

People & Equity Division

City of Toronto Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

Annual Status Report 2020



Table of Contents

- Introduction..... 4**
- Executive Summary 5**
- COVID-19 Response 7**
- Progress to Date..... 8**
 - 1) General Accessibility 8
 - 2) Training 9
 - 3) Procurement 10
 - 4) Information and Communications 11
 - 5) Customer Service 12
 - 6) Employment..... 13
 - 7) Transportation..... 14
 - 8) Built Environment & Design of Public Spaces..... 16
- Conclusion 17**
- Appendices 18**
 - Appendix A: General Accessibility Highlights..... 18
 - Toronto Accessibility Advisory Committee (TAAC)..... 18
 - Program Advisory Bodies & Public Engagements 19
 - Virtual Meetings..... 20
 - Accessible Events and Ceremonies 20
 - Community Supports & COVID-19 21
 - Disability Awareness & COVID-19..... 22
 - Appendix B: Training Highlights 23
 - Toronto for All Training Curriculum..... 23

Training Above and Beyond the AODA	23
Appendix C: Procurement Highlights	26
Accessibility Upgrades Program.....	26
New Accessible Technologies for Elections	26
Accessibility of New Shelters & COVID Isolation Centres	27
Social Procurement	28
Appendix D: Information & Communication Highlights.....	29
Digital Accessibility	29
Accessible Information during COVID-19	30
Appendix E: Customer Service Highlights	32
Customer Experience Transformation	32
Accessible Recreation	33
Accessible Elections.....	33
New Online Service Delivery	34
Long Term Care Homes – Virtual Information & Visitations	35
Appendix F: Employment Highlights	36
Employee Diversity & Engagement	36
Employee Accommodations	36
Appendix G: Transportation Highlights	37
Increased Snow Clearing	37
Automated Vehicles / Shuttles.....	37
Pedestrian Safety & Accessibility	37
Vehicle for Hire Accessibility Fund	38
Accessibility of City Sidewalks during COVID-19	38
Appendix H: Built Environment Highlights.....	40
Toronto Accessibility Design Guidelines.....	40
Accessibility of City Owned Facilities.....	40
Accessible Housing	41
Accessible Public Washrooms & Recreational Trails	42

Introduction

Toronto is Canada's largest city and one of the most diverse cities around the world. We serve an ever-changing population, including more than 425,000 seniors¹ and 495,500 people with disabilities (1 in 5 people)².

The City of Toronto is committed to building an inclusive society by providing an accessible environment in which all individuals have access to the City's services. The [2020-2024 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan](#) (MYAP) outlines our goals and initiatives and reaffirms our [commitment](#) to help advance an equitable and inclusive society. While the MYAP includes initiatives that help maintain and monitor compliance, it also promotes accessibility by design³ and goes beyond legislative requirements.

This status report has been prepared by the City's Accessibility Unit, which supports City divisions in meeting our legislative obligations under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), the Integrated Standards Regulation (IASR) and monitors progress on the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan.

The 2020 Status Report highlights key actions taken from January 1st to December 31st, 2020 to implement the City's Multi-Year Accessibility Plan. The COVID-19 global pandemic significantly affected the City's operations and services. In 2020, many City services were temporarily closed and City staff were redeployed to essential areas supporting the COVID response. At the same time, we transitioned to working in a virtual environment and had to quickly prioritize and adapt program and service delivery to meet the needs of our residents.

To this report in an alternate format, please contact accessibility@toronto.ca or phone 416-338-2632.

¹ Statistic Canada – 2016 Census of Population Catalogue Number 98-400-X2016005

² Statistic Canada – 2017 Canadian Survey on Disability, Catalogue Number 89-654-X

³ Accessibility by design is understood in this document as intentionally incorporating accessibility into all planning, programming and delivery of goods, services and facilities.

Executive Summary

In December 2019, Toronto City Council adopted the new 2020-2024 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan (MYAP). This 5-year plan is organized around the AODA standards and was developed with advice from people with disabilities, staff, and the Toronto Accessibility Advisory Committee (TAAC).

Initiatives in the MYAP fall under one of two categories:

- **Category A:** recurring initiatives which are intended to be completed annually, or
- **Category B:** projects which have distinct completion dates and which may be in-progress, completed or outstanding at the time of reporting.

The breakdown of the 63 MYAP initiatives by these categories are outlined in the Table below.

MYAP Area of Focus	Total # of Initiatives	# of Category A Initiatives (Recurring Annually)	# of Category B Initiatives (One time Project)
General Accessibility	10	8	2
Training	6	6	0
Procurement	7	5	2
Information & Communication	10	7	3
Customer Service	7	3	4
Employment	8	6	2
Transportation	9	6	3
Built Environment & Public Spaces	6	5	1
Total	63	46	17

During 2020, work was performed on 60 of the 63 (95%) MYAP initiatives as outlined in the Table below.

MYAP Area of Focus	# of Initiatives	Category A Initiatives: Completed	Category B Initiatives: Completed	Category B Initiatives: In-progress	Category B Initiatives: Outstanding
General Accessibility	10	8	-	2	-
Training	6	6	-	-	-
Procurement	7	5	-	1	1
Information & Communication	10	7	2	-	1
Customer Service	7	3	-	3	1
Employment	8	6	-	2	-
Transportation	9	6	1	2	-
Built Environment & Public Spaces	6	5	-	1	-
Total	63	46	3	11	3

COVID-19 Response

Although the MYAP is our 5-year roadmap with distinct initiatives, we are not limited to this work. By including guiding principles and intended outcomes, the plan is designed to be flexible and we encourage that new City services and programs align with these guiding principles and goals. The importance of this alignment is particularly important during emergency situations as demonstrated during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Although the pandemic has had significant health, social and economic impacts on all Torontonians, there have been unintended and disproportionate consequences especially on Indigenous, Black and equity deserving communities. In particular, many inequities faced by the disability community have been exacerbated due to COVID-19 including: unemployment, food insecurity, housing instability, lack of medical supports including those associated with mental health. In addition, people with disabilities have faced unique challenges and been negatively impacted during the pandemic due to:

- Heightened susceptibility to contracting COVID-19 due to congregate living situations, interaction with the environment and/or underlying medical conditions,
- Risks of more acute infections and increased fatality rates,
- Loss of supports, services and supplies necessary to maintain positive health outcomes,
- Longer isolation times due to underlying medical conditions,
- Inaccessible public health information, and
- New disability-related barriers especially in service delivery (e.g. addition of plexiglass barriers, use of face coverings, new queuing systems, changes to wayfinding or configuration of spaces etc.)^{4,5}

As we continue to change course where needed, we are committed to ensuring people with disabilities receive equitable service delivery and supports. As such, this status report also highlights work done to modify our services and programs while supporting the needs of people with disabilities during the pandemic.

⁴ [World Health Organization: Disability Considerations during the COVID-19 outbreak - March 2020](#)

⁵ [Government of Canada: COVID-19 and People with Disabilities in Canada - June 2021](#)

Progress to Date

1) General Accessibility

The general requirements of the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR) require the City to have accessibility policies, a statement of commitment, and a multi-year accessibility plan (MYAP). The City has met these requirements and has a strong policy framework including:

- The City of Toronto's [Statement of Commitment to Creating an Accessible City](#) was adopted by City Council in August 2009
- The [City of Toronto Corporate Accessibility Policy](#) was adopted by City Council in June 2018.

The City's MYAP lays out an additional 10 general accessibility initiatives that support the accessibility framework set by our policies and public commitment. These focus around accessible meetings and events, public consultations, governance, and resources to support staff. By the end of 2020, all initiatives were either completed or in-progress. Examples of work completed under these initiatives are highlighted in [Appendix A](#).

Status of General Accessibility Initiatives

Completed

- Initiative #3. Develop, maintain and monitor accessibility guidelines and implementation and AODA compliance.
- Initiative #4. Provide status updates on the City's MYAP to the Toronto Accessibility Advisory Committee on an annual basis and ensure updates are posted on the City's website.
- Initiative #5. Promote accessibility awareness within the organization and the communities we serve through education and awareness campaigns.
- Initiative #6. Host employee meetings and public events in facilities and public spaces that are accessible.
- Initiative #7. Engage and consult with the Toronto Accessibility Advisory Committee and disability communities in Toronto to advance accessibility.
- Initiative #8. Engage and seek advice from City Divisional Program Advisory Bodies (PABs) on advancing accessibility and inclusion, such as:
 - The Accessibility Advisory Panel for Transportation Services
 - The Parks, Forestry and Recreation Community Disability Steering Committee
 - The Elections Accessibility Outreach Network
 - The Equity and Inclusion Advisory Group.

- Initiative #9. Embed accessibility into the Toronto Seniors Strategy as work proceeds on accessible and age-friendly commitments and recommendations.
- Initiative #10. Embed and train staff on the use of the Equity Lens Tool to consider equity impacts of all new planning, projects, policies and initiatives.

