

People & Equity Division

# City of Toronto Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

## Annual Status Report 2023



# Contents

<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Executive Summary .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Progress to Date.....</b>	<b>6</b>
1. General Accessibility.....	7
2. Training .....	8
3. Procurement.....	8
4. Information and Communications.....	9
5. Customer Service.....	11
6. Employment .....	12
7. Transportation .....	13
8. Built Environment & Public Spaces Initiatives .....	14
<b>Conclusion.....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Appendix A: General Accessibility Highlights .....</b>	<b>17</b>
1. Council Advisory Bodies .....	17
2. Program Advisory Bodies.....	18
<b>Appendix B: Training Highlights.....</b>	<b>20</b>
1. Training for Vehicles-for-Hire Drivers .....	20
2. Unpacking Ableism 101 .....	20
3. Enterprise-Wide Social Media Accessibility Training.....	21
4. Accommodation Training for Managers .....	21
<b>Appendix C: Procurement Highlights.....</b>	<b>22</b>
1. Equity Responsive Budgeting in the City’s Budget Process.....	22
2. Consultations on the City Budget .....	22
3. Updated Language and Enhancements to Procurement and Accessibility	23
4. Enterprise Social Media Management and Analytics .....	24
<b>Appendix D: Information &amp; Communication Highlights .....</b>	<b>25</b>
1. Accessibility at City Council and Committee Meetings .....	25
2. Digital Engagement Team.....	25
3. Improved access to Communication Supports .....	26
<b>Appendix E: Customer Service Highlights .....</b>	<b>27</b>
1. New Online Information and Services .....	27
2. Toronto Election Enhancements .....	28

**Appendix F: Employment Highlights..... 30**

- 1. Diversity and Inclusion in People Services..... 30
- 2. Employee Disability Network..... 30
- 3. Children’s Services – Coffee Chats..... 31

**Appendix G: Transportation Highlights ..... 33**

- 1. Vision Zero ..... 33
- 2. Ongoing Infrastructure Development and Maintenance ..... 34
- 3. Construction Zones ..... 34
- 4. CafeTO ..... 35
- 5. Snow Clearing..... 35
- 6. Vehicle-for-Hire Bylaw..... 36

**Appendix H: Built Environment Highlights..... 38**

- 1. Accessibility Upgrades at City Facilities ..... 38
- 2. Affordable and Supportive Housing..... 39
- 3. New and Renovated Shelters..... 40

# Introduction

The City of Toronto remains dedicated to creating and providing an accessible and inclusive city where all individuals can use City services, programs and facilities in ways that respect one's dignity and individual needs. As the largest city on the land now called Canada, and one of the most diverse cities around the world, Toronto serves a perpetually changing population. This includes more than 477,900 seniors<sup>1</sup>, a population that is expected to increase by over 50% by 2041 and over 570,000 people with disabilities, an average of 1 in 4 people<sup>2</sup>.

The City's [2020-2024 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan](#) (MYAP) outlines the City of Toronto's goals and reaffirms its [commitment](#) to advancing an equitable and inclusive society. In addition to ensuring it continues to meet the City's legislative requirements, the MYAP promotes accessibility by design<sup>3</sup> and disability inclusion across the organization.

The 2023 MYAP Status Report has been prepared by the City's Accessibility Unit<sup>4</sup> of the Equity & Human Rights Section in the People and Equity Division. This report provides a snapshot of progress and actions taken from January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023, to December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2023, to implement the City's Multi-Year Accessibility Plan. Work highlighted in the appendices are not exhaustive and include examples of how the City has improved accessibility, removed barriers, and supported people with disabilities in 2023.

Work is underway on the development of the City's next five-year Accessibility Plan which will be reframed as the City's 2025-2029 Disability Inclusion Action Plan. Engagement and consultation with the public, the Toronto Accessibility Advisory Committee and City of Toronto staff will help to inform the actions and priorities set out in the new plan. The new plan will continue to embed accessibility by design and disability inclusion in day-to-day City operations. The current 2020-2024 MYAP has built a strong foundation upon which future work that supports disability inclusion at the City is possible.

*To request this report in an alternate format, please contact [accessibility@toronto.ca](mailto:accessibility@toronto.ca) or phone 416-338-2632.*

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<sup>1</sup> Statistic Canada – 2021 Census of Population Table 98-10-0021-0

<sup>2</sup> Statistic Canada - Statistics Canada. Population Projections 2041, Ontario Ministry of Health, IntelliHealth Ontario. Extracted in February 2024.

<sup>3</sup> [Toronto Accessibility Design Guidelines](#)

<sup>4</sup> The Accessibility Unit provides strategic advice and expertise to City of Toronto divisions in meeting legislative obligations under the [Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act \(AODA\)](#), and the [Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation \(IASR\)](#).

# Executive Summary

Toronto City Council adopted the City's [2020-2024 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan \(MYAP\)](#) in December 2019. The five-year plan is organized around the *Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR)* under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)* and was developed with advice from people with disabilities, City of Toronto staff, and the Toronto Accessibility Advisory Committee (TAAC). The MYAP's [Guiding Principles](#) serve to inform the City's actions, decision-making and service approaches pertaining to the delivery of City of Toronto goods, services and facilities through the centering of respect, dignity, and inclusion of people with disabilities.

The MYAP focuses upon the identification, removal, and prevention of accessibility barriers, and while there has been significant progress as highlighted in this report, the City recognizes that various types of barriers continue to be experienced by people with disabilities. This includes attitudinal, systemic, information, communication, and technology-related, environmental and physical barriers. As it continues in its work, the City will strive to reimagine how its systems and structures can be improved so that disability-related inequities are minimized.

Initiatives in the MYAP fall under one of two categories:

- **Category A:** Recurring initiatives that are intended to be completed annually or on a continual basis, or
- **Category B:** Projects which have distinct completion dates and which may be in-progress, completed, or outstanding at the time of reporting.

The table below illustrates the 63 MYAP initiatives into Categories A and/or B. At the end of 2023, all MYAP initiatives were completed as outlined in the table below.

MYAP Area of Focus	Total # of Initiatives	# of Category A Initiatives	# of Category B Initiatives
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
<b>Total</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>17</b>

## 2023 Completed Initiatives

In 2023, the following initiative was completed:

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.

