

2. Link with City's Mission and Vision Statements

According to Statistics Canada, approximately 1.9 million Ontarians have disabilities – about 16% of the population. Disability tends to increase with age and as such, it is estimated that 20% of the population will have disabilities within the next two decades. To be consistent with the City's desire to be "Leading Today for Tomorrow", preparations for a new future must commence today.

The current City Strategic Plan for the new millennium is comprised of 10 Vision Statements. These are "guiding principles for the City's corporate decision making process" (See Appendix C for a complete copy of the Strategic Plan). It is recognized that clear language related to improved accessibility needs to be included in the next review/update of the City's Strategic Plan.

There are connections with accessibility planning in all of the Vision Statements. For example:

- City Centre is to be downtown Mississauga, we must ensure that it is fully accessible so that all citizens have the opportunity to participate.
- The disabled community represents up to 20% of the population. Most persons with disabilities live successfully on their own, use products and services of all kinds and have an influence on a huge secondary market of friends and family in every walk of life.¹ They are clearly a part of a dynamic and diverse economy.
- Being environmentally responsible includes being aware of the challenges faced by people with respiratory illnesses. Poor air quality can be a debilitating influence on those affected.
- In order to "be governed in an open and responsive manner," we need to "regularly review public participation processes to ensure that maximum opportunities for public input are being provided".² This includes ensuring that our public participation processes are accessible.

¹ The Business Case for Accessibility, 2001

² Mississauga's Strategic Plan for the New Millennium, 2000

City of Mississauga Accessibility Plan

Providing accessible voting stations and accessible methods for voting are excellent examples.

- To achieve “excellence in public administration,” accessible City Web sites, including accessible online e-City services, are imperative if the needs of the disabled community are to be known and addressed.
- To attract employees and volunteers with the skills to meet current and future challenges, the need to make accommodations for persons with disabilities must be considered.

3. Our Vision

In response to the question:

“What are some of the ways that Mississauga will be different with respect to accessibility in the next 5 years?”

the AAC and Staff Working Group developed five key vision principles:

- Fully Accessible Public Services
- Accessible Transportation and Parking
- Universal Design
- Full Integration
- New Improved Attitudes

The following Vision Statement reflects these principles:

“To create a fully accessible community utilizing universal design principles resulting in improved attitudes and full integration.”

For a full view of specific items that the AAC and Staff Working Group believed would make Mississauga different with respect to accessibility, see Appendix D.