

City of Mississauga

# Multi-Year Accessibility Plan 2021 Accessibility Annual Status Update

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# 2021 Accessibility Annual Status Update

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## **Executive Summary/Background**

Accessibility impacts people's daily lives, families, careers and opportunities and we want to make it easier for everyone to participate more fully in our community. More than 173,600 Mississauga residents have a disability – that's nearly one quarter of the population. Further, more than half of the population has a friend or a loved one with a disability and one in three Canadians will experience a mental illness or substance use disorder in their lifetime. These residents can face multiple barriers to accessing goods, services, facilities and obtaining gainful employment and the need for accessible services will continue to rise as the population ages. Planning for accessibility helps create a more vibrant city that all residents and visitors can enjoy.

The goal of the [Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 \(AODA\)](#) is to identify, prevent and remove barriers to make Ontario accessible by 2025. Under the Act's Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR), the City is required to develop a multi-year accessibility plan that outlines how the City will meet its obligations under the legislation and remove barriers for people with disabilities.

The 2018-2022 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan is a roadmap that shows how the City is going above and beyond its legislative obligations. These achievements translate into increased opportunities to access employment and to fully participate in the social, cultural, recreational economic and political life of Mississauga. The accomplishments highlighted in this report demonstrate the City's commitment to creating a barrier-free environment for all residents and visitors.

This five-year plan was developed with feedback from the City's Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC), Staff Accessibility Resource Team (StART), persons with disabilities, accessibility stakeholders and staff and is organized around the AODA's accessibility standards.

This status report highlights key actions taken from January 1<sup>st</sup> to December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2021 and is not meant to be an inventory of accomplishments.

The City continues to encourage local businesses and organizations to meet accessibility requirements and prevent and remove barriers, however, the City has no official role in enforcing these requirements. Ensuring these requirements are met is the responsibility of the Government of Ontario.

## **Mississauga Accessibility Advisory Committee**

The Mississauga Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC) is a citizen committee that acts as an advisory body for Council. Its mandate is to advise on the identification, removal and prevention of barriers to people with disabilities in municipal programs, services, initiatives and facilities. City staff works with the AAC to review initiatives and promote awareness about accessibility and celebrate inclusion.

Each member of the AAC is a volunteer with the exception of Council representatives. The majority of AAC members are people with disabilities. The AAC is supported by the Accessibility Planning and Compliance team and the Clerk's Department.

The AAC's term coincides with Council's term. Following the 2018 Municipal Elections, a new AAC was formed and will work within its mandate until 2022. The 2018-2022 AAC members bring a wide range of personal and professional experiences and understanding of the challenges faced by people with disabilities. They provide invaluable advice as we continue to work toward a barrier-free Mississauga. For more information about the AAC, its initiatives and members, please see the City of Mississauga's [AAC page](#).

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, AAC meetings were initially postponed before resuming virtually in September. Throughout the pandemic, staff continued to share information with the committee, particularly in relation to consultation opportunities. A number of testing sessions were held with the committee on the City's virtual meeting platform prior to resuming committee meetings in September.

In 2021, the AAC and its subcommittees received several presentations and provided feedback on the following key initiatives:

- 2020 annual status update to the City's Multi-Year Accessibility Plan
- MiWay Annual Accessibility Report
- 2018-2022 AAC Work Plan
- Changing Lanes
- E-scooters
- Erin Mills Twin Arena Elevator Upgrades
- 2020 Workforce Diversity and Inclusion Results
- Ready, Willing and Able
- Mississauga Official Plan Review
- Vision Zero Action Plan
- Ontario ParaSport Games
- Elevator Renewal Project
- 2021 Provincial Accessibility Compliance Report

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## Accessibility Governance

The Accessibility Planning and Compliance (APC) team provides policy and strategic advice to City Departments and facilitates compliance with the AODA. The team works with staff to ensure accessibility is incorporated into all proposed initiatives to provide maximum accessibility over minimum compliance. To ensure the City continues to meet or exceed the requirements of the AODA, APC continues to stay informed about legislation and participates in accessibility networks such as the Rick Hansen Foundation Accessibility Certification Taskforce, Ontario Network of Accessibility Professionals (ONAP) and the Peel Region accessibility networking group (made up of the region and three local municipalities). Membership in these groups ensures the City is abreast of current developments and other municipal initiatives.