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	0	0
Training	6	6	0	0	0
Procurement	7	5	2	0	0
Information & Communication	10	7	3	0	0
Customer Service	7	3	4	0	0
Employment	8	6	2	0	0
Transportation	9	6	3	0	0
Built Environment & Public Spaces	6	5	1	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

## 1. General Accessibility

The City has developed a robust policy framework to meet and exceed the general requirements of the IASR under the AODA that includes:

- The City's [Statement of Commitment to Creating an Accessible City](#), adopted by City Council in August 2009,
- The [City of Toronto Corporate Accessibility Policy](#), adopted by City Council in June 2018 and,
- The City's [2020-2024 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan](#) (MYAP), adopted by City Council in December 2019.

In addition to these fundamental components, the City's MYAP contains a further 10 general accessibility initiatives which focus on strengthening overall governance within the policy framework, embedding equity more intentionally and meaningfully into City work, and delivering more accessible and inclusive public engagement opportunities.

Examples of work completed under these initiatives are highlighted in [Appendix A](#).

### Status of General Accessibility Initiatives

#### Completed

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

- 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.

## 2. Training

Under the IASR, the City is required to ensure all of its employees, volunteers, and those who participate in developing City policies, or who provide goods and services on behalf of the City of Toronto receive [training on accessible customer service](#).

The City has committed to going *beyond* these minimum training requirements through six MYAP training initiatives. The initiatives support the development of knowledge, capacity and skills across the organization to help ensure the delivery of equitable programs and services to people with disabilities. 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. Continue to 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. Continue the development of 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 and features when procuring or acquiring goods, services, or facilities, except where it is not practicable to do so. To meet these requirements, the City's Purchasing & Materials Management Division (PMMD) and the Accessibility Unit, Equity and Human Rights have developed and continue to promote several accessibility resources and guides for City staff. In addition,



the City's Purchase Goods and Service System continually promotes AODA-related procurement instructions.

Under the City's [Purchasing Policies](#), vendors are required to complete AODA and Accessible Customer Service training, and to provide a [declaration of compliance with Anti-Discrimination Legislation](#) stating 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.

To further strengthen the City's procurement processes, the MYAP includes seven initiatives to help ensure accessibility criteria continue to be an integral component of all procurement activities.

Examples of work completed under these initiatives are highlighted in [Appendix C](#).

## Status of Procurement Initiatives

### Completed

- 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 #19. Review and update resources and tools for accessible procurement to ensure that current best practices and technologies are considered.
- Initiative #20. Ensure an accessibility analysis of all projects and purchases before funding is requested.
- Initiative #21. Continue to 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. Continue to work with vendors and community partners to meet or exceed accessibility requirements.
- Initiative #23. Apply the City's Social Procurement Policy and practices

## 4. Information and Communications

Under the IASR, the City is required 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 \(WCAG\)](#).

In 2023, the City's Technology Services Division digital accessibility team continued to work with partners across the organization to ensure the City's website, web content and applications met or exceeded AODA standards. The Technology Services Division continues to provide guidelines and training resources to web developers and content creators to ensure that they adhere to the [City's Digital Accessibility Standard](#).

To build on this work, the City's [Multi-Year Accessibility Plan](#) outlines ten initiatives to improve accessibility of our information and communications.

Examples of work completed under these initiatives are highlighted in [Appendix D](#).

## Status of Information & Communication Initiatives

### Completed

- Initiative #24. Continue to notify the public about the availability of accessible formats and communication supports.
- Initiative #25. Continue to ensure that any process for receiving and responding to feedback is accessible by providing or arranging for accessible formats and communication supports.
- 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 to determine suitable accessible formats or communication support.
- 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.
- 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 (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. 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.

## 5. Customer Service

The City of Toronto is committed to customer service excellence at every interaction. The IASR requires the City to provide accessible services for people with disabilities and to have policies and procedures in place to support accessible customer service. The City's [Corporate Accessibility Policy](#) lays the foundation for accessible customer service at the City. In addition, all divisions maintain specific customer service standards and may have unique service guidelines. For example, the Parks, Forestry and Recreation Division maintains an additional [Accessible Customer Service Guide](#).

The public may seek information on City services or provide feedback to the City via 311 at any time. For accessibility-related feedback, residents can complete the City's [Create a Service Request – City of Toronto](#). Accessible formats and communication supports are also available upon request.

The MYAP includes seven initiatives to support accessible customer service at the City. Examples of work completed under these initiatives are highlighted in [Appendix E](#).

### Status of Customer Service Initiatives

#### Completed

- Initiative #34. Continue to embed and strengthen the focus on accessibility within the Customer Service Centre of Excellence.
- Initiative #35. Review the [“Guide to Good Practice”](#) accessible customer service guidelines and update to reflect the highest standards in accessible customer service.<sup>5</sup>
- Initiative #36. Continue to work with the Elections Accessibility Outreach Network to improve the 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.

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<sup>5</sup> While the specific Guide to Good Practice guidelines have not been updated, the intention of this initiative has been met through the development of several updated staff resources reflecting current accessible customer service best practises, including an updated internal accessibility webpage with information on providing service accommodations as well as updated information in the Equity Lens Hub and Tool.

- 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 #40. Formalize and implement accessible public consultation requirements to ensure all consultation activities are accessible and inclusive.

## 6. Employment

Under the IASR, the City is required to support the recruitment, advancement, and accommodation of its employees with disabilities. The City has developed several [employment policies](#) that work together to support equity in our employment practices including:

- [Corporate Accessibility Policy](#),
- [Accommodation Policy](#),
- [Employment Equity Policy](#),
- [Human Rights Anti-Harassment/Discrimination Policy](#).

The City of Toronto is committed to fostering a positive workforce and modelling the diversity of the communities we serve. Job applicants can request accommodation related to protected grounds of the Human Rights Code at any stage of the City's hiring process, i.e., application, assessment, and placement.

In addition to our policy framework, the City's MYAP includes eight initiatives to support equitable employment processes for people with disabilities.

Examples of work completed under these initiatives are highlighted in [Appendix F](#).

### Status of Employment Initiatives

#### Completed

- Initiative #41. Develop and implement an employment strategy for equity-deserving 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.
- Initiative #43. Continue to embed an equity analysis into all recruitment processes to remove any unintended accessibility barriers.
- Initiative #44. Review people service 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.
- 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.