In-progress

- Initiative #1. Establish a corporate Accessibility Governance structure and Accountability Framework to oversee the implementation of the multi-year plan (MYAP).
- Initiative #2. Develop relevant divisional implementation plans which will include detailed deliverables and timelines.

2) Training

The City of Toronto is required to provide training on the Integrated Accessibility Standards and Ontario Human Rights Code to all of its employees, volunteers and persons who participate in developing City policies, or who provide services or goods on behalf of the City of Toronto.

The City is committed to going beyond the mandatory training requirements of the AODA and has outlined six initiatives in the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan that will support the organization in developing knowledge and skills to deliver equitable programs and services to people with disabilities. All six recurring training initiatives were completed in 2020. Examples of work completed under these initiatives are highlighted in [Appendix B](#).

Status of Training Initiatives

Completed

- Initiative #11. Ensure all employees and volunteers continue to complete mandatory AODA and accessibility training appropriate to the person's role as soon as possible.
- Initiative #12. Enhance leadership knowledge and skills to ensure compliance with City policies, Human Rights legislation, AODA and related legislation.
- Initiative #13. Record and track employee learning and development activities specifically related to AODA and accessibility requirements.
- Initiative #14. Ensure that all training, activities, course materials and learning approaches are developed and delivered in accessible formats.
- Initiative #15. Develop the Toronto for All education program to help City employees understand human rights obligations, unconscious bias, and power and privilege to promote equitable outcomes for people with disabilities.
- Initiative #16. Apply an equity and accessibility analysis to all organizational learning and development activities.

3) Procurement

Under the IASR, the City must incorporate accessibility design criteria when procuring or acquiring goods, services or facilities, except where it is not practicable to do so.

The City's Purchasing & Materials Management Division and the Accessibility Unit have developed, and continue to promote, several accessibility resources and guides for City staff. These resources are posted on the City's intranet and include:

- Accessibility Language for Procurement Documentation
- Guidelines: Meeting Accessibility Obligations in Procurement
- Checklist: Meeting Accessibility Obligations in Procurement

As per the City's [Purchasing Policies](#), vendors doing business with the City are required to complete AODA and accessible customer service training and provide a [declaration of compliance with Anti-Discrimination Legislation](#) declaring they uphold obligations under provincial and federal legislation such as the Ontario Human Rights Code, the AODA, the Occupational Health and Safety Act, the Employment Standards Act, and the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

The MYAP includes seven initiatives to help ensure accessibility criteria continue to be embedded in procurement activities. By the end of 2020, all five recurring training initiatives were completed while only one initiative remained outstanding. Examples of work completed under these initiatives are highlighted in [Appendix C](#).

Status of Procurement Initiatives

Completed

- Initiative #17. Ensure accessibility criteria are key requirements of the procurement process when acquiring or purchasing goods, services and/or facilities.
- Initiative #18. Provide tools and resources to assist City employees in meeting accessibility obligations in procurement, such as training, templates, sample language, and guidelines that embed accessibility considerations at all stages of procurement.
- Initiative #21. Include provisions for vendor accessible customer service training requirements and a declaration of compliance with Anti-Harassment / Discrimination Legislation and City policy for all City procurement contracts.
- Initiative #22. Work with vendors and community partners to meet or exceed accessibility requirements.
- Initiative #23. Apply the City's Social Procurement Policy and practices.

In-progress

- Initiative #20. Ensure an accessibility analysis of all projects and purchases before funding is requested.

Outstanding

Initiative #19. Review and update resources and tools for accessible procurement to ensure that current best practices and technologies are considered.

4) Information and Communications

The Information and Communications Standards under the IASR requires the City of Toronto to communicate and provide information in ways that are accessible to people with disabilities. This includes ensuring that our website, applications and web content comply with specific Web Content Accessibility Guidelines by January 1st, 2021.

The City's Technology Services Division has established a digital AODA Compliance Team which works closely with partners across the organization to ensure the City's website, web content and applications (including third-party sites and applications) meet or exceed AODA standards. As part of their work, the AODA Compliance Team has established the City's Digital Accessibility Standard and guidelines as well as training resources for web developers and content creators across all divisions at the City.

The City's Multi-year Accessibility Plan outlines ten initiatives to support our legislated obligations under the Information and Communication standard. By the end of 2020, all recurring initiatives were completed while only one initiative remained outstanding. Examples of work completed under these initiatives are highlighted in [Appendix D](#).

Status of Information & Communication Initiatives

Completed

- Initiative #24. Notify the public about the availability of accessible formats and communication supports.
- Initiative #25. Ensure that any process for receiving and responding to feedback is accessible by providing or arranging for accessible formats and communication supports
- Initiative #26. Ensure that City employees understand the accommodation request process, including the requirement to arrange for accessible formats and communication supports, and the requirement to consult with the person making the request in order to determine suitable accessible formats or communication support.
- Initiative #28. Develop and implement accessible information, communication and technology guidelines and standards to ensure the City is providing clear, accessible, appropriate and timely information and communication.
- Initiative #29. Conduct annual reviews of the City of Toronto Digital Accessibility Principles and Guidelines and update to reflect current best practices in digital accessibility.
- Initiative #30. Ensure that the City's websites (including web content) and web applications incorporate the foundations of the City of Toronto Digital Accessibility Standard.

- Initiative #31. Regularly review compliance and usability best practices in order to identify ways to improve accessibility in information, communications and technology based on broader accessibility sector advancements and legislated requirements.
- Initiative #32. Develop and implement a process to review and assess requests for exceptions based on practicability and risk management as part of the City of Toronto Digital Accessibility Standard.
- Initiative #33. Evaluate and remediate City website content and ensure that it meets or exceeds accessibility compliance requirements by providing the appropriate frameworks, tools, guidelines and training for use by all City Divisions.

Outstanding

- Initiative #27. Research and develop a streamlined process for City employees to access American Sign Language (ASL), Communication Access Real-Time Translation (CART) and other accessibility services and supports to provide equitable access to City employees, residents and visitors with disabilities.

5) Customer Service

The City of Toronto is committed to customer service excellence. This includes service provision that is both accessible to and inclusive for employees, volunteers, residents and visitors with disabilities.

The [City's Accessibility Policy](#) lays down the foundation for accessible customer service at the City. In addition, all divisions maintain specific customer service standards and may also have additional Accessible Customer Services Standards and guides which are unique to their area. For example, the City's Parks, Forestry and Recreation Division maintains an additional [Accessible Customer Service Guide](#) which is publicly available.

At any point, the public may seek information on City services or provide feedback to the City via 311. 311 accepts requests through multiple channels such as phone / TTY, online, via email, mobile phone applications and Twitter. Specific to accessibility-related feedback, residents are encouraged to complete our [online Accessibility Complaint Form](#). Accessible formats and communication supports are also available upon request. Where needed, staff, volunteers, visitors and residents can also submit City-related [accommodation and human rights concerns](#) to the City's Human Rights Office by phone, email, or via a confidential secure online complaint form.

The City's MYAP includes seven initiatives to support accessible customer service at the City. By the end of 2020, all recurring initiatives were completed while only one initiatives remained outstanding. Examples of work completed under these initiatives are highlighted in [Appendix E](#).

Status of Customer Service Initiatives

Completed

- Initiative #34. Embed and strengthen the focus on accessibility within the Customer Service Centre of Excellence.
- Initiative #36. Work with the Elections Accessibility Outreach Network to improve accessibility of election services through the identification, removal and prevention of barriers that affect electors and candidates with disabilities.
- Initiative #38. Evaluate City programs and services to ensure inclusion and equitable participation of employees, residents and visitors with disabilities in City operated programs.

In-progress

- Initiative #37. Develop a comprehensive Accessibility Plan for municipal elections based on learnings from Election Accessibility Reports and consultation with the Elections Accessibility Outreach Network.
- Initiative #39. Embed an equity analysis within customer service processes at the City through the Fair Outcomes project.
- Initiative #40. Formalize and implement accessible public consultation requirements to ensure all consultation activities are accessible and inclusive.

Outstanding

- Initiative #35. Review the "Guide to Good Practice" accessible customer service guidelines and update to reflect the highest standards in accessible customer service.

6) Employment

The Employment Standards under the IASR requires that the City of Toronto support the recruitment and accommodation of employees with disabilities. The City has developed several [employment policies](#) to support equity in our employment practices including: The Corporate Accessibility policy, Accommodation Policy, Employment Equity Policy, and the Human Rights Anti-Harassment/Discrimination Policy. All policies work together to support barrier-free employment including recruitment, employment, career progression and performance management.

The City of Toronto is committed to fostering a positive and progressive workforce reflecting the residents we serve and promoting diversity at all levels within the organization in an inclusive environment. Applicants can request accommodation related to the protected grounds of the Human Rights Code at any stage of the City's hiring process, i.e., application, interview and placement.

The City's MYAP includes eight initiatives to support equitable employment processes at the City. By the end of 2020, all initiatives were completed or in-progress. Examples of work completed under these initiatives are highlighted in [Appendix F](#).

