providing accessible customer service to people with disabilities, the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation and the Ontario Human Rights Code as it relates to people with disabilities, as required under AODA. Additionally, training and support continued to be provided to staff in the area of creating accessible documents.

APC continued as the staff liaison to the AAC and facilitator of site plan and municipal project reviews by the FADS Subcommittee.

## Staff Accessibility Resource Team

The City's Staff Accessibility Resource Team (StART) is made up of representatives from each division across the organization and meets quarterly. These individuals act as champions and promote awareness of accessibility and inclusion throughout the organization and community. They support accessibility at the City by:

- Ensuring that an accessibility lens is applied to each initiative within a Department
- Promoting accessibility awareness throughout the City
- Assisting in the development of the annual status update of the City's multi-year accessibility plan, highlighting achievements across the organization

This report highlights initiatives that demonstrate the City's commitment to making accessibility a part of everyday business and integrating it into the City's long-term plans. Barriers have been removed in many areas including: City owned buildings, parks, transit and recreation services.

## General Requirements and Governance

**Key outcome: clear roles, accountability and barrier-free policies, programs, services and facilities**

### 2019 key actions

- Continued to build accessibility accountability into all levels of the City, with defined roles and responsibilities. This means that employees at all levels of the City know what their obligations are and work towards creating a more accessible organization
- Provided annual status update on the City's Multi-Year Accessibility Plan 2018-2022 to the City's AAC, outlining the initiatives the City has taken to ensure compliance with the AODA
- Promoted accessibility awareness through hosting and attending multiple fairs and events such as National AccessAbility Week, Connections Fair, Councillor Saito's Annual Seniors Fair, International Day for Persons with Disabilities event, Leadership Conference
- Integrated accessibility considerations into the procurement process
- Updated Corporate Accessibility Policy as part of the City's policy review process
- Continued to provide training on the requirements of the accessibility standards and the Ontario Human Rights Code to all employees, volunteers and anyone who participates in developing City policies or provides goods, services or facilities on behalf of the city
- Continued to implement the Dynamic Symbol of Access at City facilities, where feasible
- Ensured all City procurements considered accessibility

## Customer Service

**Key outcome: people with disabilities receive goods and services in a timely manner**

The City continued to be in compliance with the standard and ensuring that City goods and services are accessible for everyone in Mississauga, including people with disabilities. Accessible customer service for the public begins with well-trained City employees. Mandatory accessibility training at the City focused on how to provide quality service to people with disabilities. At a minimum, all employees must complete accessibility courses on the following topics:

- *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act*
- Accessible Customer Service
- Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation
- Ontario Human Rights Code

- Additional job-specific training (for example, training on creating accessible documents or the Mississauga Facility Accessible Design Standards)

## **Additional 2019 key actions**

- Introduced BRAVO Customer Service training for all City staff
- Continued to monitor customer service to ensure the City maintained and improved upon the level of accessibility provided in programs, services and facilities
- Continued to notify the public of service disruptions
- Installed charging stations for mobility devices in Celebration Square
- Offered Fresh Air Fitness classes which included modified exercise options making it easier for individuals with limited mobility
- Offered driveway snow windrow clearing program for seniors 65 years and older and people with physical disabilities or medical conditions that are unable to clear the windrow on their own

## **Information and communications**

**Key outcome: accessible information and communication supports are delivered to all employees, residents and visitors**

The City is focused on increasing the availability of accessible information for residents, visitors and employees. One of the ways to accomplish this is to design and deliver more online digital services that meet the IASR's web accessibility requirements. The City maintains an accessible public facing website – [Mississauga.ca](http://Mississauga.ca) – in addition to an accessible internal website platform for employees – [InsideMississauga.ca](http://InsideMississauga.ca).

## **2019 key actions**

- Maintained process for receiving and responding to feedback in ways that are accessible to people with disabilities
- Continued to notify the public about the availability of accessible formats and communication supports
- Provided accessible formats and communication supports when requested
- Provided emergency information in alternative formats when requested
- Maintained an accessible website and web content and monitored compliance through accessibility quality tool
- Reviewed documents and templates to ensure they are accessible
- Provided training to staff on creating accessible documents when required
- Redesigned City website to improve accessibility. Consulted with AAC and hosted individual accessibility testing sessions with AAC members. Applied new design to [mississaugalibrary.ca](http://mississaugalibrary.ca) and [Mississauga.ca/recreation](http://Mississauga.ca/recreation)



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- Expanded digital content offered by City of Mississauga Libraries in a variety of formats such audiobooks, eBooks, eAudio, digital magazines and DAISY books
- Offered delivery and pick-up services for all residents with a disability who cannot visit the library. There are over 85 residents registered for this service
- Participated in CNIB's national campaign, Phone it Forward, collecting 600 used smart phones and distributing them to individuals with sight loss
- Provided feedback to the province on initial proposed changes to the Accessible Information and Communications Standard
- Provided staff with Jabber, a communication tool containing a chat feature option to aid in collaboration without requiring speech
- Equipped some City boardrooms with audiovisual means possessing both a sound and visual component
- Implemented SMRTCITY Master Plan which includes accessibility as a main component
- Hosted SMRTCITY Idea Jam 2019: Accessibility and Inclusion The event raised awareness in the public while developing innovative ideas to help the City provide more accessible and inclusive services
- Offered assistive listening devices and included closed captions for all movies played during Movie Nights at Celebration Square

## Employment

**Key outcome: accommodation practices are implemented to ensure people with disabilities are able to fully and meaningfully participate as City employees**

The unemployment rate for people with disabilities in Ontario age 25 to 64 is 50% higher than for people without disabilities. To address this, the City strives to show leadership in accessible recruitment and employment.