## 7. Transportation

Under the IASR, requirements are outlined to prevent and remove barriers to public transportation for people with disabilities. The Toronto Transit Commission (TTC) manages conventional and specialized transportation services and maintains their own policies and plans.<sup>6</sup> The City of Toronto's MYAP initiatives are applicable to the Toronto Island Ferry, the design of bus stops and shelters, and licensing of vehicles-for-hire (taxicabs and private transportation companies).

As part of its commitment to accessibility, the City has nine MYAP initiatives related to sidewalk and roadway accessibility, pedestrian mobility and usability, beyond what is required under the IASR. For instance, the City developed the [Complete Streets Guidelines](#) which addresses both the Transportation Standards and the Design of Public Spaces Standards. The transportation initiatives build on many of the City's existing policies and guidelines and draws on previous successful streetscape projects.

Examples of work completed under these initiatives are highlighted in [Appendix G](#).

### 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. Continue to 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.

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<sup>6</sup> 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 #51. Continue to research and incorporate methods to improve accessibility on the City's streets and sidewalks.
- 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.
- 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 #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.
- Initiative #56. Continue to 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.

## 8. Built Environment & Public Spaces Initiatives

The City of Toronto recognizes that built environment barriers can prevent people with disabilities from freely and independently participating in our society. Under the IASR, the City is required to ensure that newly constructed or redeveloped public spaces are accessible. The City strives to proactively increase the accessibility of its facilities, public spaces and workspaces. This is achieved through the use of accessibility design guidelines such as the [Toronto Accessibility Design Guidelines \(TADG\)](#) and the [Complete Streets Guidelines](#) which are mandatory for City projects.

Based on the principles of respect, dignity and inclusion, the TADG is a key component of the City's MYAP and its [Corporate Accessibility Policy](#). The TADG is aligned with the [City's Statement of Commitment to Creating an Accessible City](#) and the [City's Official Plan](#), which states that "a key city-building principle is that public buildings, parks and open spaces should be open and accessible to all members of the public."

The City's MYAP includes six initiatives to help support access into and around City facilities and public spaces. Examples of work completed under these initiatives are highlighted in [Appendix H](#).

## Status of Built Environment & Public Spaces Initiatives

### Completed

- Initiative #58. Continue to maintain and update the Toronto Accessibility Design Guidelines.
- Initiative #59. Continue to prioritize and retrofit existing built environment barriers at facilities under its management to comply with the Toronto Accessibility Design Guidelines (TADG).
- Initiative #60. Continue to 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. Continue to maintain accessible elements in public spaces through monitoring and regularly planned preventative maintenance of accessible elements.
- Initiative #63. Continue to respond to temporary disruptions when accessible elements in public spaces are not in working order by notifying the public and prioritizing remediation.

# Conclusion

The City of Toronto remains committed to identifying, removing and preventing barriers for people with disabilities who live, work or visit Toronto. By providing an accessible environment in which people with disabilities can access City services, programs, facilities and public spaces, the inherent dignity, diversity and inclusion of all individuals is respected.

The City will continue to meet its obligations under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)* and look for ways to advance accessibility. The City of Toronto is dedicated to advancing an equitable and inclusive society and will examine and address new and existing barriers for people with disabilities by using efficient and innovative approaches. These approaches can be adapted where needed to support its residents, visitors, volunteers, and employees.

The next MYAP Status Report will be for 2024 and will be the last for the MYAP 2020-2024. The City's next five-year plan, which will be titled the 2025-2029 Disability Inclusion Action Plan, will recognize that disability inclusion continues to evolve and will therefore outline both opportunities and actions that will proactively support a culture of disability inclusion.

*For inquiries about this plan or to request an alternate format, please contact [accessibility@toronto.ca](mailto:accessibility@toronto.ca) or phone us at 416-338-2632.*



# Appendix A: General Accessibility Highlights

## 1. Council Advisory Bodies

### 1.1 Toronto Accessibility Advisory Committee (TAAC)

The City's [Toronto 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. Most members on the committee are persons with lived experience of disability. Meetings are accessible and have live captioning with closed captioned recordings available for viewing on the [City's YouTube channel](#).

Throughout 2023, TAAC continued to meet virtually to provide a critical lens and feedback into various City programs and services. Key consultations in 2023 included:

- [Accessibility Needs Assessment: Toronto's Sidewalks and Streets](#).
- [Ensuring Safe and Accessible Pedestrian Routes in Construction Zones](#)
- [Accessible Parking Review](#)
- [Maximizing Accessibility in City-led Housing Developments](#).

To learn more, see [TAAC Meeting Agenda, recordings and minutes](#).

### 1.2 Housing Rights Advisory Committee

In March 2023, Toronto City Council adopted the terms of reference for a new [Housing Rights Advisory Committee \(HRAC\)](#) as part of the City's continued commitment to a human rights-based approach to housing and improving housing outcomes for residents.

The HRAC provides advice to Toronto City Council to ensure that the interests and needs of those with living or lived experience of housing precarity, discrimination and homelessness are reflected in City policies, programs, and service delivery. The City's engagement with equity-deserving communities, including people with disabilities, helped to identify systemic barriers that prevent people from accessing and maintaining adequate housing. The structuring of this group continues the City's efforts to achieving its housing goals, including those outlined in [Housing Action Plan 2022-2026](#).

For more information on accessible housing initiatives in 2023, see [Affordable Housing](#).

#### **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.

## 2. Program Advisory Bodies

One way the City demonstrates its commitment to ongoing, meaningful engagement with diverse stakeholders is through public engagement. This collaborative approach with the public helps the City make more informed decisions and build stronger relationships with the communities it serves. The City engages the public in various ways, including through specific Program Advisory Bodies that help advance accessibility in City programs, initiatives, and services. Some examples of active Program Advisory Bodies in 2023 include:

### 2.1 City Clerk's Office - Elections Accessibility Outreach Network

The City Clerk's Office (CCO) engaged the Elections Accessibility Outreach Network (AON) on barrier-free elections for the City's four by-elections in 2023. The CCO consults with members of the AON on matters such as accessible customer service, assistive devices, and voting options.

### 2.2 Parks, Forestry and Recreation - Community Disability Steering Committee

In 2023, the Parks, Forestry and Recreation (PFR) Division engaged with its Community Disability Steering Committee to review, assess and advise on how Parks and Recreation provides programs, services, and facilities to people with disabilities. Co-chaired by a community member and a PFR staff, this committee is comprised of individuals with a range of lived disability experience. Some key projects the Committee was consulted upon included in 2023 include the proposed designs of the [Wabash Community Centre](#) and for input and feedback on the advancement of accessibility and inclusion in the [Urban Forestry's Natural Environment Trail Wayfinding](#) pilot project.