Status of all Employment Initiatives

Completed

- Initiative #43. Embed an equity analysis into all recruitment processes to remove any unintended accessibility barriers.
- Initiative #44. Review people services policies and procedures to identify, prevent and remove barriers to employment and development opportunities. This review will also serve to ensure ongoing compliance with legislation.
- Initiative #45. Prepare individualized accommodation and emergency response plans for City employees with disabilities.
- Initiative #46. Foster a culture of employee engagement and inclusion through analysis of the Employee Engagement Survey and the development of action plans in partnership with Communities of Inclusion, including the Employee Disability Network.
- Initiative #47. Conduct an employment equity survey (Count Yourself In: Workforce Survey) to inform workforce planning priorities through data-informed decision making.
- Initiative #48. Support the Employee Disability Network (EDN) to promote professional development opportunities for employees with disabilities.

In-progress

- Initiative #41. Develop and implement an employment strategy for equity-seeking groups, including people with disabilities.
- Initiative #42. Develop a targeted outreach strategy for recruiting people with disabilities and ensuring an application process that is barrier-free. This will include increased partnership and outreach with organizations and agencies that support the development and employment of people with disabilities.

7) Transportation

The Transportation Standards under the IASR outlines requirements to prevent and remove barriers to public transportation which are applicable to the Toronto Island Ferry, design of bus stops and shelters, and licensing of vehicles-for-hire (taxicabs and private transportation companies). The City of Toronto is also committed to increasing accessibility and usability of all City sidewalks and roadways by going beyond the requirements of the Transportation and the Design of Public Spaces Standards. To support this, the City has developed the [Complete Streets Guidelines](#) which includes accessibility design of pedestrian areas. The Complete Streets Guidelines build on many of the City's existing policies, guidelines and recent successful street design and construction projects.

The City also has an Accessibility Advisory Panel for Transportation Services (AAPTTS). AAPTTS provides objective advice to Transportation Services staff on current accessibility issues, based on user experience. The citizen group is comprised of seniors, mobility

instructors, research experts, and advocates. Their role is to support, inform and advise Transportation Services to create a barrier-free city for persons of all ages and abilities.

The City's MYAP includes nine initiatives to support safe and accessible transportation and mobility within the City. To date, work has started on all (100%) initiatives. By the end of 2020, all initiatives were completed or in-progress. Examples of work completed under these initiatives are highlighted in [Appendix G](#).

The Toronto Transit Commission (TTC) manages conventional and specialized transportation services, and maintains their own policies and plans.⁶

Status of Transportation Initiatives

Completed

- Initiative #49. Implement a Vehicle-for Hire Accessibility Fund Program to help offset the higher cost of providing wheelchair accessible service, funded through a regulatory charge on members of the industry that do not provide this service.
- Initiative #50. Integrate accessibility considerations in the application of Toronto On-Street Bikeway Design Guide by consulting with the Toronto Accessibility Advisory Committee and the public, and by incorporating best practices.
- Initiative #51. Research and incorporate methods to improve accessibility on the City's streets and sidewalks.
- Initiative #53. Include accessibility considerations and implications in the City's Vision Zero Road Safety Plan by consulting with the community and the Toronto Accessibility Advisory Committee.
- Initiative #54. Ensure public transportation equipment purchased, including Toronto Island ferries, will meet or exceed all provincial and federal legislated requirements for accessibility.
- Initiative #56. Fulfill requests for Accessible Pedestrian Signals (APS), and install APS with all new traffic signals and replacements of existing traffic signals.
- Initiative #57. Install Tactile Walking Surface Indicators (TWSI) at all corners during state of good repair road rehabilitation projects.

In-progress

- Initiative #52. Prepare the City of Toronto for automated vehicles ensuring accessibility considerations are incorporated in the earliest planning stages. This includes consultation with Toronto Accessibility Advisory Committee to ensure an accessibility analysis is applied to future policies and plans.

⁶ The Toronto Transit Commission maintains an independent multi-year plan and reports directly to the Province of Ontario on AODA compliance. Visit the [TTC's Accessibility webpage](#) for details.

Initiative #55. Conduct a review of snow clearing policies, practices and procedures using an accessibility and equity analysis and develop a strategy to reduce barriers that significantly limit the mobility of people with disabilities.

8) Built Environment & Design of Public Spaces

The City of Toronto recognizes that built environment barriers can exclude the participation of people with disabilities to freely and independently participate in our society. We are committed to proactively increasing the accessibility of our facilities and public spaces while going above minimum standards where possible.

The Design of Public Spaces Standards under the IASR requires that newly-constructed or redeveloped public spaces are accessible. The City is compliant with the barrier-free design requirements of the Ontario Building Code and strives to achieve a higher level of accessibility in our public spaces as well as all City workspaces through the use of mandatory accessibility design guidelines such as the [Toronto Accessibility Design Guidelines](#).

The City's MYAP includes six initiatives to help support access into and around City facilities and public spaces. By the end of 2020, all initiatives were completed or in-progress. Examples of work completed under these initiatives are highlighted in [Appendix H](#).

Status of Built Environment & Public Spaces Initiatives

Completed

- Initiative #59. Prioritize and retrofit existing built environment barriers at facilities under its management to comply with the Toronto Accessibility Design Guidelines (TADG).
- Initiative #60. Implement accessibility improvements as part of State of Good Repair AODA Capital programs.
- Initiative #61. Ensure accessibility considerations are incorporated into Shelter Design and Technical Guidelines through best practice research and in consultation with people with disabilities and the Toronto Accessibility Advisory Committee.
- Initiative #62. Maintain accessible elements in public spaces through monitoring and regularly planned preventative maintenance of accessible elements.
- Initiative #63. Respond to temporary disruptions when accessible elements in public spaces are not in working order by notifying the public and prioritizing remediation.

In-progress

- Initiative #58. Maintain and update the Toronto Accessibility Design Guidelines.

Conclusion

The City of Toronto is committed to providing an accessible environment in which people with disabilities can access City services, programs, and spaces with dignity and independence. As we work towards these goals, we will continue to meet our requirements under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act and look for ways to go above minimum compliance. Our Multi-Year Accessibility Plan (MYAP) is the City's five-year playbook to guide us as we move beyond minimum compliance to a culture which embraces "accessibility by design".

After the first year of the 2020-2024 MYAP, we are making great progress in delivering on our commitments. However, the COVID-19 pandemic has required us to shift and adapt the way we do business and we recognize that the pandemic has reinforced many existing disability-related inequities. As a City committed to advancing an equitable and inclusive society, we will continue to examine these issues so that we can adapt and re-focus our efforts where needed to support our residents, visitors and employees during such unprecedented times.

Status reports on the City's MYAP will continue to be posted annually. The next MYAP status report will be posted in spring 2022.

For inquiries about this plan or to request an alternate format, please contact accessibility@toronto.ca or phone us at 416-338-2632.

Appendices

The following appendices highlight work performed in 2020 which support the City's Multi-Year Accessibility Plan. This is not a complete list of all work done in 2020. These are examples of how the City is improving accessibility and supporting people with disabilities during 2020 and the COVID-19 pandemic.

Appendix A: General Accessibility Highlights

Toronto Accessibility Advisory Committee (TAAC)

The City's [Accessibility Advisory Committee](#) provides advice to City Council on the elimination of barriers faced by people with disabilities in public life including City programs, services and facilities. The majority of members on the committee are persons with lived experience of disability.

In Spring 2020, City committee meetings were temporarily cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. When meetings were able to resume, TAAC transitioned to meeting virtually and meetings continued to be streamed live on YouTube for the public. Meetings were made accessible with live captioning and available for viewing afterwards via the City's YouTube channel, with closed captioning.

In 2020, TAAC met six times and continued to provide a critical lens into various City programs and services, including the City's COVID-19 response and possible impacts on the disability community. Key 2020 consultations included:

- The City of Toronto's Poverty Reduction Strategy
- E-scooter Oversight and Management in the City of Toronto
- Accessibility features at the Wallace Emerson Community Recreation Centre
- City of Toronto's COVID-19 Response
- City of Toronto's COVID-19 Recovery and Rebuild
- Access and Waiting Areas at City Hall for People with Disabilities
- Economic Advancement Opportunities for Persons Living with Disabilities
- The City of Toronto's new Data For Equity Strategy
- Renaming Dundas Street and other Public Assets
- Toronto Public Health's Response and Efforts Related to COVID-19
- Supporting People with Disabilities who are homeless (During and Beyond COVID)
- COVID-19 Response and Accessibility of Park & Recreation Programs
- Equity Responsive Budgeting at the City of Toronto
- CaféTO, CurbTO and Accessibility
- ActiveTO and Accessibility
- Wheel-Trans Consultations and COVID-19 Response
- Communicating COVID-related Information to People Living with Disabilities
- Yonge TOMorrow Initiative and Accessibility

This work supports MYAP initiative:

Initiative #7. Continue to engage and consult with the Toronto Accessibility Advisory Committee and disability communities in Toronto to advance accessibility.

