

City of Mississauga

# Multi-Year Accessibility Plan 2020 Accessibility Annual Status Update

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City of Mississauga

# 2020 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 regulation's requirements 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 is going above and beyond its legislative obligations. The plan's achievements translate into improved accessibility in City policies, services and facilities, creating a more accessible and inclusive community that benefits people of all abilities.

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 2020 Annual Status Report highlights some of the key areas of progress made in 2020 and is not meant to be an inventory of accomplishments.

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 Government of Ontario.

## COVID-19 and People with Disabilities

The impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic have resulted in many changes to the way the City operates as an organization. It has also had a disproportionate effect on vulnerable populations and people with disabilities. Ensuring access to City programs and services for people with disabilities continues to be a priority and forms part of the City's commitment to accessible customer service. To help facilitate access, the City created a COVID-19 information webpage and used its social media platforms to notify and share information with the community.

Continuing to provide programs and services has the majority of staff working from home and meeting with colleagues and residents virtually. Working and meeting remotely has exposed accessibility challenges for people with disabilities such as the accessibility of meeting platforms, captioning videos for events and the accessibility of websites and web content. These challenges and the solutions staff have been developing will extend beyond the timeframe of this report and help shape accessibility at the City moving forward.

## 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 members are people with disabilities. The AAC is supported by the Accessibility Planning and Compliance 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 understanding of the challenges faced by people with disabilities. They provide invaluable advice 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](#).

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, AAC meetings were initially postponed before resuming virtually in September. Throughout the pandemic, staff continued to share information with the committee, particularly in relation to consultation opportunities. A

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number of testing sessions were held with the committee on the City's virtual meeting platform prior to resuming committee meetings in September.

In 2020, the AAC and its subcommittees received several presentations and provided feedback on the following key initiatives:

- 2019 annual status update to the City's Multi-Year Accessibility Plan
- MiWay Annual Accessibility Report
- 2018-2022 AAC Work Plan
- AAC Manual
- Updated Corporate Accessibility Policy
- Burnhamthorpe Community Centre
- Central Library Transformation
- COVID-19: Corporate Pillar Recovery Plan
- Fire Station 120
- Accessible Parking Signage
- City's approach to Micromobility and E-scooters
- AODA Alliance - E-Scooters
- Downtown Movement Plan
- Pedestrian master Plan
- Ontario Chamber of Commerce - Discover Ability Network
- Treat Accessibly
- Rick Hansen Foundation – Accessibility Certification Program
- National AccessAbility Week brainstorming session

## Accessibility Governance

The Accessibility Planning and Compliance (APC) team provides policy and strategic advice to City Departments and facilitates compliance with the AODA. The team works with staff to ensure accessibility is incorporated into all proposed initiatives to provide maximum accessibility over minimum compliance. 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 Rick Hansen Foundation Accessibility Certification Taskforce, Ontario Network of Accessibility Professionals (ONAP) and other Accessibility Coordinators in Peel and Halton Region through attendance at meetings and events.

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

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## 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 every initiative
- Promoting accessibility awareness throughout the City
- Assisting in the development of the City’s annual accessibility status update

## Multi-Year Accessibility Plan 2018-2022, progress to date

MYAP section	Number of commitments	Completed by 2020
General requirements and governance	9	8 (89%)
Customer service	6	4* (67%)
Information and communications	11	9 (82%)
Employment	9	9 (100%)
Transportation	10	9 (90%)
Design of public spaces	19	17 (89%)
Total	64	56 (88%)

**\*The two outstanding customer service commitments will be completed in 2022.**

This plan’s achievements translate into improved accessibility in City services, programs and facilities for residents, employees and visitors. They demonstrate the City’s commitment to making accessibility a part of everyday business and integrating it into the City’s long-term plans.