In 2023, PFR established four additional Program Advisory Bodies, all of which had a primary focus upon advancing accessibility for people with disabilities, including:

- (1) Community Advisory Committee (CAC) and Indigenous Advisory Committee (IAC) for a new park at 70 Croatia Street;
- (2) CAC for new parks at 10 Ordnance Street and 801 Wellington Street West;
- (3) CAC and an IAC for new parks in the Six Points neighbourhood; and
- (4) CAC for new parks near Dundas Street West and Thomas Riley Road.

PFR continues to consult annually with the Disabled Allies of Sam Smith Park as part of the planning of Urban Forestry's Spring Bird Festival, to ensure all individuals can participate.

### 2.3 Housing Secretariat – Tenant Advisory Committee and Seniors Tenant Advisory Committee

In Spring 2023, Toronto Community Housing Corporation (TCHC) and the City began to work collaboratively to launch the [TCHC Tenant Advisory Committee](#). The Committee's mandate is to advise TCHC on improvements to the implementation of their refreshed Tenant Engagement System and on corporate initiatives that advance tenant priorities, including accessible living spaces. The Committee provided advice and feedback on policy and program development aimed at preserving affordable and accessible housing in Toronto.

The Housing Benefits and Supports Unit in the Housing Secretariat supported the [Senior Tenant Advisory Committee](#), an advisory body to Toronto Seniors Housing Corporation and the City. TCHC staff attended a Senior Tenant Advisory Committee meeting in 2023 to review communications relating to proposed built environment accessibility upgrades at a Toronto Seniors Housing Corporation building.

For more information on accessible housing initiatives in 2023, see [Affordable Housing](#)

## 2.4 Transportation Services – Multi-Stakeholder Advisory Group

Transportation Services created a Multi-Stakeholder Advisory Group comprised of accessibility organizations and advocacy groups. The group provided input into the development of stakeholder workshops for pedestrians facing accessibility barriers and cyclists. In 2023, four workshops were held with discussion themes including communication, safe paths of travel, staff training and enforcement. Transportation Services continued to engage other City of Toronto divisions to advance its Construction Zones program of ensuring pedestrian accessibility in construction zones.

### **This work supports MYAP initiatives and outcomes:**

Outcome #1: An organization which fosters a culture of equity and inclusion that values and includes employees, residents, and visitors with disabilities.

Outcome #3: City employees will have the support and tools needed to actively identify, prevent and remove accessibility barriers.

Initiative #8. Continue to engage and seek advice from City Divisional Program Advisory Bodies (PABs) on advancing accessibility and inclusion.

# Appendix B: Training Highlights

## 1. Training for Vehicles-for-Hire Drivers

As per Toronto City Council direction in 2023, new applicants for taxicab, limousine, and private transportation companies (such as Lyft and Uber) need to successfully complete City approved training and submit their certificate of completion as a requirement of license issuance. Drivers currently licensed were required to take this training program before renewing their license in 2023. New licenses were not issued or reviewed if the training was not completed.

This mandatory training includes in-class, virtual and in-car components and focuses upon improving awareness about racism, discrimination, accessibility and applicable legal requirements. The training also covers how to transport passengers in a safe manner while driving in an urban setting and raises awareness of the City's [Vision Zero Road Safety Plan](#).

For more information, [Vehicle-for-Hire Bylaw Updates – City of Toronto](#)

### **This work supports MYAP initiatives and outcomes:**

Outcome #18: Access to a range of accessible transportation services in Toronto to meet the needs of all residents and visitors.

Initiative #16: Apply an equity and accessibility analysis to all organizational learning and development activities.

## 2. Unpacking Ableism 101

The Toronto Children's Services (TCS) division provided training to their staff titled "Unpacking Ableism 101". Facilitated by the [Crip Collective](#), a collective using arts and education to facilitate connections within the disabled community in Toronto and beyond, the training was delivered by people with lived experience as people with disabilities. The workshop addressed ableism within an intersectional framework, defined accessibility and accommodation, and helped participants engage meaningfully with anti-ableist discourse.

### **This work supports MYAP initiatives:**

Initiative #12: Enhance leadership knowledge and skills to ensure compliance with City policies, Human Rights legislation, AODA and related legislation.

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

Initiative #16. Apply an equity and accessibility analysis to all organizational learning and development activities.

### 3. Enterprise-Wide Social Media Accessibility Training

In 2023, the City’s Strategic Public and Employee Communications (SPEC) division continued to advance accessibility by design principles as it developed and created advertisements, posters, graphics, questionnaires and videos in accessible formats that meet AODA requirements. Training was provided to City staff who manage social media accounts and create content on digital accessibility features and best practices. Additionally, the Creative Services team within the division established two specialist positions on the design team: Designer – Accessibility & Inclusive Compliance to focus upon accessibility in their work.

**This work supports MYAP initiatives:**

- Initiative #12. Enhance leadership knowledge and skills to ensure compliance with City Policies, Human Rights legislation, AODA and other related legislation.
- Initiative #14. Ensure that all training, activities, course materials and learning approaches are developed and delivered in accessible formats.
- Initiative #16. Apply an equity and accessibility analysis to all organizational learning and development activities.
- 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.

### 4. Accommodation Training for Managers

In 2023, the Human Rights Office (HRO) within the Equity and Human Rights section of the People and Equity division developed and launched a virtual instructor-led training on accommodations for managers. The aim of this training was to embed an understanding of employee accommodations, including procedures for disability-related accommodations, and the documentation of Individualized Accommodation Plans as required by AODA.

Launched in September 2023 this training was promoted widely to Managers and Supervisors across the organization. Between roll out and the end of 2023, over 420 management staff completed the training.

**This work supports MYAP initiatives:**

- Initiative #12. Enhance leadership knowledge and skills to ensure compliance with City Policies, Human Rights legislation, AODA and other related legislation

# Appendix C: Procurement Highlights

## 1. Equity Responsive Budgeting in the City's Budget Process

The City's Equity Responsive Budgeting (ERB) process remains a key element of the City's Equity and Reconciliation commitments and activities. In 2023, the ERB process was refreshed to better equip City leadership and Divisional leads to complete equity impact analyses upon changes to their Operating Budgets. These analyses inform whether a Division's budget submissions have positive, negative, or no equity impacts on the equity-deserving groups it may serve, including people with disabilities. Examples of possible impacts include proposed changes to service levels, efficiencies, and new/expansion of existing programs, services, or user fees. Training on the Equity Responsive Budgeting process was made available to all divisionally appointed ERB leads and included an overview of the Equity Lens tool so that equity considerations are effectively embedded into the design of all policies, programs and services.