The goal of employment accommodation is to enable people with disabilities to participate fully in their work environment. The City is committed to the regular review and evaluation of recruitment, leadership development and accommodation practices. The City's first Diversity and Inclusion survey will launch in 2020 and will provide data that will lead to better a better understanding about accommodation for employees and lead to better employee experiences.

### 2019 key actions

- Continued to notify applicants and successful recruits about the availability of accommodations in the recruitment process and workplace
- Continued to inform employees of policies regarding job accommodations
- Provided workplace and emergency response information in accessible formats to employees when requested

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- Trained staff on mental health awareness program The Working Mind, created by the Mental Health Commission of Canada
- Launched the People Strategy 2019-2023 which includes a focus on a diverse and inclusive workforce

## Transportation

**Key outcome: the City continues to support the development of a barrier-free transportation system**

Transportation is a vital link for people with disabilities to take part in their communities. It enables participation in education, work, recreation and access to services, like healthcare.

### 2019 key actions

- Continued to make information about accessible equipment available using multiple formats of communication
- Procured vehicles and equipment that meet the technical requirements of the regulation
- Provided training to all new staff
- Developed new customer service training highlighting challenges that people with disabilities face when accessing transportation
- Ensured taxi owners and operators met the requirements of the regulation
- Conducted accessible taxicab On-Demand Solutions Study
- Initiated design of Hurontario Light Rail Transit
- Implemented City Parking Master Plan
- Continued facility, service and operation improvements to enhance the universal design of the transit system
- Integrated accessibility considerations in the design of the City's Cycling Master Plan
- Integrated accessibility considerations in the design of Dundas Connects project

The AODA identifies extensive requirements for conventional and specialized transit. The MiWay 2019 Annual Accessibility Report outlines the accomplishments and current initiatives to provide accessible transportation to the community.

## Design of Public Spaces

**Key outcome: greater accessibility in and around City facilities and public spaces**

Accessible public spaces include specific features that make it easier for everyone, including people with disabilities, to use public spaces.

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## 2019 key actions

- Continued to meet or exceed all technical requirements of the standard in new and redeveloped public spaces
- Consulted the AAC on construction or redevelopment of public spaces
- Prioritized and retrofitted existing built environment barriers at facilities under the City's management to comply with FADS
- Incorporated FADS in new construction and redevelopment projects
- Incorporated accessibility retrofits where possible during renovations
- Maintained accessible elements in public spaces through monitoring and regularly planned preventative maintenance of accessible elements
- Notified the public and responded to temporary disruptions when accessible elements in public spaces were not in working order
- Installed mobility device charging stations in Celebration Square
- Installed accessible beach routes at Lakefront Promenade and Jack Darling, including signage and mats
- Replaced surface of senior spray pad at Mississauga Valley Community Centre, including regrading of surface to remove extreme slopes, installation of accessible benches and replacement of paved park pathways
- Installed new park shelter and four benches at Churchill Meadows Community Common Park
- Added 7.5 kilometres of accessible trail within the Hydro One corridor. Accessible features include signage, rest areas every 90 metres and eight per cent max slopes along the trail
- Upgraded playground surfacing at Hawthorne Valley Park, Garthwood Park and Charles "Bud" Brennan Park
- Completed installation of 13 new accessible pedestrian signals
- Completed installation of accessible pedestrian signals at 13 existing traffic signals based on requests received from the CNIB
- Added 10 accessible park benches and six new concrete pads as part of the Park Bench Arm Rest Addition Program at Queensway Trail, Don Rowing Club, JJ Plaus Park and Rhododendron Park
- Installed accessible swing at Willowvale Fields Park in response to public request
- Improved accessibility at several City facilities through targeted renovations:
  - Completed construction of Fire Station 120 to the City's FADS requirements including accessible path of travel throughout, universal washroom with barrier-free shower area, accessible kitchenette and power door operators
  - Installed new prefabricated universal washroom at Westwood Transit Terminal including power door operators, accessible sinks, colour contrasting throughout and LED lighting

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- Added new interior signage at Paramount Fine Foods Centre including braille and colour contrast signs as part of new wayfinding system to improve accessibility
  - Installed new LULA lifts at Clark Memorial Hall and Semenyk Court T&W Administration including automatic access (rather than keyed access) providing access to barrier-free path of travel
  - Installed automatic door operators on four doors at Burnhamthorpe Library providing barrier-free path of travel
  - Installed three new automatic door operators at Braeburn Golf Course to improve access to barrier-free path of travel
  - Added accessible interior signage, new hearing assistance station and installed hand railings at Meadowvale Theatre
  - Added new handrails to improve accessibility in the City's Council Chambers
  - Completed various improvements at City Hall on the ground floor allowing more programs and activities to be offered in the space. Improvements include infilling the Great Hall, upgraded lighting throughout the ground floor, added visual cues to north door to assist people with low vision and installed sliding exterior doors, making it easier for a person with a disability to use the doors independently
- Consulted the AAC and FADS subcommittee for design input on:
    - City Centre Transit Terminal accessibility upgrades
    - City Hall Ground Floor Modernization Project
    - Pheasant Run Park expansion
    - Bicycle Bypass Lanes at Skymark Drive and Explorer Drive Roundabout
    - Development of Parks 524 and 525
    - Accessible Beach Routes
    - Lakefront Promenade Park

## Continuing Progress

Accessibility innovation in the City goes above and beyond the commitments in the multi-year accessibility plan. Across the City, accessibility champions seek ways to make Mississauga more accessible.

In two years, the City has made great progress on the commitments in our 2018-2022 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan. We know that more progress is needed in order to make the City a more accessible organization that helps people with disabilities participate fully in their life and work. Forging new partnerships and innovative ways of working will enable the City to remove more barriers and continue driving towards becoming a more accessible employer and service provider.