Program Advisory Bodies & Public Engagements

Public engagement is one way the City builds relationships and invites participation in governance and decision-making. The City engages through citizens through Program Advisory Bodies, [public consultations](#), surveys, deputations, service delivery, public appointments and a range of other methods. Below is one example of how public engagements were made accessible and included the disability community in 2020.

Community Disability Steering Committee

In 2020, the Park, Forestry and Recreation (PFR) Division continued to host a Community Disability Steering Committee. The committee is one of several divisional Program Advisory Bodies (PAB) which have been established to help advance accessibility in City programs and services. This particular PAB provides feedback on program and service enhancements with respect to community recreation and members have a range of lived disability experience. In 2020, the Community Disability Steering Committee was updated or consulted on the following key projects:

- Accessibility features of the new North East Scarborough Community Recreation and Child Care Centre including:
 - Wayfinding and barrier-free paths of travel,
 - Rest areas,
 - Wheel Trans Drop-off,
 - Exterior recreation amenities (splash pad, playground),
 - Accessible service counters,
 - Tactile indicators of stairs, ramps and path to service counter and elevator,
 - Accessible / universal change rooms,
 - Universal washrooms, and
 - Accessible viewing areas.
- New or recently completed, small scale Urban Forestry Projects, including:
 - The City's Parks & Trails Wayfinding Pilot,
 - Accessibility information on trailhead signage,
 - Widening of boardwalks to allow people using mobility devices to easily pass each other,
 - Natural environmental trails, and
 - New paved trails and rest areas.

To find out more about accessible recreation in 2020, please see [Accessible Recreation](#) and [Accessible Public Washrooms and Recreational Trails](#).

This work supports MYAP initiatives:

Initiative #7. Continue to engage and seek advice from City Divisional Program Advisory Bodies (PABs) on advancing accessibility and inclusion.

Virtual Meetings

The COVID pandemic accelerated the City's planned workplace modernization efforts as employees began to work and meet remotely. This has improved accessibility for many employees however, it has also posed new communication barriers for some. In 2020, the City recognized these challenges and took action to find solutions.

The City has been using the Cisco WebEx video conferencing platform for approximately eight years, before the existence of many other virtual platforms. WebEx is a secure platform that integrates with the City's existing technology and aligns with our security standards and policies. It also meets the unique needs of City divisions and allows for efficient coordination between the City, its Agencies, Corporations and residents. With the increased use of the software in 2020, the City became aware of some accessibility deficiencies or "bugs". Technology Services used public feedback and user testing to identify accessibility-related issues which were quickly escalated to the software developer. This resulted in a collaborative approach to find fixes. A total of 37 issues were escalated to Cisco, of which only four were outstanding at the end of the 2020. In 2020, the City also piloted the use of automated captioning capabilities within the WebEx platform. These capabilities will continue to be considered going into 2021.

This work supports MYAP initiatives:

- Initiative #6. Host employee meetings and public events in facilities and public spaces that are accessible.
- Initiative #22. Continue to work with vendors and community partners to meet or exceed accessibility requirements.
- Initiative #33. Continue to evaluate and remediate City website content and ensure that it meets or exceeds accessibility compliance requirements by providing the appropriate frameworks, tools, guidelines and training for use by all City Divisions.
- Initiative #38. Continue to evaluate City programs and services to ensure inclusion and equitable participation of employees, residents and visitors with disabilities in City operated programs.
- Initiative #40. Formalize and implement accessible public consultation requirements to ensure all consultation activities are accessible and inclusive.

Accessible Events and Ceremonies

The City of Toronto continually strives to ensure City hosted events and ceremonies are accessible to people with disabilities, this includes both in-person celebrations held prior to the COVID-19 pandemic and virtual ceremonies held during lockdowns.

2020 New Year's Eve Celebrations

An example of an in-person event which took place in 2020 was the City's New Year's Eve Celebrations at Nathan Phillip's Square. Staff took great care to minimize barriers and

welcome all residents at the celebrations. The event included American Sign Language (ASL) translation and live captioning on large video screens at the main stage. The event also had dedicated accessible viewing areas for people with disabilities, support persons and service animals. Attendant care was provided on site and attendees could also ask for accommodations specific to their needs if required.

Virtual Media Briefings and City Council / Committee Meetings

In 2020, The City held over 148 virtual committee and City Council meetings and 132 remote COVID-19 press conferences. City Clerk's and Technology Services provided support at all meetings including providing support for live captioning and American Sign Language interpretation.

To support the public in navigating WebEx and participating in Council and Committee meetings and events, the City launched a [virtual engagement instruction page](#) which provides instructions on how to join City meetings and events using various channels. The page includes information on accessibility including a section for those who use screen reader technology.

This work supports MYAP initiatives:

- Initiative #6. Host employee meetings and public events in facilities and public spaces that are accessible.
- Initiative #26. Continue to ensure that City employees understand the accommodation request process, including the requirement to arrange for accessible formats and communication supports, and the requirement to consult with the person making the request in order to determine suitable accessible formats or communication supports.

Community Supports & COVID-19

In the first months of the pandemic, the City created a City-Community Response Table with representatives 11 City divisions and more than 30 agencies across Toronto. The table met daily to identify new and emerging issues affecting Torontonians and to plan a city-wide response. Examples of issues discussed included food security, income supports and community resource needs particularly those for Indigenous, Black and equity deserving groups such as people with disabilities. Staff within the City's Accessibility Unit also engaged community organizations to understand the unique concerns of disability community and what supports were needed. Information gathered through the discussions was shared with several program areas including the team leading the City's [TOSupports: COVID-19 Equity Action Plan](#) and [TOSupports: COVID-19 Investment Fund](#).

TOSupports: COVID-19 Investment Fund

The City's TOSupports: COVID-19 Investment Fund was created to address the needs of Toronto residents during the pandemic, including those with disabilities. In 2020, the City released three rounds of funding and invested in 85 community-based agencies, particularly those supporting Indigenous, Black and equity deserving groups negatively impacted by the pandemic. Supports have focused around eight priority areas including: housing and homelessness; food access & security; family support; mental health support; income support; social connection; community sector support; and community safety and well-being.

Specific to food access and the Provincial recommendations for seniors and at risk individuals to isolate, the City partnered with the Red Cross and other organizations to provide food hamper delivery to those unable to leave their homes. In the first three months of the pandemic response, food hampers were provided to more than 14,000 seniors and residents who could not leave their homes. In addition, nine food banks were opened at Toronto Public Library locations.

To further support residents during the pandemic, the City launched a [COVID-19 Financial & Social Support](#) webpage which includes information on mental health resources, tax relief, rental supports and other income supports. There is also a dedicated resource page for [seniors and people with disabilities](#). Residents can call 211 directly for information on food program availability or view a map of local service providers on the [211 website](#).

This work supports MYAP outcomes:

- Outcome #1. An organization which fosters a culture of equity and inclusion, that values and includes employees, residents and visitors with disabilities.
- Outcome #2. City employees, residents and visitors are aware of resources and can easily utilize accommodation and accessibility services when accessing City goods, services and facilities.
- Outcome #13. People with disabilities receive City goods and services of the same quality and within the same timeline as others and benefit equally from customer service initiatives.

Disability Awareness & COVID-19

At the start of the pandemic, the City's Accessibility Unit engaged community organizations and collected disability-related policy advice from the United Nations, World Health Organization, the Government of Canada and the Ontario Human Rights Commission. The information collected, along with special considerations for accessible service delivery during the pandemic, was summarized into a guiding document which aims to raise awareness on the unique considerations for persons with disabilities during the pandemic. The living document includes several practical tips for ensuring City Services remain accessible during the pandemic. In 2020, the information was shared with several program areas including the Toronto Office of Recovery and Rebuild. The document was also added to the City's Equity Lens tool to help ensure the needs of the disability community are being considered in new service and programs design during COVID-19 and beyond.

This work supports MYAP initiative:

- Initiative #3. Develop, maintain and monitor accessibility guidelines and tools to support implementation and AODA compliance assurance.

Appendix B: Training Highlights

Toronto for All Training Curriculum

In January 2020, under the City's Toronto for All training curriculum, the City launched a new Accessibility 101 course. The course covers concepts of accessibility, obligations under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), the Ontario Human Rights Code, and includes practical considerations for providing service to people with different disabilities. Learning objectives include:

- Key concepts relating to accessibility, disability, barriers, ableism, accommodations, and inclusion.
- Responsibilities under Ontario laws and City policies related to accessibility.
- Customer service requirements when providing service to people with disabilities.

The course is designed to be accessible and includes American Sign Language translation, closed captioning, as well as an accompanying transcript. This course is mandatory for all staff and supplemental courses will be rolled out that build on these learning concepts.

The Toronto for All Training Curriculum is an education initiative for all City staff that will help build and maintain an equitable and inclusive workplace to better serve our city's diverse communities. Targeted courses help clarify misconceptions to remove barriers to inclusion. The City ensures courses are accessible by following an Accessible E-learning Framework which starts with ensuring content follows Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) and takes into account various user-centered design principles.