All Divisions were required to complete and submit a Qualitative Equity Overview, a summary analysis of their Operating Base Budget and, optionally, their Capital Budget. This is an important next step in ensuring a more holistic budget process that supports the systemic understanding of various services, programs and policies that a Division may have and their impacts on equity-deserving groups, including people with disabilities.

### **This work supports MYAP initiatives:**

- Initiative #10. Continue to embed and train staff on the use of the Equity Lens Tool to consider equity impacts of all new planning, projects, policies and 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 #20. Ensure an accessibility analysis of all projects and purchases before funding is requested.

## 2. Consultations on the City Budget

The City Manager's Office coordinated the City's 2024 Budget Public Consultations between November 1– 30, 2023. These public consultations included 10 in-person consultation events and six virtual events at accessible sites across Toronto that welcomed hundreds of participants to discuss priorities for the 2024 City Capital and Operating Budgets.

Community-based consultation sessions on budget items with equity objectives were held in person with equity-deserving groups, including people with disabilities, to ensure the City's efforts aligned with their concerns and priorities. An online survey was also available to gather feedback on budget priorities, which included optional demographic questions,

such as disability status. This voluntary data will enhance the analysis of the consultation findings to better understand the results in the context of participants' demographics.

**This work supports MYAP initiatives and outcomes:**

Outcome #1: An organization which fosters a culture of equity and inclusion that values and includes employees, residents, and visitors with disabilities.

Initiative #12: City employees, residents and visitors with disabilities will have equal access to City information through communication supports, alternate formats, accessible websites and digital content.

### **3. Updated Language and Enhancements to Procurement and Accessibility**

In 2023, the Purchasing Materials Management Division (PMMD) administered various tools, templates and resources to assist City employees in meeting accessibility obligations in procurement. These included guidelines wherein City Divisions are required to complete a comprehensive review of purchases to understand barriers for people with disabilities. These guidelines contain associated accessibility criteria and/or specifications to be included in procurements based on the barriers identified. This process also acts as documentation of decision making to demonstrate successful vendors meet accessibility obligations throughout the term of the contract period.

In 2023, the City's Equity and Human Rights section of the People & Equity Division engaged with PMMD to include updated accessibility related language in the City's procurement templates and associated tools and guidelines. Reviews are currently underway to consider these updated requirements through consultation with the City's Purchasing Client Services Team and Legal Services division to ensure that accessibility is prioritized in all city procurements.

**This work supports MYAP initiatives:**

Initiative #10. Continue to embed and train staff on the use of the Equity Lens Tool to consider equity impacts of all new planning, projects, policies and 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 #19: Review and update resources and tools for accessible procurement to ensure that current best practices and technologies are considered.

## 4. Enterprise Social Media Management and Analytics

The Strategic Public and Employee Communications (SPEC) division of the City, in collaboration with the Technology Services Division and the Purchasing Materials Management Division, initiated a Request for Proposal to secure a multi-year agreement for an enterprise social media management and analytics solution. The procurement requirements mandate compliance with accessibility standards (AODA) and Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG), as well as features and functionality that support accessible content. The procurement language also includes compatibility with assistive technologies, such as screen readers and voice recognition programs.

SPEC also administered and managed a corporate contract with an external vendor for document remediation services so that divisions could ensure their documents are accessible to people with disabilities.

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

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



# Appendix D: Information & Communication Highlights

## 1. Accessibility at City Council and Committee Meetings

In 2023, the City Clerk's Office enhanced accessibility at City Council and Committee meetings. Real-time captioning was made available for all meetings, and translation services were provided upon request. Additionally, the office started using DocuSign as an accessible application for executing Member of Council staff contracts. This ensured that document text and tags could be read by assistive technology tools, such as screen readers, and allowed readers to enlarge the text for better readability.

The City Clerk's Office refreshed its Toronto Meeting Management Information System (TMMIS) which provides residents with information on all civic meetings. With an accessibility by design approach, this refresh enabled the [TMMIS application](#) to meet new requirements including the City's Digital Accessibility Standard. These updates included adherence to Web Content Accessibility Guideline (WCAG) 2.0 Level AA. Working with Digital Technology Services within the Technology Services Division, the application was further reviewed and updated after the receipt of accessibility feedback.

### **This work supports MYAP initiatives:**

Initiative #25: Continue to ensure that any process for receiving and responding to feedback is accessible by providing or arranging for accessible formats and communication supports.

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.

## 2. Digital Engagement Team

In 2023, the City's Strategic Public and Employee Communications (SPEC) Division, along with the Technology Services Division, conducted an analysis and update of the City's public website (toronto.ca) to ensure all hyperlinks are underlined. This update enhanced the website's accessibility by clarifying which text serves as links, addressing potential issues related to low color contrast and touch screen usability.

Additionally, SPEC advocated for improved accessibility and functionality in the City's Social Media Management Tool. As a result, all images shared on the City's social media pages now include alternative text description.

### **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 #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 #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.

## **3. Improved access to Communication Supports**

The City Clerk's office signed a three-year contract with Canadian Hearing Services to provide real-time captioning services (CART), American Sign Language (ASL) interpretation, and described video services to City Divisions and the Toronto Accessibility Advisory Committee. Canadian Hearing Services specializes in accessibility solutions, including interpreting, captioning, communication devices, and DeafBlind intervenor services. This contract underscores the City's commitment to ensuring that meetings and public events in its facilities and public spaces are accessible to everyone.

### **This work supports MYAP initiatives:**

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.

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.

# Appendix E: Customer Service Highlights

## 1. New Online Information and Services

### 1.1 MyToronto Pay

Building on the roll out of its [MyToronto](#) Pay digital platform in 2022, the City introduced the next phase which allows residents to sign up for the City's new electronic billing (eBilling) option and opt in to receive email notifications regarding their property tax bill.

The improvements made to offer added convenience and flexibility to both residents and businesses. With secure, user-friendly, and accessible payment options, it brings numerous benefits, including dedicated customer support available through live chat, phone, and email to address any questions or concerns in real-time.

