

City of Mississauga Corporate Report



<p>Date: May 2, 2023</p> <p>To: Chair and Members of General Committee</p>	<p>Originator's files:</p>
<p>From: Shari Lichterman, CPA, CMA, Commissioner of Corporate Services and Chief Financial Officer</p>	<p>Meeting date: May 24, 2023</p>

Subject

Multi-Year Accessibility Plan – 2023-2028 and 2022 Accessibility Annual Status Update

Recommendation

That the “Multi-Year Accessibility Plan – 2023-2028 and the 2022 Accessibility Annual Status Update” report dated May 2, 2023 from the Commissioner of Corporate Services and Chief Financial Officer, be received for information.

Executive Summary

- 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.
- Establishing a multi-year accessibility plan is a requirement under the AODA. The City's new Multi-Year Accessibility Plan 2023-2028 (included as Appendix 1) is the City's third plan and builds on the success of the previous plans, outlining new and continued initiatives to meet and go beyond AODA requirements.
- In addition to the new multi-year accessibility plan, this report provides a status update on the final year of the 2018-2022 plan, included as Appendix 2, highlighting that 98% of the 64 commitments were completed.
- The 2022 MiWay Annual Accessibility Report included as Appendix 3, highlights the improvements made to the City's transportation system to ensure its services and operations are accessible to everyone.
- The impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic have continued to impact the way the City operates as an organization but ensuring access to City programs and services for people with disabilities continues to be a priority and forms part of the City's commitment to accessible customer service.

Background

Everyone should have the opportunity to participate fully in society. More than 173,600 Mississauga residents have a disability – that's nearly one quarter of the population and at

some point, most of us will likely face some type of temporary, situational or permanent disability. People with disabilities can face multiple barriers to accessing goods, services, facilities and 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, visitors and employees 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. To meet this goal, the Act outlines accessibility requirements so people with disabilities can participate in all areas of daily life. The requirements are applied under five standards:

- Customer Service
- Information and Communications
- Employment
- Transportation
- Design of Public Spaces

Establishing a multi-year accessibility plan is a requirement under the AODA. The City's 2023-2028 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan (Appendix 1) outlines the actions the City will take to meet and go beyond its legislated obligations to identify, prevent and remove barriers for people with disabilities. An accessibility plan is a road map for the City. Its commitments translate into increased opportunities to access employment and to fully participate in the social, cultural, recreational economic and political life of Mississauga.

The plan also demonstrates the City's commitment to creating a barrier-free environment for all residents, visitors and employees.

City staff work in partnership with the Accessibility Advisory Committee to review and seek feedback on City programs and services and promote awareness in the community.

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 Ontario government.

Present Status

The City's new 2023-2028 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan includes both new and continuing initiatives that will help the City's commitment to an inclusive community where all residents, visitors and employees have access to City services, programs and facilities in a manner that is integrated and promotes dignity and independence.

The initiatives fall under six key areas stemming from legislative obligations:

- Governance and Reporting

- Equitable customer service
- Digitally-inclusive communications
- Inclusive employment
- Accessible movement
- Universally-designed facilities and public spaces

These requirements operate in addition to the duty to accommodate under the [Ontario Human Rights Code](#) and the [Ontario Building Code](#).

2022 Accessibility Annual Status Update

Every year the Facilities & Property Management Accessibility Planning & Compliance team provides an update on the accessibility achievements from the previous reporting year. The 2022 Accessibility Annual Status Update (Appendix 2) highlights the City's completed 2022 initiatives which have improved accessibility for everyone.

Meeting our commitments

In the final year of the 2018-2022 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan, the City continued to make goods, services, facilities and employment more accessible for everyone.

MYAP Standards	Number of commitments	Completed by 2022
General requirements and governance	9	9 (100%)
Customer service	6	6 (100%)
Information and communications	11	10 (91%)
Employment	9	9 (100%)
Transportation	10	10 (100%)
Design of Public Spaces	19	19 (100%)
Total	64	63 (98%)

Year five saw 98% of the 64 commitments completed with one exception, related to accessible websites and content. In 2021, the city was required to ensure that all websites and web content are accessible, meeting the international Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 Level AA standards. This requirement has proven difficult to meet and the City is aware of an unprecedented number of public sector organizations also reporting non-compliance with this requirement in 2021. Many of these organizations have provided feedback to the province requesting the province to re-examine how web compliance is assessed moving forward.

To meet this final requirement, the City continues to invest a significant amount of time and resources into making the City's websites, web content and applications more accessible. Staff

have launched multiple training courses on creating accessible documents and web content, expanded website information governance and publishing standards and are currently developing a digital strategy to meet WCAG 2.0 Level AA requirements. Staff will continue to work on website accessibility and provide updates on meeting this requirement to the province.

MiWay has also prepared the 2022 MiWay Annual Accessibility Report, which is included as Appendix 3 and highlights the improvements made to the City's transportation system to ensure its services and operations are accessible to everyone.

Financial Impact

There are no financial impacts resulting from the Recommendations in this report.

Conclusion

This report introduces the City's new 2023-2028 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan and provides a status update on the 2022 initiatives of the previous multi-year accessibility plan. Annual status updates are posted on the City's website in an accessible format.

In addition to the requirements under the AODA, this status update highlights a number of City initiatives completed, to support the City's commitment to providing accessible programs, services and facilities in the communities.

Attachments

Appendix 1: Multi-Year Accessibility Plan – 2023-2028

Appendix 2: 2022 Accessibility Annual Status Update

Appendix 3: 2022 MiWay Annual Accessibility Report



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