This work supports MYAP initiatives:

Initiative #14. Ensure that all training, activities, course materials and learning approaches are developed and delivered in accessible formats.

Initiative #15. Continue the development of Toronto for All education program to help City employees understand human rights obligations, unconscious bias, and power and privilege to promote equitable outcomes for people with disabilities.

Training Above and Beyond the AODA

During 2020, several divisions offered training and development opportunities that went above the City's mandatory training requirements. Below are a few examples of training initiatives for 2020:

Training in Accessible Documents

With the onset of the pandemic and in light of social distancing measures, much of the City's in-person training courses were cancelled in 2020 and divisions quickly pivoted to webinars or virtual instructor-led courses. As a result, the Training Unit within Technology Services Division adapted the City's popular document accessibility course and shifted to virtual instruction. The course allows staff to build the knowledge and skills required to create and convert documents into accessible formats to ensure they are accessible to people with disabilities. This new two-

and-a-half hour course continues to be popular among staff with training sessions sizes approximately doubling compared to in-person training. City staff were encouraged to take the training through regular all-staff communications during 2020.

City Clerk's & Elections Staff

Throughout 2020, staff in the City Clerk's Office that focus on accessibility and that liaise with committees and working groups attended various forums, collaborative meetings and conferences. Some examples include attendance at the #a11yTO (Accessibility Toronto) Conference, CNIB Connecting the Dots conference, events held by the City's Employee Disability Network, as well as collaborating with Elections Ontario and Elections Canada. These added forums allow staff to remain current on developments and how accessibility issues intersect with the City's approach to information collection and administering municipal elections.

During the Ward 22 Scarborough-Agincourt By-election additional training was given to part-time staff and election officials working in the voting locations. Training included a customer service handbook and accessibility and gender equity trainings. Election Services also developed training for event staff which addressed customer service accessibility and COVID-19 Protocols to ensure enhanced accessibility and health and safety for voting location staff and the public. Online training was made mandatory as an alternative to in-person training. To learn more on how the City increased accessibility of City elections in 2020, please see [New Accessible Technology for Elections](#) and [Accessible Elections](#).

Accessibility Coordinators in Court Services

In 2020, Accessibility Coordinators in Court Services Division continued to participate in an Accessibility Community of Practice to help with ongoing learning in the area of accessibility. The community of practice provides a forum to start dialogue, share information and resources, as well as provide feedback on accessibility coordination processes and best practice. It furthers opportunity for cross-section collaboration and provides and strengthens networking opportunities amongst court and tribunal professionals in Ontario.

Accessibility Coordinators support customers with disabilities who require accommodations to participate in court proceedings. The Accessibility Coordinators act as a resource to better meet the accessibility needs of our customers and to assist staff in responding to requests for accommodation where there are circumstances requiring support. A list of [courthouse accessibility features](#), as well as the contact information for Accessibility Coordinators are available for all courthouses on the City's internet. For more information on how the City made Court Service more accessible in 2020, please see [New Online Service Delivery, Court Services](#).

This work supported the following MYAP initiatives:

- Initiative #11. City employees have the tools and resources to develop and provide information in accessible formats.
- Initiative #26. Continue to ensure that City employees understand the accommodation request process, including the requirement to arrange for accessible formats and communication supports, and the requirement to consult with the person making the request in order to determine suitable accessible formats or communication supports.

Initiative #38. Continue to evaluate City programs and services to ensure inclusion and equitable participation of employees, residents and visitors with disabilities in City operated programs.

Appendix C: Procurement Highlights

Accessibility Upgrades Program

The City's Corporate Real Estate Management Division continues to oversee an Accessibility Upgrades Program to proactively identify and remove barriers at hundreds of City owned and operated facilities. The estimated costs for the planned accessibility upgrades are estimated to be \$200 million by the end of 2025. Building upgrades will comply with the Toronto Accessibility Design Guidelines. Buildings under the program include civic centers, community centers, shelters, fire halls, Offices, and other buildings.

In 2020, under the Accessibility Upgrades Program, the City:

- Processed procurements across various divisions which resulted in 24 blanket contracts at a cumulative value of \$27,000 and
- Awarded two tenders relating to construction procurements including building renovations and AODA upgrades, valued at \$2,294,600.00 and \$5,294,025.00.

To learn more about accessibility improvements made in 2020 see the [Toronto Accessibility Design Guidelines](#) and [Accessibility of Toronto Owned Facilities](#).

This work supports MYAP initiatives:

Initiative #17. Continue to ensure accessibility criteria are key requirements of the procurement process when acquiring or purchasing goods, services and/or facilities.

Initiative #21. Ensure an accessibility analysis of all projects and purchases before funding is requested.

Initiative #22. Continue to work with vendors and community partners to meet or exceed accessibility requirements.

Initiative #59. Continue to prioritize and retrofit existing built environment barriers at facilities under its management to comply with the TADG.

Initiative #60. Continue to implement accessibility improvements as part of State of Good Repair AODA Capital programs.

New Accessible Technologies for Elections

In 2020, Election Services worked closely with the Purchasing, Materials and Management Division, Legal Services, and external accessibility experts from the Inclusive Design Research Centre of the Ontario College of Art and Design University to develop accessibility requirements for new vote counting equipment. Ten percent of the functional procurement requirements were accessibility focussed to ensure the newly acquired equipment and associated software adhere to the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act and are accessible to staff, election workers and voters. Examples of some features include integrated touch screens, audio components, Braille key pads, a rocker paddle/foot switch and zoom features to adjust font sizes and colour contrast. A presentation on the new vote counting

equipment was also provided to the Elections Services' Accessibility Outreach Network (AON). The AON is a community-based advisory body composed of people with disabilities. At the consultation, members were advised of future opportunities to participate in usability testing of the new equipment. To learn more on how the City increased accessibility of City elections in 2020, please see [Training Above and Beyond the AODA](#) and [Accessible Elections](#).

This work supports MYAP initiatives:

- Initiative #17. Continue to ensure accessibility criteria are key requirements of the procurement process when acquiring or purchasing goods, services and/or facilities.
- Initiative #22. Continue to work with vendors and community partners to meet or exceed accessibility requirements.
- Initiative #38. Continue to evaluate City programs and services to ensure inclusion and equitable participation of employees, residents and visitors with disabilities in City operated programs.

Accessibility of New Shelters & COVID Isolation Centres

In 2020, the City's Shelter Support and Housing Administration (SSHA) continued to ensure that facilities procured to provide homelessness services were assessed for accessibility prior to purchase. SSHA works with the City's Corporate Real-estate Management (CREM) Division when procuring properties to assess properties for lifts, elevators, ramps and consider items such as door and corridor widths. If a desired property is not fully accessible, but is considered suitable based on all other criteria, SSHA works with CREM to assess the feasibility of upgrading the property to meet the Toronto Accessibility Design Guidelines, Shelter Design Guidelines and obligations under the IASR Design of Public Spaces Standard.

In 2020, SSHA secured 40 new temporary shelter and hotel locations and moved more than 3,600 people throughout the emergency shelter system in order to ensure physical distancing between beds. In addition, SSHA worked with health care partners to open Toronto's first COVID-19 voluntary isolation and recovery programs which provided medical supports for people experiencing homelessness. New facilities were assessed for accessibility by using a site assessment tool which not only considered accessibility features of the facility but also potential service barriers. For example, before opening, new locations had to post an inclusive service poster for those who are Deaf, deafened or hard of hearing and experiencing communication barriers during the pandemic.

Shelter residents with accessibility requirements were moved to new shelters that met their needs. Several accessible transportation options were available for clients moving between sites including dedicated TTC bases, Wheel-trans vehicles, accessible school buses and retrofitted City of Toronto Fleet vehicles. To learn more about how the City improved accessibility in City owned facilities in 2020, please see the [Toronto Accessibility Design Guidelines](#) and [Accessibility of Toronto Owned Facilities](#).

This work supports MYAP initiatives:

- Initiative #17. Continue to ensure accessibility criteria are key requirements of the procurement process when acquiring or purchasing goods, services and/or facilities.
- Initiative #18. Provide tools and resources to assist City employees in meeting accessibility obligations in procurement, such as training, templates, sample language and guidelines that embed accessibility considerations at all stages of procurement.
- Initiative #38. Continue to evaluate City programs and services to ensure inclusion and equitable participation of employees, residents and visitors with disabilities in City operated programs.

Social Procurement

In 2020, the City continued to promote and apply a Social Procurement Program as per requirements in our purchasing procedures. Under the Program, the City has a Corporate Membership with the Inclusive Workplace and Supply Council of Canada (IWSCC). This organization is a Canadian non-profit created to support Veterans and/or people with disabilities who own businesses. They provide certification so that these businesses can be officially recognized as Diverse Suppliers and work with corporate partners to increase the inclusivity of workplaces and procurement processes. The Diverse Vendors List which City staff refer to as part of procurement requirements includes 17 certified vendors from the IWSCC, 13 which are disability-owned.