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

## Staff Accessibility Resource Team

The City's Staff Accessibility Resource Team (StART) is made up of representatives from each division across the organization and meets quarterly. These individuals act as champions and promote awareness of accessibility and inclusion throughout the organization and community. They support accessibility at the City by:

- Ensuring that an accessibility lens is applied to every initiative
- Promoting accessibility awareness throughout the City
- Assisting in the development of the City's annual accessibility status update

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

MYAP section	Number of commitments	Completed by 2021
General requirements and governance	9	9 (100%)
Customer service	6	5 (83%)
Information and communications	11	10 (91%)
Employment	9	9 (100%)
Transportation	10	10 (100%)
Design of public spaces	19	18 (95%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>61 (95%)</b>

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

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## General Requirements and Governance

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

**100% complete: 9 out of 9 governance and policy commitments achieved**

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

### 2018-2022 Goals

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

### 2021 key actions

- Provided annual status update on the City's Multi-Year Accessibility Plan 2018-2022 to the City's AAC, outlining the initiatives the City has taken to ensure compliance with the AODA
- Performed accessibility audits on venues for the 2022 ParaSport and Ontario Summer Games
- Promoted accessibility awareness through hosting and attending multiple events such as Virtual Mississauga Older Adult Expo, International Day of Persons with Disabilities and National AccessAbility Week

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- Developed accessible procurement guidelines
- Conducted accessible virtual meetings for Council and Committees
- Filed provincial accessibility compliance report

### Customer Service

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

**83% complete: 5 out of 6 customer service commitments achieved**

The City continued to be in compliance with the standard and ensuring that City goods and services are accessible for everyone in Mississauga, including people with disabilities. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, City service delivery over the past two years had to be innovative, agile and responsive to the ever-changing restrictions. For example, many services moved online and staff continued working and communicating digitally to provide accessible services remotely.

### 2018–2022 Goals

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

### 2021 key actions

- Created 2022 municipal election accessibility plan
- Updated Living Arts Centre ticketing software to include accessibility symbol on accessible seats, allowing individuals to purchase their accessible seats online rather than calling the box office

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- Added a new accessibility clause in all public art applications that provides clear information for how applicants/individuals with disabilities can receive assistance and/or accommodations with their applications
- Exhibited artwork created by adults with intellectual disabilities at Bradley Museum on December 3<sup>rd</sup> in honour of International Day of Persons with Disabilities
- Provided training for staff on inclusive physical literacy, which explored the benefit of universally accessible programs and how to plan and create them
- Provided ASL interpreters and closed captioning for City Council meetings and the Mayor's COVID-19 press conferences
- Offered driveway snow windrow clearing program for seniors 65 years and older and people with physical disabilities or medical conditions that are unable to clear the windrow on their own
- Included an audio description alongside a public art installation, providing individuals who are visually impaired with a description of the artwork in the artist's own words
- Integrated audio clips into virtual tour for The Lengths We Go: Reflections on Hair, available on the Museum website. Audio clips cover all exhibition panels so every element of the exhibit is available to users in this format
- Included virtual tours of all physical Museum exhibitions providing an option for individuals who cannot visit the museum or prefer to learn virtually
- Adapted education programs such as Maple Sap to Syrup, Early Settler Experience and Black Settlers of Peel to become virtual programs, allowing students to tour the Bradley House, view demonstrations and participate in a virtual interactive activity

## Information and communications

**Key outcome: accessible information and communication supports are delivered to all employees, residents and visitors**

**91% complete: 10 out of 11 information and communication commitments achieved**

The global pandemic and the need to provide an increased number of services remotely required the City to move more services online. This increased the importance of maintaining the City's accessible website and ensuring the City increases the availability of accessible information for residents, visitors and employees. The City maintains an accessible public facing website – [Mississauga.ca](https://www.mississauga.ca) – in addition to an accessible internal website platform for employees – [InsideMississauga.ca](https://inside.mississauga.ca).



