

Appendix A- Summary of MYAP Survey Responses

This summary presents an overview of the key findings from the recent accessibility survey conducted as we develop the town's 2024-2029 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan. The analysis focuses on identifying themes and trends within the feedback, offering a general view of the responses received. This summary will serve as a valuable resource in the update of the town's 2024-2029 MYAP, helping to inform actionable insights.

The following themes emerged as significant contributors to the overall opinion:

Demographic patterns

The majority of those who responded identified themselves as:

- Over the age of 40 (63%)
- A friend, family member, or caregiver of a person with a disability
- Living in Oakville

The responses emphasized the town's aging population, underscoring the importance of consistently incorporating this demographic into town planning and decision-making processes.

Positive highlights, common challenges, and opportunities for improvement

Respondents shared positive experiences and opinions about accessibility in the town, and also pointed out common challenges they face, giving us a better understanding of some of the barriers within the community.

Customer Service

- The majority of the respondents identified that they typically access town programs and services online. The difficulty in being able to connect with a person by phone was identified as a barrier to providing feedback.
- Several respondents reported facing accessibility challenges when using a town service or visiting a town facility (i.e. registering for a swim lesson, using transit, visiting a facility in person, etc.), yet did not provide feedback to the town. For those who did provide feedback, the majority of respondents called or emailed ServiceOakville.

Information and Communication

Several respondents identified that they found using the town's website and social media for information on events, programs and services as accessible. From respondents who commented that it wasn't accessible, suggested opportunities for improvement included more description and information on the website about accessibility features available at town facilities (such as which locations have adult change tables, hoist lifts, etc.).

The majority of respondents identified that they found participating in virtual/online Council or committee meetings, or other public engagement opportunities as accessible.

Employment

When considering to apply or applying for a job or volunteer opportunity at the town, some respondents identified that they found the accessibility accommodation information useful or helpful. Some respondents also requested an easier and streamlined application process when applying for a job or volunteer opportunity.

Moving around Oakville

- The majority of the respondents who have used Oakville Transit to move within Oakville, found their experience to be accessible. Many indicated that they were happy with continuous improvements they are seeing in transportation accessibility and the friendly service received from Transit staff. From respondents who commented that it wasn't accessible or only sometimes accessible, suggested improved/additional training for drivers and other transit staff to further enhance their knowledge in accessibility and improve the overall user experience.
- For those respondents who indicated that they have used the town's specialized transit services (care-A-van), there was tremendous support for its accessible services and friendly staff. A few encouraged continuous improvements to reduce wait times and backlog, and seek a solution to scheduling pick up times after medical appointments, etc.
- A number of respondents provided feedback on how the town can improve accessibility when using sidewalks, crosswalks, pedestrian signals, bike lanes, etc. This included increased lighting around key intersections, especially during the winter months or poor weather conditions, longer cross walk times, improved snow removal response times at intersections, crosswalks and bus stops, and improvements to bike lanes and bike lane markings.

Accessing Town Facilities and Spaces

- The responses were quite positive about experiences using accessible features and amenities at town-owned indoor facilities (including accessible ramps at building entrances, parking spots, washrooms/changerooms, seating, tactile surfaces, etc.). Areas of suggested improvements included improved lighting and accessibility to certain park washrooms (including extending seasonal operating times).
- The responses were also quite positive about experiences using accessible features and amenities at town-owned outdoor facilities (including beach access routes, recreational trails and pathways, eating areas, play spaces, etc.). Areas of suggested improvements included reviewing picnic table access on grassy areas, offering more paved trail options for those using mobility devices such as walkers or scooters, more shade options at playgrounds, and offering more playground equipment for wheelchair users and sensory seekers.

Additional suggestions for improvement

Recurring suggestions and recommendations provided by respondents, indicating areas that may benefit from further attention or development included the following:

- While many respondents commended staff service levels and friendliness, respondents suggested that additional training would be beneficial, particularly in addressing a broader spectrum of abilities and disabilities (including those that may not be immediately apparent or known). The consensus among respondents underscores the importance of fostering an inclusive environment through comprehensive training to ensure that all community members, regardless of their unique needs, receive equitable and considerate assistance.
- A few respondents referenced a lack of accommodations for individuals with hearing impairments. This signals a need for a review of staff training, town infrastructure, programs, and services with a focus on the needs of the hearing impaired to foster inclusivity and ensure a more supportive environment for all members of the community.
- Curbside parking considerations for those requiring accessible parking when none available.
- Respondents spoke to how improving the maintenance of town amenities and public spaces is essential for enhancing accessibility. Well-maintained areas contribute to a more inclusive environment, ensuring that residents, including those with diverse needs, can navigate and enjoy community spaces with ease.

Overall Satisfaction Levels

Survey respondents expressed high levels of satisfaction, highlighting a positive sentiment towards collaborative efforts aimed at enhancing accessibility in the town. The identification of shared obstacles shed light on prevalent community issues, fostering a deeper understanding of challenges. Importantly, respondents not only pointed out areas for improvement but also contributed valuable initiatives and ideas, reflecting an engaged and constructive community. Overall, the survey conveyed a sense of contentment and optimism among residents, emphasizing the success of ongoing efforts and the potential for further enhancements in the town's overall quality of life.

“The town of Oakville should continue to position itself as a leader in creating accessible experiences for everyone who lives, works and visits Oakville.”