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2014 Report on the Accessibility Plan

Mississauga is becoming a more accessible city.

An accessible city ensures everyone feels they belong.

The City marked the 12th Annual Accessibility Plan this year.

That's important, because currently, one in seven people in Ontario have a disability. In Mississauga, that means that right now, about 150,000 people could have a disability of some kind. By 2036, as the population ages, the number will rise to one in five.

Mississauga's Accessibility Vision Statement: "*A Great Place to live, work, travel and play for everyone!*" complements the City's vision "*A place where people choose to be*" as outlined in the City's Strategic Plan.

The new Accessibility Vision is an inclusive vision that will be realized by:

- ✓ Mississauga being a leader in accessibility (by meeting or exceeding timelines of legislation)
- ✓ universal mobility for everyone (snow removal, transit, accessible sidewalks)
- ✓ retrofitting for full accessibility (address accessibility in older buildings, including parks and trails)
- ✓ being pro-active about making accessibility a design priority

- ✓ state-of-the-art accessible information and tools (websites, equipment, wayfinding, voting)
- ✓ a fully aware and educated community (courtesy, better attitudes and understanding)
- ✓ well supported by all levels of government (funding)
- ✓ persons with disabilities well represented in all aspects of society (for example, represented on various committees)

These strategies were developed to overcome obstacles and realize our vision:

- 1 give accessibility a voice everywhere
- 2 do what we know is right through our practices and policies
- 3 partner with other jurisdictions (i.e. government) for synergies and efficiency
- 4 outreach and partner to improve education and awareness
- 5 encourage private sector contributions to accessibility

Legislation

The Ontario Human Rights Code recognizes the dignity and worth of every person in Ontario and provides for equal rights and opportunities, and freedom from discrimination.

Customers, clients and tenants with disabilities have the right to equal treatment and equal access to facilities and services. Examples of facilities and services are restaurants, shops, hotels and movie theatres, as well as apartment buildings, transit and other public places.

At work, employees with disabilities are entitled to the same opportunities and benefits as people without disabilities. In some cases, they may need special arrangements or “accommodations” so they can do their job.



The Ontarians with Disabilities Act (ODA, 2001) laid the foundation of accessibility legislation in Ontario. The ODA requires municipalities to prepare annual accessibility plans. Mississauga's first plan was adopted under this legislation in 2003.

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA, 2005) further defines accessibility requirements and outlines the path the government will take to achieve an accessible Ontario by 2025. The purpose of the AODA is to:

- A** Develop, implement and enforce accessibility standards in order to achieve accessibility for Ontarians with disabilities with respect to goods, services, facilities, accommodation, employment, buildings, structures and premises by January 1, 2025 and
- B** Provide for the involvement of persons with disabilities, the government of Ontario and representatives of industries and of various sectors of the economy in the development of accessibility standards.

Customer Service, Information & Communication, Employment, Transportation, and Built Environment Standards

A number of accessibility standards are laid out in regulations made under the AODA. They set out the measures, policies, practices and other steps needed to improve and prevent barriers for people with disabilities.

The standards apply to both the public and private sector. The Accessibility Standard for Customer Service was the first standard to become law as a regulation. The City of Mississauga complied with this regulation in 2009.

The next four standards — information and communications, employment, transportation, and built environment — have been combined under one regulation, the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR). The regulation also includes additional 'general requirements' such as ensuring that we purchase accessible goods and services. The City of Mississauga complied with some IASR requirements in 2013, and is currently focussing on complying with the new built environment requirements



Mississauga's Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

The City's new Multi-Year Accessibility Plan (2012-2017) and yearly reports demonstrate the City's commitment to making accessibility a part of everyday business.

The plan, approved by City Council in March 2012, identifies accessibility standards and City projects that will ensure the City meets the requirements laid out in the standards.



Achievements

The achievements identified in the 2014 Annual Report presented to Council include:



Customer Service

The 2014 Exceptional Accessible Customer Service Award was presented to:

- ✓ Linda Norris, Homebound Library Service Coordinator who is professionally and personally engaged with her customers.
- ✓ The Friends of the Library donated accessible equipment to be used throughout Mississauga's Library system like daisy disc players, magnifiers, large print keyboards and licences for Zoom Text.
- ✓ Provided an accessible municipal election



Information & Communications

- ✓ Accessible document training was implemented in 2013, continued in 2014, and will continue into 2015. The training highlights how to create accessible documents for screen readers and print.
- ✓ Plain language training for staff has been initiated and will continue into 2015, for better understanding amongst all citizens



Employment

- ✓ Council approved a new Employee Recruitment policy in compliance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) that ensures accommodations are provided throughout the employment life cycle.



Transportation

- ✓ To go along with the City's fleet of accessible buses, including automated announcements on the bus, MiWay introduced electronic pre-boarding announcements. This was done three years ahead of the compliance timeline.
- ✓ A total of 50 new bus pads were added making access to transit more accessible for all.
- ✓ Transitway stations incorporated Universal Design Principles like tactile wayfinding panels and warning indicators.





Built Environment

Buildings

- ✓ Facilities with improved accessibility in 2014 include:

Woodlands Library
Civic Centre
Don McLean Westacres Outdoor Pool
River Grove Community Centre
Streetsville Library
Traffic Management Centre

- ✓ The City of Mississauga was awarded a Silver Walk Friendly Community designation.



Outdoor Spaces

- ✓ A Zoning By-law was amended to include new accessible parking space sizes and required number of accessible parking spaces for non-residential sites.
- ✓ Streetsville Village Square was renovated with accessibility in mind.

Other Successes

- ✓ The Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC) hosted the Second Annual Abilities Awards in partnership with the Abilities Ministries, Able Living, Peel Regional Police, Victorian Order of Nurses, Coalition for Persons with Disabilities, ROP and the Next Step to Active Living Program.
- ✓ The 2014 Future Directions master plans for Library Services, Parks & Forestry, and Recreation contain a number of recommendations that are related to accessibility improvements (i.e. to continue to develop partnerships in reaching more residents with disabilities).

The Accessibility Advisory Committee and the Accessibility Policy

Mississauga's Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC) advises, recommends and assists the City in promoting and facilitating a barrier-free Mississauga for citizens of all abilities (universal accessibility) including persons with disabilities.

The committee reviews municipal policies, programs, services and facilities, assists with the identification, removal and prevention of barriers faced by persons with disabilities. It also consults with the City in yearly reviews and updates to the City's Accessibility Plan, as required by the AODA.

The City's Accessibility Policy ensures that the City continues its progress towards an accessible Mississauga. The policy requires all City corporate policies and procedures, bylaws, standards and guidelines comply with the AODA's accessibility standards.

The policy also outlines the City's statement of commitment:

"The City of Mississauga is committed to implementing, maintaining and enhancing accessibility with respect to employment and the use of all City goods, services, programs and facilities in a timely manner for all persons with disabilities in a manner that:

- 1 Respects their dignity and independence;
- 2 Ensures reasonable efforts are made to provide an opportunity equal to that given to others; and
- 3 Allows persons with disabilities to benefit from the same services, in the same place, and in a similar way to others, to the greatest extent possible."





For more information:

To find out more about the City's Accessibility Advisory Committee or Accessibility Plan, visit **mississauga.ca/accessibility** or contact Diana Simpson, Accessibility Coordinator at 905-615-3608, TTY: 905-615-3411, or accessibility.info@mississauga.ca