This work supports MYAP initiative:

- Initiative #23. Continue to apply the City's Social Procurement Policy and practices.

Appendix D: Information & Communication Highlights

Digital Accessibility

The City's Digital AODA Compliance Team within Technology Services works closely with partners across the organization to ensure City website, applications, and web content meet or exceed AODA standards. This includes, testing websites and content using automated, semi-automated and manual accessibility testing techniques.

In 2020, The Digital AODA Compliance Team updated the City's Digital Accessibility Standard, supporting principles and guidelines to reflect best practices, advancement in strategic approaches, and new technologies that help incorporate digital accessibility. The team also collaborated on refreshing the City's Web Application User Interface Standard, which outlines development practices and usability approaches that developers must follow. Overall, Technology Services:

- Completed technical evaluations on 231 City applications.
- Trained over 275 technical staff on digital accessibility techniques and coding best practices.
- Implemented an Accessibility by Design approach in various City processes including updating and applying consistent accessibility language in all City technical procurements and contracts, and embedding accessibility checkpoints into technical gating processes.
- Reviewed and updated the City's Digital Accessibility Standard, Digital Accessibility Principles & Knowledge Base and the City's Web Application User Interface Standard.

For complex web content, the City's Digital AODA Compliance Team oversees an evaluation and approval process to validate the accessibility and unconvertible nature of certain information (for example, complex City maps and architectural drawings). Although the City aims to make all content accessible, if it's not possible to do so, a statement will be added to the published material indicating that the information can be provided in an alternate format upon request.

This work supports MYAP initiatives:

Initiative #28. Develop and implement accessible information, communication and technology guidelines and standards to ensure the City is providing clear, accessible, appropriate and timely information and communication.

Initiative #29. Conduct annual reviews of the City of Toronto Digital Accessibility Principles and Guidelines and update to reflect current best practices in digital accessibility.

Initiative #30. Continue to ensure that the City's websites and web applications incorporate the foundations of the City of Toronto Digital Accessibility Standard.

Initiative #31. Regularly review compliance and usability best practices in order to identify ways to improve accessibility in information, communications and technology

based on broader accessibility sector advancements and legislated requirements.

Initiative #32. Develop and implement a process to review and assess requests for exceptions based on practicability and risk management as part of the City of Toronto Digital Accessibility Standard.

Initiative #33. Continue to evaluate and remediate City website content and ensure that it meets or exceeds accessibility compliance requirements by providing the appropriate frameworks, tools, guidelines and training for use by all City Divisions.

Accessible Information during COVID-19

The City of Toronto is committed to sharing timely and accurate information with all Torontonians through a variety of methods. We recognize that people living with disabilities have faced many challenges accessing critical information during the pandemic. Below are some examples of how we are ensuring information is accessible during the pandemic and beyond.

Accessible Media Briefings

In 2020, the City's Strategic Communications team lead our COVID-19 media briefings. More than 150 briefings were held and posted on the City's YouTube channel. Briefings included live sign language interpretation and closed captioning. All captioning was reviewed and corrected by staff after every briefing to ensure recordings posted on YouTube were accurate.

COVID-19 Public Education Working Group

Various internal City stakeholders, including staff from the City's Accessibility Unit, convened in 2020 to form a COVID-19 Public Education Working Group, co-led by Strategic Communications and the City's Emergency Operations Centre. The group's mandate was to focus on communication strategies to reach those who were high risk of COVID-19, including people with disabilities. The working group helped develop various education material and used existing and grassroots methods to circulate information within community groups, agencies and networks.

Public Information on COVID-19

In 2020, the City produced numerous posters and videos (including those in ASL) to communicate emergency information and service expectations during the pandemic. For example, the City developed accommodation posters for in-person service locations including a [service poster for those who are Deaf, deafened or hard of hearing](#) and experiencing communication barriers due to plexiglass barriers or face coverings. Children's Services partnered with Toronto Public Health's Vaccine Education group to develop several videos including a [Stop the Spread](#) training video to help families understand changes to child care during COVID-19. All videos use plain language, include closed captioning and displayed the same information via images. Additional information videos on [reducing virus spread](#) have been produced with captioning and ASL interpretation. Lastly, in 2020, the [Practice Safe Six advertising campaign](#) targeted Torontonians between the ages of 18 to 40 and included videos with closed captioning and posters depicting youth with disabilities.

Overall, the primary sources of COVID-related information have been the City's website, the City's media briefings and the City's corporate social media channels (Twitter, Instagram, Facebook and YouTube). Near the end of 2020, more than 2,300 social media messages specifically about COVID-19 health measures, service updates and new programs had been posted by the City. As a companion to the primary media channels, the City of Toronto introduced a chatbot as a new communication channel to help residents and businesses with common COVID-19 questions. The City's chatbot, which is AODA-compliant, uses artificial intelligence technology to provide a question and answer service. The chatbot includes an audio feature to allow users to click for a text to speech experience; which is useful for people with vision disabilities or difficulty reading.

This work supports MYAP initiatives:

- Initiative #5. Promote accessibility awareness within the organization as well as all the communities we serve through education and awareness campaigns.
- Initiative #6. Host employee meetings and public events in facilities and public spaces that are accessible.
- Initiative #26. Continue to ensure that City employees understand the accommodation request process, including the requirement to arrange for accessible formats and communication supports, and the requirement to consult with the person making the request in order to determine suitable accessible formats or communication supports.

Appendix E: Customer Service Highlights

Customer Experience Transformation

In 2020 a new Customer Experience Transformation (CET) Program was created to help embed best practices (learned from the City's Fair Outcomes Project) into the City's end-to-end customer service processes. A key driver of the transformation program is to improve access to City services in a way that meets the unique needs of all individuals. The program will design services that are accessible, user-friendly and easy to navigate in several ways including online and by phone. For example, divisions under our Community and Social Services umbrella rolled-out a new virtual caseworker pilot to improve access to services. The pilot allows service users to connect virtually with City staff (e.g. caseworker). This allows people with disabilities to see their caseworker, read lips or use closed captioning while also benefiting from visual facial expressions and body cues to help understand language, tone and meaning.

When modifying or introducing new service channels, the Customer Experience Transformation Program team is using a human centred design approach by incorporating accessibility user testing. For example, in building the City's new Tenants Rights Portal, the Customer Experience Transformation Program team watched residents engage with the tool to identify improvement opportunities and ensure everyone can understand, navigate and interact with the websites and tools.

The CET Program also includes an in-person customer experience strategy for service counters. Under this strategy the City will be improving accessibility of service spaces. For example, the Etobicoke Civic Centre will incorporate open floor plans with reduced visual and physical barriers to help improve wayfinding and mobility (for those using assistive devices, services animals etc.) between spaces. Modular and adaptable furniture including accessible counter options and sit-stand desks will also be incorporated. To learn more about new online services and customer service improvements introduced in 2020, please see [New Online Service Delivery](#) and [Redesign of Customer Service Areas at City Hall](#).

This work supports MYAP initiatives:

- Initiative #34. Continue to embed and strengthen the focus on accessibility within the Customer Service Centre of Excellence.
- Initiative #38. Continue to evaluate City programs and services to ensure inclusion and equitable participation of employees, residents and visitors with disabilities in City operated programs.
- Initiative #39. Embed an equity analysis within customer service processes at the City through the Fair Outcomes project.
- Initiative #59. Continue to prioritize and retrofit existing built environment barriers at facilities under its management to comply with the TADG.

Accessible Recreation

The City of Toronto is committed to providing all communities with high quality, accessible recreation and leisure opportunities. Specialized City programs provide individuals with disabilities the opportunity to be involved in recreational activities with people who have similar interests, abilities and needs in a safe and positive environment.

In 2020, Adapted and Inclusive Recreation Services established a new hotline number to help improve customer services and support to people with disabilities participating in City recreation programs. Although many recreation centres were closed throughout the pandemic, the City was able to offer outdoor recreation programs and adapted camps to serve people with disabilities. Below are examples of some accessible programs offered in the summer 2020:

- SwimTO continued offering aquatic opportunities and participants with disabilities were supported through accessible locations, pool ramps, lifts and access to warm water pools.
- CampTO provided 16 virtual Adapted Camp sessions.
- ParksPlayTO program provided inclusive supports for children and youth with disabilities.

Over the course of the summer, staff from the City's Adapted and Inclusive Recreation Services unit were deployed within 100 parks and greenspaces to provide support to children and youth with disabilities enrolled in City recreation programs.

The City's Adaptive and Inclusion Recreation programs are being regularly assessed by setting new benchmarks, goals, and evaluating improvement initiatives that promote inclusive and equitable participation. Going into 2021, regardless of lockdowns, [ten community centre locations](#) will be available for individuals that require physical therapy during the pandemic. Many free virtual adaptive programs will also continue to be available again in Spring 2021. For more information on accessible recreation projects in 2020, please see [Community Disability Steering Committee](#).