For more information, see [MyToronto Pay](#)

### 1.2 Housing Data Hub

The City of Toronto launched the new online [Housing Data Hub](#), a centralized and publicly accessible source for information and data related to housing in the City. The Hub is an early and key deliverable under the City of Toronto's [Housing Action Plan 2022-2026](#).

The Hub aims to improve accountability and transparency by tracking the City's progress on creating more housing in Toronto, including accessible housing for people with disabilities. It will help publicly showcase the City's clear and cohesive approach to enabling housing production to achieve or exceed the provincial housing target of 285,000 new Toronto homes in the next 10 years and to reach City targets as outlined in its [HousingTO 2020-2030 Action Plan](#).

The Hub also brings together key housing data related to the social and affordable housing portfolio under the City's administration, including:

- the affordable rental housing pipeline with homes that are approved, under construction and completed
- maps showing where affordable rental projects in the pipeline are, as well as where social housing buildings are located in the city, and
- details on accessible units

Data included in the Housing Data Hub will ensure that new policies, programs and financial investments are evidence-based to help optimize limited public resources while maximizing outcomes for Toronto residents, targeting areas and populations most in need, including people with disabilities.

## 1.3 Toronto Employment and Social Services: Virtual Caseworker Services and Service Delivery

In efforts to support and provide services to clients in receipt of Ontario Works, Toronto Employment and Social Services (TESS) piloted a new innovative Virtual Caseworker service in 2023. The service was created to address barriers exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic within Toronto's most economically vulnerable communities. These services enabled TESS clients to access services remotely via a virtual interface, allowing for greater accessibility to services, particularly those who experience physical and/or communication barriers.

TESS also continued to make strides in service delivery through a model that supports the unique and complex needs of families who have children with disabilities and in receipt of Ontario Works. In 2023, TESS staff were trained on providing equitable services to this client group.

Staff were also provided access to communication spaces to share best practices with one another via a case conferencing tool.

### **This work supports MYAP initiatives and outcomes:**

Outcome #12 City employees, residents and visitors with disabilities will have equal access to City information through communication supports, alternate formats, accessible websites and digital content.

Outcome #14. City employees have access to tools, resources, policies and procedures to support accessible customer service.

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.

## 2. Toronto Election Enhancements

For the 2023 by-elections, Toronto Elections continued to prioritize accessibility by offering mail-in voting with a braille option for blind voters as an alternative voting channel. Additional accessibility options made available included curbside voting, personal assistance for voters in the voting place, ballot transfers and voting by proxy.

Toronto Elections communicated these accessible voting options to targeted organizations to promote election awareness voting, braille overlay, Voter Assistance Terminals and American Sign Language (ASL) videos. Public resources, including "How to Vote" booklets, candidate guides and other relevant publications were translated and made available online and in person to assist voters with declarations, marking a ballot and expectations when voting. Ballots were also made available online in accessible formats for electors to view their ballot independently ahead of voting. Further, Toronto Elections inspected all new voting places in advance of voting day to ensure accessibility for people with disabilities.

### **This work supports MYAP initiatives and outcomes:**

- Outcome #12. City employees, residents and visitors with disabilities will have equal access to City information through communication supports, formats, accessible websites and digital content.
- Outcome #14. City employees have access to tools, resources, policies and procedures to support accessible customer service.
- 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 #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.

## **3. Enhanced City-Led Events**

In 2023, the Economic Development and Culture (EDC) division sought to ensure their services and events were as accessible as possible for people with disabilities. EDC's [StrollTO](#), a self-guided walking program, was made available online in 2023, and each walk contained an accessibility statement for those with mobility related disabilities.

Within EDC's Arts Services section, gallery staff ensured all artwork displayed in public exhibitions were accompanied by printed signage and labels in large print and braille. When developing new exhibits, staff refer to the Tangled Arts Accessibility Toolkit: [Accessibility Tool Kit - Tangled Art + Disability \(tangledarts.org\)](https://tangledarts.org)

### **This work supports MYAP initiatives and outcomes:**

- Outcome #14. City employees have access to tools, resources, policies and procedures to support accessible customer service.
- 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 #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 F: Employment Highlights

## 1. Diversity and Inclusion in People Services

The City's Workforce Equity Unit within the Equity and Human Rights Section of the People and Equity division supported innovative inclusive hiring practices at the City. In 2023, the Unit:

- Managed a Youth Career Development Program which included youth with disabilities. This targeted employment program allows the City to hire youth into paid positions that offer ongoing learning and skill development.
- Participated in targeted career related workshops, panel discussion and speed networking events that help strengthen the City's reputation as an employer of choice for people with disabilities.
- Provided guidance, support and oversight to the City's employee Communities of Inclusion, including the Employee Disability Network.

In 2023, the City of Toronto was also named one of [Canada's Best Diversity Employers](#) for the seventh time in recognition of its diverse workplace and inclusive and equitable culture.

For more information see, [Top Employer: Toronto, City of \(canadastop100.com\)](#).

### **This work supports MYAP initiatives:**

Initiative #41. Develop and implement an employment strategy for equity-deserving 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.

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.

## 2. Employee Disability Network

The City continues to support several [Corporate Communities of Inclusion](#) including the Employee Disability Network (EDN). The EDN is a membership-driven staff network committed to promoting inclusion and accessibility in the workplace by supporting and nurturing the professional development of employees with disabilities through activities that foster a sense of belonging and empowerment. The purpose of this Community of Inclusion is to:

- Foster a dynamic, innovative, membership-driven group committed to supporting employees with disabilities through sharing experiences and discussing common concerns in the workplace; promoting a diverse workforce that reflects Toronto's many disability communities.
- Celebrate disability pride in the workplace, reduce stereotypes, discrimination and exclusion through education and awareness raising through City initiatives, campaigns, and celebrations of national and international days for different disabilities.
- Collectively identify and suggest ways the City could increase inclusion through services and supports to employees with disabilities; provide a disability/accessibility perspective on organizational practice; promote accessibility and inclusion by universal design.

The Employee Disability Network and several City Divisions hosted events to celebrate National Accessibility Week May 28 – June 3: in 2023, including:

- **Collaborating for Inclusion & Transformative Change - Wednesday, May 31**  
Toronto Employment and Social Services (TESS)'s AccessAbility Network hosted an event with guest speaker, Dr. Deborah Stienstra. The event included how staff can innovatively collaborate for inclusion and transformative change with a focus on intersectional disability rights in at work with each other and with others.
- **Disability experiences in the workplace - Thursday, June 1**  
The Employee Disability Network (EDN) hosted an event about disability experiences in the workplace.
- **Accessible features of common technology applications - Friday, June 2**  
A lunch and learn, hosted by the Technology Services Division, about accessible features of common technology applications including Webex and M365.