## General Requirements and Governance

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

**89% complete: 8 out of 9 governance and policy commitments achieved**

The City continued to build accessibility accountability into all levels of the City, with defined roles and responsibilities. This means that senior leadership in all areas and at all levels of the organization are accountable for advancing accessibility in their areas of responsibility. All staff, volunteers and anyone who participates in developing city policies or provides goods, services or facilities on behalf of the City receive training on the requirements of the accessibility standards and the Ontario Human Rights Code.

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This training ensures employees at all levels of the City know what their obligations are and work towards creating a more accessible organization.

## 2018-2022 Goals

- ✓ Establish a corporate accessibility governance structure and accountability framework to oversee the implementation of the multi-year accessibility plan (MYAP)
- ✓ Provide annual status updates on the City's MYAP to the City's AAC and Council and post on the City's website
- ✓ Promote accessibility awareness within the organization and community
- ✓ Continue to demonstrate leadership in accessibility by meeting or exceeding timelines of provincial legislation
- ✓ Continue to ensure City purchases include accessibility design, features and criteria
- ✓ Continue to provide training on the IASR and the Ontario Human Rights Code to all new employees, volunteers, anyone who participates in developing City policies or provides goods, services or facilities on behalf of the City
- ✓ Adopt and implement the Dynamic Symbol of Access at City facilities, where feasible
- ✓ Update Corporate Accessibility Policy in 2020 as part of the City's policy review process
- Increase the number of accessibility audits for City facilities

## 2020 key actions

- 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
- Received 100% compliance rating from Government of Ontario's AODA Desk Audit
- Conducted accessible virtual meetings for Council and Committees
- Updated Corporate Accessibility Policy as part of the City's policy review process
- Updated Purchasing By-Law and included additional accessibility language and considerations to Purchasing Policy
- Updated AAC Resource Manual

## Customer Service

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

**67% complete: 4 out of 6 customer service commitments achieved**

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

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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)

## 2018–2022 Goals

- ✓ Explore assistive technologies that make City programs and services more accessible including, but not limited to:
  - Assistive listening devices
  - Assistive devices
  - Charging stations for mobility devices
  - CART captioning
- ✓ Train staff, Council, volunteers and those who provide goods, services or facilities on the City's behalf on an ongoing basis, as required
- ✓ Monitor customer service to ensure we are maintaining and improving upon the level of accessibility we provide in programs, services and facilities
- ✓ Provide notice of service disruptions
- Develop and consult AAC on an Election Accessibility Plan including auditing potential voting locations, ensuring forms and signage are accessible and providing accessible customer service training to election officials
- Create Accessibility Report after the 2022 election highlighting key accomplishments and identifying challenges

## 2020 key actions

- Provided ASL interpreters and closed captioning for City Council meetings and the Mayor's COVID-19 press conferences
- Continued to rollout BRAVO Customer Service training for all City staff
- 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**



## **82% complete: 9 out of 11 information and communication commitments achieved**

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](http://InsideMississauga).

### **2018–2022 Goals**

- ✓ Maintain a process for receiving and responding to feedback in ways that are accessible to people with disabilities
- ✓ Notify the public about the availability of accessible formats and communication supports
- ✓ Provide accessible formats and communication supports, upon request
- ✓ Provide emergency information in alternative formats, upon request
- ✓ Maintain an accessible website
- ✓ Develop resources for employees on accessible public engagement and consultations
- ✓ Review documents and templates to ensure they are accessible
- ✓ Provide training to staff on creating accessible documents, as required
- ✓ Expand digital content offered by City of Mississauga Libraries
- Develop a strategy to meet WCAG 2.0 Level AA requirements
- Ensure documents and content posted online are in accessible formats

### **2020 key actions**

- Launched newly designed 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), [Mississauga.ca/recreation](http://Mississauga.ca/recreation) and [MiWay](http://MiWay)
- Monitored website accessibility compliance through accessibility quality tool
- Developed tools and guides for staff to create accessible documents and presentations
- Created resources for employees on accessible public engagement and consultations
- Posted the Emergency Preparedness Guide and Disaster Management Plan in an accessible format online
- Implemented VEED.IO software that auto generates subtitles for video and allows users to edit to ensure City videos are inclusive and accessible