This work supports MYAP initiatives:

Initiative #6. Host employee meetings and public events in facilities and public spaces that are accessible.

Initiative #38. Continue to evaluate City programs and services to ensure inclusion and equitable participation of employees, residents and visitors with disabilities in City operated programs.

Accessible Elections

In 2020, the City Clerk's Office continued to review and update the City's [Election Accessibility Plan](#) and host the Elections Accessibility Outreach Network (AON) to help plan barrier-free elections for the City. In 2020, meetings with the AON were moved online and user-tested to ensure meetings were accessible for all participants.

For the Ward 22 Scarborough-Agincourt By-election, information on accessible voting options for people with disabilities was posted to the [Toronto Election website](#). All voting locations were inspected in advance to identify potential barriers and confirm accessible elements. Accessible Voter Assist Terminals were installed at two voting locations sites. These terminals allow voters with disabilities to mark their ballot privately and independently. Accessibility Officers and Customer Service Officers were available at all voting sites and clear masks were provided for key event staff in order to remove communication barriers with those who have hearing disabilities. To learn more on how the City increased accessibility of City elections in 2020, please see [New Accessible Technology for Elections](#).

This work supports MYAP initiatives:

- Initiative #6. Host employee meetings and public events in facilities and public spaces that are accessible.
- Initiative #36. Continue to work with the Elections Accessibility Outreach Network to improve accessibility of election services through the identification, removal and prevention of barriers that affect electors and candidates with disabilities.
- Initiative #37. Develop a comprehensive Accessibility Plan for municipal elections based on learnings from Election Accessibility Reports and consultation with the Elections Accessibility Outreach Network.

New Online Service Delivery

In response to the pandemic and closure of in-person service, several City divisions began offering various services online. Moving services online has helped modernize the way we deliver service including increasing accessibility for those who experience barriers at in-person service locations. Some examples of new online services are highlighted below.

Court Services

In 2020, Court Services began offering remote hearings. As well, early resolution meetings were offered via telephone or online using the online [Court Case Look Up](#). Various Provincial Offences Act court forms and process such as disputing a ticket, submitting a Notice of Intention to appear were also made available via e-mail or mail.

Children Services

In 2020, Children Services introduced new virtual programming for children with extra support needs. Families were able to place their children on child care waitlists and apply / provide information for fee subsidy assistance online. Information updates for City-operated emergency and licensed child care were also made available through My Child Care Account and EarlyOn provided information, resources and support to families in a virtual format.

Online Licence Renewals

In 2020, the City launched a new portal so that businesses can apply for and renew licences and permits virtually. In partnership with the City's Customer Experience Transformation Program and Technology Services, the portal incorporates usability best practices and accessibility. The online service also facilitates the use of the Ontario Photo Card to accommodate those that don't have a Driver's License. To date, 2,454 new business licence applications have been processed and 115 licences and permits have been renewed through

these platforms and the team continues to improve the process for enhanced client experience.

This work supports MYAP initiative:

Initiative #36. Continue to evaluate City programs and services to ensure inclusion and equitable participation of employees, residents and visitors with disabilities in City operated programs.

Long Term Care Homes – Virtual Information & Visitations

As visitations to City-operated long-term care homes became restricted in 2020, the City of Toronto began holding virtual information sessions for families to discuss the COVID-19 pandemic. Sessions included information and education for visitors entering care homes as well as information on the COVID-19 vaccine. Recorded videos with closed captioning were provided for those not able to attend the virtual meeting and alternative formats were made available as requested.

In light of the COVID-19 restrictions limiting interaction within in long-term care, City staff facilitated virtual visits between residents of City-operated long-term care homes and their families and friends. Staff also provided support for those with physical disabilities where needed. Approximately, 130 tablets were distributed to care homes to allow video calls with family members. Accessibility was further enhanced by expanding the City's Wi-Fi within the care homes to ensure residents, especially those with limited mobility, were able to connect to the internet and communicate with their families during the pandemic.

This work supports MYAP outcomes:

- Outcome #1. An organization which fosters a culture of equity and inclusion, that values and includes employees, residents and visitors with disabilities.
- Outcome #2. City employees, residents and visitors are aware of resources and can easily utilize accommodation and accessibility services when accessing City goods, services and facilities.
- Outcome #14. City employees have access to tools, resources, policies and procedures to support accessible customer service.

Appendix F: Employment Highlights

Employee Diversity & Engagement

In 2020, the People & Equity Division aligned the City's 2019 Employee Engagement survey results with our [Count Yourself In \(CYI\) Workforce Survey](#) data. Together, these data provide an equity overview to divisional Senior Management and support the City's [Workforce Equity and Inclusion Plan](#). Summary reports depicting the corporate and divisional employee engagement scores for five diversity dimensions (Women, Racialized People, Indigenous Peoples, Persons with Disabilities and LGBTQ2S+) were also made available internally on the City's intranet. Senior staff from People & Equity met with select divisions to discuss their scores and provide recommendations to increase diversity and inclusion and improve scores wherever gaps were apparent. The 2020 CYI reports are currently in production.

This work supports MYAP initiatives:

- Initiative #46. Foster a culture of employee engagement and inclusion through analysis of the Employee Engagement Survey and the development of action plans in partnership with Communities of Inclusion, including the Employee Disability Network.
- Initiative #47. Continue to conduct an employment equity survey – Count Yourself In – to inform workforce planning priorities through data-informed decision making.

Employee Accommodations

In 2020, the City saw a large increase in the number of accommodations required by staff who were redeployed as part of the City's COVID response. Accommodations included both disability-related accommodations and accommodations for employees providing care to dependents who were at high risk of contracting COVID-19 or experiencing severe illness. Due to the high number of requests, the City convened a new COVID-19 Accommodation Team dedicated to support the redeployment of staff during the pandemic. To help ensure employees were being accommodated as soon as possible the team created a new, streamlined assessment processes including new assessment forms and guides. The Human Rights Office in partnership with a cross-functional team in the People & Equity Division also developed new tools and resources to educate employees and managers on COVID-19 accommodation requests. Regular communication and distribution of resources helped ensure that employees, especially those redeployed to essential services, were aware of their rights to accommodation and how to seek accommodation.

This work supports MYAP initiatives:

- Initiative #3. Develop, maintain and monitor accessibility guidelines and tools to support implementation and AODA compliance assurance.
- Initiative #44. Review people services policies and procedures to identify, prevent and remove barriers to employment and development opportunities. This review will also serve to ensure ongoing compliance with legislation.
- Initiative #45. Continue the practice of preparing individualized accommodation and emergency response plans for City employees with disabilities.

Appendix G: Transportation Highlights

Increased Snow Clearing

In 2020, Transportation Services implemented a pilot project to expand mechanical snow clearing in historically underserved areas. The City of Toronto plows about 5,800 kilometres of Toronto's 7,029 kilometres of sidewalk. In older parts of Toronto, narrow sidewalks, obstructions and obstacles prevent plows from working safely. In these areas the City offers [sidewalk clearing services](#) for seniors and people with disabilities, but this did not address greater navigation issues within these areas. The pilot tested new, smaller, mechanical snow clearing equipment on 230 km of sidewalk covering nine pre-determined areas.

This work supports MYAP initiatives:

Initiative #51. Continue to research and incorporate methods to improve accessibility on the City's streets and sidewalks.

Initiative #55. Conduct a review of snow clearing policies, practices and procedures using an accessibility and equity analysis and develop a strategy to reduce barriers that significantly limit the mobility of people with disabilities.

Automated Vehicles / Shuttles

In 2020, Transportation Services continued work on the [automated shuttle trial](#) and worked with The Toronto Transit Commission (TTC) to translate the TTC's accessibility standards for buses into the specifications to procure vehicles for this pilot. Accessibility elements have been explicitly identified as one of the benefits of this new technology, and is being addressed within the pilot. The project team consulted both the City of Toronto and Metrolinx's Accessibility Advisory Committees to collect important input into the design criteria. The City signed an agreement with Local Motors by LM Industries to deliver the City's planned Automated Shuttle Trial, which will begin operating in fall 2021. With a seating capacity of up to eight passengers, the shuttle is equipped with an accessibility ramp and a wheelchair securement system, along with audio and visual announcements and other features for rider information. An on-board safety steward will oversee vehicle operations and can manually take control of the vehicle at any time when required. As next steps, the team plans to hold a focus group with people with disabilities where they will have the opportunity to interact with and test ride the self-driving shuttle.

This work supports MYAP initiative:

Initiative #52. Prepare the City of Toronto for automated vehicles, ensuring accessibility considerations are incorporated in the earliest planning stages. This includes consultation with Toronto Accessibility Advisory Committee to ensure an accessibility analysis is applied to future policies and plans.

Pedestrian Safety & Accessibility

In 2020, Transportation Services installed a total of 2263 linear meters of new [Tactile Walking Surface Indicators](#) on City sidewalk ramps. In addition, 1,111 [Accessible Pedestrian Signals](#) were installed at City intersections, this increased the total percent of all signalized

intersections across the City to 46%. APSs are installed at all new traffic signals and when existing traffic signals are replaced. Signals may also be upgraded on an ad-hoc basis.