#### **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 #48. Support the Employee Disability Network (EDN) to promote professional development opportunities for employees with disabilities.

## **3. Children's Services – Coffee Chats**

As part of the Children's Services division's ongoing commitment to fostering disability inclusion and accessibility in its workplace, a series of virtual 'Coffee Chats' were designed to engage with staff to gather insights and perspectives on disability inclusion. 20-minute discussions were offered as an opportunity for staff to share perspectives, identifying strengths, gaps and priorities for accessibility. Staff members with lived experiences

related to disabilities, both visible and invisible, were invited. Allies with relevant experience working with people with disabilities and supporting disability inclusion were also invited.

Topics explored included accessibility within the division, strengths and areas for improvement, and actionable steps to enhance disability inclusion. Information gathered from the chats were collated and recommendations for advancing disability inclusion and accessibility were offered to divisional units for action.

**This work supports MYAP initiative:**

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.



# Appendix G: Transportation Highlights

## 1. Vision Zero

The City's [Vision Zero Road Safety Plan](#) continues to focus on reducing traffic-related fatalities and serious injuries on Toronto's streets, making the roads safer for everyone including people with disabilities.

In 2023, raised crosswalks level with sidewalks were implemented at various locations across the city to support the broader goals of the Vision Zero Road Safety Plan, including the intersection of Danforth Ave and Kelvin Ave.

Over 235 Pedestrian head start signals, also known as Leading Pedestrian Intervals (LPI) were deployed in 2023. LPIs are a feature of a traffic signal that provide pedestrians with the opportunity to begin crossing the street before vehicles are permitted to proceed by delaying the green signal. This allows pedestrians to establish a presence in the crosswalk, which increases the visibility of pedestrians to drivers, and thereby reduces conflicts with turning vehicles.

In 2023, over 1,657 meters of Tactile Walking Surface Indicators were installed, intended to be detectable underfoot when walking or by a long white cane. They are used to alert people with low or no vision of potential hazards, such as moving vehicular traffic. These indicators also have a high tonal contrast with the surrounding surface for those with low vision.

Information about progress on other safety initiatives, such as Community Safety and Senior Safety Zones can be found on the following website: [Vision Zero Dashboard – City of Toronto](#).

### **This work supports MYAP initiatives and outcomes:**

Initiative #51. Continue to 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 #56. Continue to fulfill requests for Accessible Pedestrian Signals and install with all new traffic signals and replacements of existing traffic crossing signals.

Outcome #17. Sidewalks and roadways are accessible and facilitate easy and safe mobility throughout Toronto for all residents and visitors.

## 2. Ongoing Infrastructure Development and Maintenance

In 2023, Transportation Services ensured all work met accessibility requirements for road users, pedestrians and cyclists. Chapters 1-3 of Transportation Services' [On-Street Bikeway Design Guidelines](#) were adopted in 2023, which included design guidelines that strive to meet the needs of a range of users, including people with disabilities, and best practices for accessibility and user accommodations. These design guidelines support the City's [Vision Zero Road Safety Plan](#), the [Cycling Network Plan](#), and [Transform TO](#) – policies that promote a safer future for all Torontonians.

As part of the implementation of these guidelines, staff training was provided and included the importance of in-person site visits and consultations with people with disabilities, to help staff better understand unique perspectives and needs. Site visits continued throughout the year to obtain and assess accessibility feedback from people with disabilities on the effectiveness of accessible design elements and multi-use rains, intersection design and bus platforms.

### **This work supports MYAP initiatives:**

- Initiative #50: Continue to 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 from best practices.
- Initiative #51. Continue to 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

## 3. Construction Zones

As part of its response to the Toronto Accessibility Advisory Committee (TAAC)'s 2022 request to examine accessibility in construction zones, Transportation Services conducted an accessibility needs assessment with disability advocacy groups, consultants and subject matter experts on accessibility barriers on sidewalks and streets. Assessment responses outlined six categories of barriers, with construction zones being the top concern.

In October 2023, Transportation Services presented to TAAC key recommendations resulting from the needs assessment, including refreshed and [new policies, standards and specifications](#), such as:

- Pedestrian Accessibility in Construction Zones Checklist \*new

- Special specification on Pedestrian and Cyclist Safety and Accessibility Considerations \*new
- Contractor Performance Evaluation (CPE) & Professional Services Performance Evaluation – updated
- Comprehensive update of Construction Specification for Maintenance of Traffic

New [design standards](#) for improved accessibility in construction zones were completed in September 2023, such as integrated bus platforms and modifications to the [Intermediate Height Raised Cycle Track](#) with unit pavers for delineation between cyclists and pedestrians.

**This work supports MYAP initiatives and outcome:**

Initiative #51. Continue to 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

Outcome #17. Sidewalks and roadways are accessible and facilitate easy and safe mobility throughout Toronto for all residents and visitors.

## 4. CafeTO

In 2023, important changes were made to the City’s [Café TO program](#) in which local restaurant and bar owners and operators could expand outdoor dining spaces into curb lanes and sidewalks. With the aim of improving accessibility and program equity, participating restaurants were required to install platforms to ensure the extended patios are level with the sidewalk or curb, be at least 1m wide with a slip-proof surface and be visible at night. Business owners are expected to maintain compliance with providing a barrier-free access area for people using mobility devices, ensure café areas are identified with cane-detectable boundaries, and contain space at the bottom of platforms for someone using a mobility device to turn and navigate into the cafe area.

**This work supports MYAP initiative and outcome:**

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

Outcome #17. Sidewalks and roadways are accessible and facilitate easy and safe mobility throughout Toronto for all residents and visitors.

## 5. Snow Clearing

In the 2022-2023 winter season, approximately 98% of city sidewalks were cleared using a combination of contracted equipment and new, smaller plows operated by City staff. Due to sidewalk obstructions and narrow spaces, the remaining 2% of public sidewalks were

manually cleared. Expansion of the mechanical sidewalk winter snow clearing service continued in 2023 to the remaining approximately 1,300km of sidewalks not receiving this service prior. Overall, the expansion has resulted in 103,000 additional homes across the city receiving mechanical sidewalk snow clearing services.