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- Offered assistive listening devices at Paramount Fine Foods Centre and installed the Williams Sound Hearing HotSpot, which allows guests who require hearing assistance to listen to Wi-Fi audio streams from events on a mobile device
- Launched new computer workstation labs at Central Library and Burnhamthorpe Library, both equipped with accessible workstations
- Upgraded Enterprise, the Library's online public access catalogue to ensure compliance with AODA web content requirements
- Expanded digital content offered by City of Mississauga Libraries in a variety of formats such as audiobooks, eBooks, eAudio, digital magazines and DAISY books. Total resources added this year includes:
  - 23,813 eBooks
  - 4,569 eAudio
  - 462 audiobooks

## Employment

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

**100% complete: 9 out of 9 employment commitments achieved**

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 launched in 2020 and its results will provide data that will lead to increased understanding and better employee experiences.

### 2018–2022 Goals

- ✓ Notify applicants about the availability of accessibility accommodations in the recruitment process
- ✓ Advise successful applicants about the availability of accommodations for employees with disabilities
- ✓ Make policies on accommodating and supporting employees with disabilities available to all employees
- ✓ Provide accessible formats and/or communication supports to employees with disabilities who require it

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- ✓ Document individual accommodation plans for employees with disabilities
- ✓ Offer a return to work process for employees with disabilities
- ✓ Continue to regularly review corporate policies and practices to ensure applicants and employees with disabilities receive the proper support
- ✓ Train staff on mental health awareness program The Working Mind, created by the Mental Health Commission of Canada
- ✓ Provide training to staff on the City's new Workforce Diversity and Inclusion Strategy

## 2020 key actions

- Launched the City of Mississauga Diversity and Inclusion Survey
- Offered Diversity and Inclusion Fundamentals and Diversity and Inclusion Unconscious Bias courses
- Trained 90% of City leaders The Working Mind, a mental health awareness program created by the Mental Health Commission of Canada

## Transportation

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

**90% complete: 9 out of 10 transportation commitments achieved**

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. The City continues to ensure all vehicles and equipment meet the technical requirements of the regulation and that training is provided to all new staff.

### 2018–2022 Goals

- ✓ Procure vehicles and equipment that meet the technical requirements of the regulation
- ✓ Provide training to all new staff
- ✓ Make information about accessible equipment available using multiple formats of communication
- ✓ Develop and implement City Parking Master Plan
- ✓ Continue facility, service and operation improvements to enhance the universal design of the transit system
- ✓ Monitor taxi owners and operators in Mississauga to ensure they are meeting the requirements of the regulation
- ✓ Conduct accessible taxicab “On-Demand Solutions” study as recommended by Public Vehicle Advisory Committee

- ✓ Continue to integrate accessibility considerations in the design and implementation of the City's Cycling Master Plan
- ✓ Continue to integrate accessibility considerations in the design and implementation Dundas Connects
- Design and begin construction of Hurontario Light Rail Transit (LRT)

## 2020 key actions

- Developed new customer service training video showcasing members of the AAC highlighting challenges that people with disabilities face when using transit. Training video to be used as part of MiWay's Operator Training curriculum
- Launched Triplinx, MiWay's new accessible trip planner
- Reviewed over 250 Hurontario Light Rail Transit (HuLRT) concept drawings
- Improved accessibility at City Centre Transit Terminal (CCTT) by adding sliding doors at the terminal platform, accessible counters, improved signage, elevator upgrades and replaced escalator
- Implemented a temporary customer service trailer during CCTT renovation to ensure an accessible ramp and accessible doors were available
- Constructed 17 accessible bus shelters
- Upgraded 125 bus stop locations to meet accessibility requirements
- Implemented temporary pedestrian landing pads/connections during HuLRT construction where existing transit stops were disrupted or did not exist
- Consulted the AAC for input on:
  - E-scooters
  - Micromobility Plan
  - Temporary Sidewalk Specifications
  - Pedestrian Master Plan

The AODA identifies extensive requirements for conventional and specialized transit. The MiWay 2020 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**

**89% complete: 17 out of 19 Design of Public Spaces commitments achieved**

Accessible public spaces include specific features that make it easier for everyone, including people with disabilities, to use public spaces. The City continued to prioritize retrofitting existing built environment barriers at facilities under the City's management

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to comply with FADS, while also incorporate FADS in all new construction and development projects. The City also maintained accessible elements through monitoring and regularly planned maintenance, notifying the public whenever a temporary service disruption occurred.