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## 2018–2022 Goals

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

## 2021 key actions

- Provided accessible document awareness presentations to 18 leadership teams representing over 125 staff
- Trained staff responsible for posting corporate policy and by-law documents as accessible PDFs on remediation and creation of accessible PDF documents
- Provided training to Creative Services on how to build accessibility into InDesign documents
- Developed resources and rolled out to staff including:
  - Procedure manual on creating accessible documents
  - Accessible presentation and communication guidelines
  - Guide on creating accessible social media
  - Tips on creating accessible videos and podcasts
- Updated corporate policies in a new accessible template and posted online
- Posted Stay Connected newsletter in an accessible format
- Embedded Google Translate on the Cultural Districts web page to increase the accessibility of engagement opportunities and project information
- Updated and posted the Emergency Preparedness Guide and Disaster Management Plan in an accessible format online
- Improved accessibility of the City's new eLearning module: BRAVO for Written Correspondence
- Ensured virtual ceremony for the 2021 Mississauga Urban Design Awards, as well as all marketing and voting materials were accessible

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- Monitored website accessibility compliance through accessibility quality tool
- Offered assistive listening devices at Paramount Fine Foods Centre and offered the Williams Sound Hearing HotSpot, which allows guests who require hearing assistance to listen to Wi-Fi audio streams from events on a mobile device
- Expanded digital content offered by City of Mississauga Libraries in a variety of formats such as audiobooks, eBooks, eAudio, digital magazines and DAISY books

## Employment

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

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

The unemployment rate for people with disabilities in Ontario age 25 to 64 is 50% higher than for people without disabilities. To address this, the City strives to show leadership in accessible recruitment and employment.

The goal of employment accommodation is to enable people with disabilities to participate fully in their work environment. The City is currently in the process of implementing 10 recommendations from a third-party review as part of our Workforce Diversity and Inclusion Strategy. Implementing these recommendations will help the City address systemic employment barriers in the recruitment and succession planning.

### 2018–2022 Goals

- ✓ Notify applicants about the availability of accessibility accommodations in the recruitment process
- ✓ Advise successful applicants about the availability of accommodations for employees with disabilities
- ✓ Make policies on accommodating and supporting employees with disabilities available to all employees
- ✓ Provide accessible formats and/or communication supports to employees with disabilities who require it
- ✓ Document individual accommodation plans for employees with disabilities
- ✓ Offer a return to work process for employees with disabilities
- ✓ Continue to regularly review corporate policies and practices to ensure applicants and employees with disabilities receive the proper support
- ✓ Train staff on mental health awareness program The Working Mind, created by the Mental Health Commission of Canada
- ✓ Provide training to staff on the City's new Workforce Diversity and Inclusion Strategy

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## 2021 key actions

- Partnered with both the Ready, Willing and Able and the Discover Ability Network. Both organizations look to connect employers directly to people with disabilities seeking employment and provide support and resources throughout the process
- Partnered with KPMG to perform a third-party review of the City's employment policies
- Offered Diversity and Inclusion Fundamentals and Diversity and Inclusion Unconscious Bias courses
- Trained 90% of City leaders The Working Mind, a mental health awareness program created by the Mental Health Commission of Canada

## Transportation

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

**100% complete: 10 out of 10 transportation commitments achieved**

Transportation is a vital link for people with disabilities to take part in their communities. It enables participation in education, work, recreation and access to services, like healthcare. The City continues to ensure all vehicles and equipment meet the technical requirements of the regulation and that training is provided to all new staff.