City staff clear all pedestrian sidewalks when at least 2cm of snow has accumulated, including mechanically and manually, to maintain fairness and equitable for all residents. Residents can report uncleared snow and ice on sidewalks by calling 311 or by [submitting a service request](#) approximately 16 hours after the snow stops falling.

In 2023, Transportation Services retained a consultant to help develop a policy to reduce accessibility barriers in the City's snow clearing practices that significantly limit the mobility of people with disabilities. This policy continued to be developed in 2023.

For more information see, [Sidewalk Clearing – City of Toronto](#).

**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.

## 6. Vehicle-for-Hire Bylaw

### 6.1 Accessibility Fund Program

In 2023, the City disbursed \$1.2 million dollars to 183 wheelchair accessible taxicab owners and 188 accessible vehicle-for-hire drivers as part of its [Vehicle-for-Hire Accessibility Fund Program](#). This program is for accessible vehicle owners and drivers in the taxi and limo industries to apply and receive funds in recognition of their higher operating costs of purchasing and maintaining accessible vehicles and providing on-demand transportation services.

Funding applications were sent to all licensed accessible taxi owners and drivers inviting them to apply for annual grants from the Accessibility Fund, as well as program information and opportunity to share feedback for improvement. Forms were improved based on the feedback provided by users and City staff administering the grant program.

More information is available on the City's [Vehicle-for-Hire Bylaw Updates page](#).

**This work supports MYAP initiative and outcome:**

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.

Outcome #18. Access to a range of accessible transportation services in Toronto to meet the needs of all residents and visitors.

# Appendix H: Built Environment Highlights

## 1. Accessibility Upgrades at City Facilities

In 2023, the City's Corporate Real Estate Management Division (CREM) continued to oversee its Accessibility Upgrades Program to proactively identify and remove barriers at City-owned and operated facilities. The costs for the planned accessibility upgrades are estimated to be \$200 million with a total of \$40 million spent in 2023. 52 projects have been completed to date, and at the end of 2023, the City had 155 active projects under the Accessibility Upgrades Program including:

- 16 buildings in the initiation phase,
- 44 buildings in the design phase,
- 25 buildings in the procurement phase, and
- 70 buildings in the construction phase.

Several 2023 capital projects included accessibility improvements to museum and art centre sites, including:

- Parking lot improvements at Montgomery's Inn to meet Toronto Accessibility Design Guideline (TADG) standards.
- The accessible entrance and landscaping project at Colborne Lodge
- Spadina Museum and Assembly Hall
- Parking lot improvements to Todmorden Mills.

In addition, in 2023, many other City run facilities were improved under the State of Good repair project. Some examples include:

- Cedarbrook Community Centre and Herbert H. Carnegie Arena: Elevator replacements and installation of barrier-free change rooms and a universal washroom.
- Dufferin Grove Park: Multiple upgrades including improvements to outdoor rinks, pathways, a clubhouse plaza, main entry, multi-purpose rooms, community kitchen, staff office, and universal washrooms which are all accessible and comply with the Design of Public Spaces Standards under the AODA and the Toronto Accessibility Design Guidelines,

### **This work supports MYAP initiatives and outcomes:**

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

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.

Initiative #62: Continue to maintain accessible elements in public spaces through monitoring and regularly planned preventative maintenance of accessible elements.

Outcome #20: Improved accessibility of City of Toronto public spaces and workplaces by incorporating accessibility into the design of new facilities as well as during renovations and redevelopments of existing facilities.

## 2. Affordable and Supportive Housing

### 2.1 HousingTO 2020-2030 Action Plan

In 2023, the HousingTO 2020-2030 Action Plan continued to progress towards meeting its action plan targets, including announcing new affordable and supportive housing for people with disabilities. Some examples include:

**Modular Housing:** Modular housing is an innovative, cost-effective, rapid way to build new homes quickly and provide a dignified response to homelessness in Toronto. Delivery of the first set of 57 modular homes to 39 Dundalk Drive began in 2023, with 20 of these homes being barrier free for people with disabilities who are currently residing at local hotel shelters.

**Supportive Rental Homes:** 220 new mixed affordable and supportive rental homes at Birchmount Green, an integrated community that will include 45 accessible homes and an accessible rooftop for people with disabilities.

#### **This work supports MYAP initiatives:**

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.

### 2.2 Accessible Housing Working Group: Accessibility Requirements in City-led Housing Development Projects

In response to City Council's request in 2022, the City's Housing Secretariat formed a working group comprised of staff, stakeholders and community representatives to explore the options and feasibility to increase the percentage of accessible units delivered through the City's [Housing Now Initiative](#).

This request included having the Housing Secretariat review the existing Terms of Reference and membership of the Accessible Housing Working Group, expand the scope beyond Housing Now to include other accessible housing-related matters, and to ensure proper community/membership representation to accommodate this expanded scope.

In the fall of 2023, the working group presented recommendations to the Toronto Accessibility Advisory Committee (TAAC) for consideration, with the overall goal of increasing the supply of affordable and accessible housing in the City. Some key recommendations included:

1. Introducing a set of universal design features, based on established industry standards and guidelines, which can be implemented across 100% of all City-led housing units.
2. Identifying design features and construction techniques that can best facilitate longer term adaptability/flexibility of housing units.
3. Introducing measures to increase modifications, renovations and improvement projects in existing housing.

Working groups will be formed to produce list of measures for each recommendation with a summary report back to TAAC in 2024.

#### **This work supports MYAP initiatives:**

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.

Initiative #62: Continue to maintain accessible elements in public spaces through monitoring and regularly planned preventative maintenance of accessible elements.

## **3. New and Renovated Shelters**

In 2023, the City expanded and made improvements to its shelter facilities as the demand for shelter spaces continued to grow at an unprecedented pace. All planning for new shelters, renovations and condition assessments continued to adhere to the [Shelter Design and Technical Guidelines](#). Originally launched in 2021 these guidelines were updated in 2023 after an extensive review with a range of stakeholders, including people with disabilities.

The accessibility criteria within these guidelines include, but are not limited to, exterior ramps, automated door operators, barrier-free showers, washrooms and service counters. In 2023, work was completed at various shelter sites to meet these guidelines including:

- 1651 Sheppard Ave,
- 1076 Pape Ave., and
- 21 Park Road.

#### **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 #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 program