This work supports MYAP initiatives:

Initiative #56. Continue to fulfill requests for Accessible Pedestrian Signals and install with all new traffic signals and replacements of existing traffic crossing signals.

Initiative #57. Install Tactile Walking Surface Indicators at all corners during state of good repair road rehabilitation projects.

Vehicle for Hire Accessibility Fund

In 2020, The City's Vehicle-for-Hire Accessibility Fund Program (AFP) adopted by City Council in 2019, was rolled-out. The program supports the availability of accessible transportation services around the City and to offset the higher cost of providing wheelchair accessible service. In the first year, \$1.78 million was disbursed to 327 taxicab owners and 349 vehicle-for-hire drivers. These funds help ensure that accessible vehicle-for-hire service is available on-demand.

Under the AFP, drivers are required to have valid accessible customer service training. Furthermore, amendments to the Vehicle-for-Hire bylaw that came into effect on January 1, 2020 include additional training requirements. Preliminary training topics included transporting passengers in a safe manner; driving in an urban setting; providing accessible customer service; as well as anti-racism, diversity and sensitivity training; and relevant legal requirements. New drivers are required to provide proof of this training from June 1, 2020 onwards. Drivers previously licensed were required to provide evidence of training in a City-approved third-party program by the end of 2020.

This work supports MYAP initiative:

Initiative #49. Implement a Vehicle-for-Hire Accessibility Fund Program to help offset the higher cost of providing wheelchair accessible service, funded through a regulatory charge on members of the industry that do not provide this service.

Accessibility of City Sidewalks during COVID-19

During COVID-19, The City has launched several new programs to help with congestion and social distancing on busy sections of City sidewalks:

[CurbTO](#) creates on-street pedestrian zones to ensure sidewalks remain clear while also allowing for physical distancing in customer line-ups outside local businesses. The designated areas include asphalt ramps so that those using assistive devices can benefit from the added space. After receiving feedback from the public and the Toronto Accessibility Advisory Committee (TAAC) in 2020, ramp design will be improved during the 2021 season.

[CaféTO](#) provides space for expanded (on-street) outdoor dining areas to help restaurants and bars who have been impacted by COVID-19. By placing the areas in the curb lane, the program also aims to keep sidewalks clear while promoting physical distancing. Similar to CurbTO, the areas include temporary asphalt ramps for those using assistive devices and the

City will be incorporating feedback and recommendations on the ramps as well as furniture placement and design during the 2021 season. A revised CaféTO guidebook planned for release in 2021 contains important rules that CaféTO operators must follow, such as maintaining the pedestrian clearway, cane-detectability and colour contrasting of café materials. The guidebook also has some suggestions to help operators to improve the accessibility of their outdoor dining space, including furniture choice and layout of the café.

This work supports MYAP initiatives:

- Initiative #7. Continue to engage and consult with the Toronto Accessibility Advisory Committee and disability communities in Toronto to advance accessibility.
- Initiative #38. Continue to evaluate City programs and services to ensure inclusion and equitable participation of employees, residents and visitors with disabilities in City operated programs.
- Initiative #51. Continue to research and incorporate methods to improve accessibility on the City's streets and sidewalks.

Appendix H: Built Environment Highlights

Toronto Accessibility Design Guidelines

In 2020, the City's Corporate Real Estate and Management Division (CREM) continued to review and update the [Toronto Accessibility Design Guidelines \(TADG\)](#). As the TADG has been updated, City divisions have started implementing the enhanced requirements into new construction and renovation projects as well as upgrades to existing facilities.

The Toronto Accessibility Design Guidelines (TADG) can be used by all sectors to conduct accessibility site audits and in planning new developments. Based on the human rights principles of respect, dignity and inclusion, the Guidelines are a key component of the City's Accessibility Plan and set the foundation for the City's multi-year implementation strategy to make City facilities accessible to people with disabilities. The Accessibility Guidelines are the result of the collaborative effort among community members and subject matters experts working with City staff. Overall, the TADG bring together barrier-free requirements found under the Ontario Building Code, the Design of Public Spaces Standards of the AODA, as well as industry best practices that go above these legislated requirements. To see more information on how the TADG are being used, please see [Accessibility of New Shelters & COVID Isolation Centres](#) and Accessibility of City Owned Facilities (below).

This work supports MYAP initiatives:

Initiative #58. Continue to maintain and update the Toronto Accessibility Design Guidelines (TADG).

Accessibility of City Owned Facilities

In 2020, the City continued implementing an Accessibility Upgrades Program to proactively identify and remove barriers at hundreds of City owned and operated facilities. Upgrades will comply with the Toronto Accessibility Design Guidelines (TADG) where feasible. Buildings under the program include civic centers, community centers, shelters, fire halls, Offices, and other buildings. Below are a few examples of accessibility improvements being implemented at the City:

Redesign of Customer Service Areas at City Hall

In 2020, a new conceptual design was developed for first floor of City Hall which includes accessible elements such as:

- The addition of private consultation rooms which will accommodate service animals and/or support persons,
- Additional universal washrooms,
- Varied modes of wayfinding,
- Adaptable waiting areas,
- A dedicated Wheel Trans waiting area, and
- A quiet room.

Public engagement on the City Hall conceptual design is planned for 2021.

PMMD Corporate Office & Warehouse

In 2020, the City's Purchasing Materials and Management Division (PMMD) completed an accessibility audit and implemented several upgrades at its Corporate Office and Warehouse. The audit identified several barriers including non-compliant stairs, the lack of accessible entrances, accessible / universal washrooms, and inaccessible control heights. As a result, several accessibility improvements were initiated in 2020 including:

- Reconstructing the ramp and adding tactile walking surface indicators on the staircase outside the main entrance,
- Refinishing exterior walkways and
- Replacing floors with less reflective surfaces.

All upgrades to date comply with the Ontario Building Code, Design of Public Spaces Standard and / or the TADG.

This work supports MYAP initiatives:

Initiative #38. Continue to evaluate City programs and services to ensure inclusion and equitable participation of employees, residents and visitors with disabilities in City operated programs.

Initiative #59. Continue to prioritize and retrofit existing built environment barriers at facilities under its management to comply with the TADG.

Initiative #60. Continue to implement accessibility improvements as part of State of Good Repair AODA Capital programs.

Accessible Housing

In 2020, the City of Toronto launched the [HousingTO 2020-2030 Action Plan](#) to increase the supply of affordable housing across the City. The plan is taking an intersectional approach to support equity deserving groups, including persons with disabilities experiencing homelessness. All new City housing projects will incorporate at least 20% accessible units and universal design will be incorporate throughout. Various HousingTO initiatives were launched in 2020 including, but not limited to:

New Modular Housing Units

New modular housing units were constructed at [11 Macy Avenue](#) and [321 Dovercourt Road \(formerly 150 Harrison Street\)](#). These two projects provide 100 new homes with support service for people experience or at risk of homelessness. 25% of these new units are accessible and applicants can indicate their accommodation needs in order to be matched to available accessible units.

New Supportive Housing

City Council approved a new Social Medicine Initiative (SMI) housing partnership that will create [new permanent supportive housing opportunities](#) in the Parkdale neighborhood. Supportive housing combines affordable housing with coordinated support services and is designed to provide people who have complex mental health and/or physical challenges with on-site supports. Examples of supports include personal care, case management, counselling, life skills training, and medication reminders. It will provide more housing opportunities for

people who are currently under-served by the healthcare system while experiencing homelessness and other challenges imposed by poverty. Furthermore, this systems integration approach will reduce the number of clients who require an alternate level of care, and provide them with the supports they need to live successfully while reducing the pressures on the overall health and social services system.

This work supports MYAP initiative:

Initiative #38. Continue to evaluate City programs and services to ensure inclusion and equitable participation of employees, residents and visitors with disabilities in City operated programs.

Accessible Public Washrooms & Recreational Trails

In 2020, the City has opened a number of facilities with accessible washrooms and showers for individuals in need of these services during COVID-19 closures. In addition, the City more than doubled its supply of winter park washrooms, expanded winter maintenance in 60 large and high-destination parks including clearing paved pathways and added more than 50,000 square metres of winter maintenance in park parking lots. Accessible public washrooms were also opened in community recreation centres, libraries and City-owned buildings throughout Toronto during the COVID-19 closures.

Accessibility-related information for [public washrooms and maintained pathways](#) in winter and spring, including hours, type, and accessibility, as well as paths that are cleared of snow in winter are available on the City's website. Detailed information about accessible pools, recreation centres, public washrooms and shower facilities open during COVID can be found on the City's [COVID-19 website: Changes to City Services](#). For more information on accessible recreation initiatives in 2020, please see [Accessible Recreation](#).

This work supports MYAP initiative:

Initiative #38. Continue to evaluate City programs and services to ensure inclusion and equitable participation of employees, residents and visitors with disabilities in City operated programs.