## 2018–2022 Goals

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

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## 2021 key actions

- Installed temporary bus platforms that improve accessibility by:
  - Reducing the vertical gap between the bus step and the adjacent surface
  - Allowing bus ramps to deploy with minimal slope aiding in boarding and alighting
  - Accompanying the platforms with fixed ramps, providing a transition between the boulevard, street level, and the raised platforms
- Upgraded 70 bus stop locations to meet accessibility requirements
- Installed temporary asphalt pedestrian landing pads to accommodate accessibility with a hard surface. Moderate slopes are maintained to facilitate use of a mobility device or provide ease of use by those with other accessibility needs
- Improved customer service notifications by installing customer service posters at stops impacted by construction and road closures throughout the City. These posters now include maps that identify existing and temporary stop locations in addition to additional accessible locations for wayfinding purposes
- Launched “on bus” safety announcements that are broadcasted to educate/remind customers about safety practices on the bus. Messages will be updated every 6-8 weeks as MiWay implements planned service changes
- Launched new website and incorporated best practices for accessibility, including removing italics and limiting accordions as well as adding alt-text to images
- Launched MiWay Customer Charter, outlining our commitment to transit customers
- Updated customer service feedback form to improve ease of use, readability and improved accessibility
- Realigned pedestrian crosswalks at Westwood Square Transit Terminal and installed tactile plates at all curb depressions for additional safety
- Installed new pedestrian crossover at Dixie Station to provide a safe, designated crossing along the guideway for customers with accessibility needs. In addition to reducing the posted speed to 30 km/h to ensure vehicles are aware of pedestrians, the crosswalk installation is complete with:
  - Signs
  - Pavement markings
  - Flashing beacons
  - Tactile plates
- Renovated City Centre Transit Terminal including:
  - Barrier-free counters at new information and fares booth
  - Upgraded entrance doors
  - Barrier-free staff washroom
  - Replacement of the escalators and elevators
  - Widened escalator steps to provide a larger walkway
  - Replaced manual doors at north and south entrances with automatic sliding doors

- Incorporated accessible wayfinding
- Renovated Kipling Bus Terminal including:
  - Providing accessible connections via elevators, pedestrian bridges and pedestrian tunnels to connect to bus, train and subway
  - Installed extensive wayfinding package including outdoor totems and signage along the interior and overhead signage throughout the building

The AODA identifies extensive requirements for conventional and specialized transit. The MiWay 2021 Annual Accessibility Report outlines the accomplishments and current initiatives to provide accessible transportation to the community.

## **Design of Public Spaces**

**Key outcome: greater accessibility in and around City facilities and public spaces**

**95% complete: 18 out of 19 Design of Public Spaces commitments achieved**

Accessible public spaces include specific features that make it easier for everyone, including people with disabilities, to use public spaces. The City continued to prioritize retrofitting existing built environment barriers at facilities under the City's management to comply with FADS, while also incorporate FADS in all new construction and development projects. The City also maintained accessible elements through monitoring and regularly planned maintenance, notifying the public whenever a temporary service disruption occurred.

### **2018–2022 Goals**

- ✓ Consult the Mississauga Accessibility Advisory Committee, the public and people with disabilities prior to redeveloping or constructing new public spaces under this Standard
- ✓ Incorporate public consultations into existing processes wherever possible
- ✓ Meet or exceed the technical requirements of DOPS
- ✓ Continue to maintain and update the Mississauga FADS
- ✓ Continue to prioritize and retrofit existing built environment barriers at facilities under the City's management to comply with FADS
- ✓ Continue to implement accessibility improvements as part of state of good repair capital and maintenance programs
- ✓ Continue to maintain accessible elements in public spaces through monitoring and regularly planned preventative maintenance of accessible elements
- ✓ Continue to respond to temporary disruptions when accessible elements in public spaces are not in working order by notifying the public and prioritizing remediation

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- ✓ Explore the inclusion of mobility device charging stations in new and redeveloped public spaces
- ✓ Increase the number of accessible picnic tables at parks
- ✓ Continue to implement Park Bench Arm Rest Addition Program
- ✓ Continue to enhance the accessibility of new and redeveloped playgrounds
- ✓ Continue to fulfill requests for accessible pedestrian signals and install with all new traffic signals and replacements of existing traffic crossing signals
- ✓ Continue to install tactile walking surface indicators at all corners during state of good repair
- ✓ Improve accessibility at City Centre Transit Terminal by adding sliding doors at the terminal platform, elevator upgrades and replace escalator
- ✓ Install two operators for public washroom at BraeBen Golf Course
- ✓ Install three automatic door operators at Burnhamthorpe Library site
- ✓ Replace elevator/lift at Burnhamthorpe Community Centre and Huron Park Recreation Centre
- Install 24 automatic door operators on corridor doors leading to rinks and rink change rooms at Paramount Fine Foods Centre