## 2018–2022 Goals

- ✓ Consult the Mississauga Accessibility Advisory Committee, the public and people with disabilities prior to redeveloping or constructing new public spaces under this Standard
- ✓ Incorporate public consultations into existing processes wherever possible
- ✓ Meet or exceed the technical requirements of DOPS
- ✓ Continue to maintain and update the Mississauga FADS
- ✓ Continue to prioritize and retrofit existing built environment barriers at facilities under the City's management to comply with FADS
- ✓ Continue to implement accessibility improvements as part of state of good repair capital and maintenance programs
- ✓ Continue to maintain accessible elements in public spaces through monitoring and regularly planned preventative maintenance of accessible elements
- ✓ Continue to respond to temporary disruptions when accessible elements in public spaces are not in working order by notifying the public and prioritizing remediation
- ✓ Explore the inclusion of mobility device charging stations in new and redeveloped public spaces
- ✓ Increase the number of accessible picnic tables at parks
- ✓ Continue to implement Park Bench Arm Rest Addition Program
- ✓ Continue to enhance the accessibility of new and redeveloped playgrounds
- ✓ Continue to fulfill requests for accessible pedestrian signals and install with all new traffic signals and replacements of existing traffic crossing signals
- ✓ Continue to install tactile walking surface indicators at all corners during state of good repair
- ✓ Improve accessibility at City Centre Transit Terminal by adding sliding doors at the terminal platform, elevator upgrades and replace escalator
- ✓ Install two operators for public washroom at BraeBen Golf Course
- ✓ Install three automatic door operators at Burnhamthorpe Library site
- Install 24 automatic door operators on corridor doors leading to rinks and rink change rooms at Paramount Fine Foods Centre
- Replace elevator/lift at Burnhamthorpe Community Centre and Huron Park Recreation Centre

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## 2020 key actions

- 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
- Improved accessibility at several City facilities through targeted renovations:
  - Added new interior signage at Paramount Fine Foods Centre and Central Parkway Transit Building including Braille and colour contrast signs as part of new wayfinding system to improve accessibility
  - 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 washrooms and barrier-free path of travel
  - Installed new automatic door operators at 950 Burnhamthorpe Road West to improve access to the second floor washrooms
  - Installed new LULA lifts at Clark Memorial Hall and Semenyk Court including automatic access (rather than keyed access) providing access to barrier-free path of travel
- Redeveloped spray pad at McKechnie Woods, including paved surfaces, installation of accessible benches and bulldog activators
- Improved accessibility of parking lot two at Leslie Log House by adding additional accessible parking spaces and paving sidewalk connection to building entrance
- Installed new umbrella table and paved pathways to park trail and accessible seating
- Completed 2019 multi-use trail program, including new wider boulevard paths (3.5 m) and intersection safety improvements such as new tactile warning surface indicators, reduced corner radii to slow turning vehicles, and shorter crosswalks
- Constructed 3.7 kilometres of accessible sidewalks throughout the City
- Installed 30 tactile walking surface indicators to sidewalk ramps and pedestrian crossovers throughout the City as part of the 2020 Sidewalk Program
- Completed installation of 17 accessible pedestrian signals (including eight based on requests from the CNIB)
- Consulted the AAC and FADS subcommittee for design input on:
  - Burnhamthorpe Community Centre
  - Central Library Transformation
  - COVID-19: Corporate Recovery Pillar
  - Downtown Strategy

## **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 three years, the City has completed 80% of its 65 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.