## 2021 key actions

- Renovated Living Arts Centre Information Desk to be more accessible
- Developed accessible exhibition design standards based on FADS and best practices from recognized international Museum organizations. The new standards will inform the design of all exhibition materials (didactic panels, graphics, and interactives) and ensure all museum exhibition content is designed to be universal and accessible
- Improved accessibility at 23 community playgrounds through targeted improvements including accessible swing seats, playground mulch safety surfacing, paved access route, sand pit and park benches with armrests on concrete pads
- Expanded Pheasant Run Park to include accessible benches and picnic tables, paved walking loop and distance markers, accessible spray pad with bulldog activators and paved parking lot with two accessible parking spaces
- Installed automatic door openers at the following facilities:
  - Erin Mills Twin Arena: 10 single entry were replaced with automatic sliding doors

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- Clarkson Community Centre: multi-purpose room, fitness room and Margaret Marland
  - Frank McKechnie Community Centre: Auditorium 1 and Auditorium 2
  - Mississauga Valley Community Centre: Program Room 1
  - Churchill Meadows Older Adult Centre and Library: two multi-purpose rooms
- Continued Elevator Renewal Program to improve accessibility at:
  - Clarke Memorial Hall
    - Additional upgrades include creating a barrier-free path of travel allowing safe access to the elevator from parking lot
  - Erin Mills Twin Arena
    - Additional upgrades include new front entrance sliding doors and creating an accessible viewing gallery
  - Huron Park Community Centre
  - Clarkson Community Centre
  - MiWay Administration Offices
- Improved accessibility at several City facilities through targeted renovations:
  - Upgraded shower/sink at Malton Community Centre Fitness change room
  - Installed light weight chairs at Churchill Meadows Older Adult Centre and Library
  - Installed sliding doors to both men's and women's washrooms at Lakeview Golf Course and installed grab bars to accessible washrooms
- Incorporated MiWay's first bus loop and terminal at Churchill Meadows Older Adult Centre, including an interconnected sidewalk network leading to the building, sports fields or the hiking trails. Exterior facing washrooms were designed to meet FADS and include an automatic door operator
- Incorporated accessible document guidelines into Land Use Summary
- Included FADS and AODA standards requirements when reviewing development applications. All applicants are asked to implement all required accessibility measures when reviewing development applications, including Site Plan, Rezoning and Official Plan amendment applications
- Updated all existing Urban Design Guidelines, Standards and Design Reference Notes to conform with FADS and AODA standards requirements
- Constructed exterior ramp on Millcreek Drive which connects to an accessible path of travel to the main entrance of the building. Additionally, accessible

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parking stalls and barrier free walkways were constructed connecting the surface parking to the primary building entrance

- Constructed 2.6 kilometres of accessible sidewalks throughout the City
- Installed 40 tactile walking surface indicators to sidewalk ramps and pedestrian crossovers throughout the City as part of the 2021 Sidewalk Program
- Completed installation of 21 accessible pedestrian signals
- Consulted the AAC and FADS subcommittee for design input on:
  - City of Mississauga Official Plan Review
  - Port Credit Harbour Parks West
  - Malton Community Hub Renovation
  - Living Arts Centre Entrance Renovation
  - Kinsmen Hall Accessibility Upgrades - Ramp Renewal and Door Widening
  - Carmen Corbassen Community Centre Redevelopment
  - Tobias Mason Washroom Pilot Project
  - FADS update/refresh

## Continuing Progress

Accessibility innovation in the City goes above and beyond the commitments in the multi-year accessibility plan. Across the City, accessibility champions seek ways to make Mississauga more accessible.

In four years, the City has completed 95% of its 64 commitments in our 2018-2022 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan. We know that more progress is needed in order to make the City a more accessible organization that helps people with disabilities participate fully in their life and work. Forging new partnerships and innovative ways of working will enable the City to remove more barriers and continue driving towards becoming a more accessible employer and service provider.