

Town of Oakville  
2024-2029 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan  
Annual Status Update 2024

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# Introduction

The Town of Oakville is committed to being an inclusive workplace and community where everyone feels they belong. This includes removing barriers to achieve Council's vision to be a vibrant and livable community for all, and ensuring equitable access to the town's programs, services, and facilities that promote dignity and independence.

The town's [Accessibility Policy](#) and related procedures, the [Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Accessibility \(IDEA\) Multi-Year Plan, 2024-2029 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan](#), Development Standards and [Oakville Universal Design Standards](#) all work together to reinforce the town's commitment to embed accessibility into its culture and business practices and to go above and beyond the legislated requirements of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA). This work is a shared responsibility with goals and actions to further the town's IDEA efforts and enhance community belonging.

Developing, posting and implementing a multi-year accessibility plan (MYAP) is an ongoing requirement of the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR, O. Reg 191/11) under the AODA. Annual status updates provide an update on the Town of Oakville's progress and commitment to ensure compliance with all five standards and associated requirements.

The five standards under the IASR include:

1. Customer Service Standard
2. Information and Communications Standard
3. Employment Standard
4. Transportation Standard
5. Design of Public Spaces Standard

The town is committed to transparency and ongoing community collaboration, ensuring our efforts align with Council's Strategic Plan priorities of Community Belonging and Accountable Government. As a fast-growing municipality, we will regularly review the MYAP to keep it relevant and focused on meaningful accessibility improvements and ensure our efforts lead to measurable outcomes.

## Progress to Date

### General Accessibility

The general accessibility requirements apply to all five standards of the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation: customer service, information and communications, employment, transportation, and the design of public spaces. While each department has their own responsibilities and accountability associated with accessibility regulations, the

town fosters collaboration to address overlaps and achieve the best possible outcomes. This year, significant progress was made in continuing reporting, policy development, training, and procurement to maintain and enhance accessibility while meeting or exceeding requirements.

[Accessibility policies and procedures](#) are posted on the town's website and are available in accessible formats upon request, clearly outlining how the town fulfills its obligations. Additionally, the [2024–2029 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan \(MYAP\)](#) was developed and implemented in consultation with persons with disabilities and the Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC), with the plan published in an accessible format on oakville.ca. An annual status report on MYAP progress was prepared, presented to the AAC, and posted publicly, ensuring it is also available in accessible formats. The town also maintained high standards for preventative and emergency maintenance of accessible elements and ensured accessible public spaces remained available during [temporary service disruptions](#), with detailed information provided online or in alternative formats as requested.

## Training

Town-wide training on the IASR and the Human Rights Code continues to be provided to new and existing staff, Council, volunteers, and contractors offering goods, services, or facilities on behalf of the town. Training and resource availability are regularly enhanced to promote inclusion, diversity, equity, and accessibility (IDEA). Staff training emphasizes the importance of clear communication, especially when assisting individuals with hearing or vision impairments and other disabilities, and extends to consultants and contractors working on behalf of the town. Training also fosters a comprehensive understanding of both known and unknown disabilities to ensure customers receive appropriate support and aims to expand and strengthen awareness of inclusion and belonging. This year, select staff participated in specialized training provided by the Rick Hansen Foundation.

## Procurement

The town prioritizes accessibility in its procurement practices, embedding design, criteria, and features into the process wherever feasible. Suppliers and their staff are required to comply with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) and the Oakville Universal Design Standards, as mandated by the town's purchasing by-law. The procurement policy was updated in 2017 to reflect changes to the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR), with a comprehensive review and further updates anticipated in 2025. Key achievements this year in maintaining and enhancing accessibility through procurement include the continued implementation of the purchasing by-law, integration of mandatory accessibility fields in the Corporate Information System, and the availability of a purchasing reference resources outlining accessibility requirements for staff. Upcoming training for staff will incorporate accessible purchasing requirements to ensure

accessibility criteria are consistently applied. These measures strengthen the town's commitment to embedding accessibility into all aspects of its operations.

## Customer Service

The Customer Service Standard outlines how the town will make it easier for everyone to use its goods, services and facilities. The town recognizes the digital shift experienced when it comes to accessing services and programs. The impact of this shift is at the forefront, and the town maintains its commitment to accessible customer service through this transition.

Staff across the organization remain committed to engaging with the community to uphold accessible and inclusive customer service excellence. Building on existing initiatives, listening to community feedback, and exploring innovative ways to enhance accessibility reflect the town's dedication to creating an inclusive environment for residents, visitors, and staff. This year, several key initiatives have been maintained and enhanced to meet or exceed accessibility requirements.

The town continues to maintain and review [accessibility policies and procedures](#), such as the [Accessible Customer Service Procedure](#). These documents, available on oakville.ca and in accessible formats upon request, focus on providing goods, services, and facilities in ways that uphold the principles of dignity, independence, integration, and equality. Staff also continue to use tools and technologies that improve customer service and communication, as well as educate others about these resources. Some of these resources include the online accessible customer service feedback form, an iPad Pro at ServiceOakville, hearing loop arials, and universal signage across the town. Efforts to explore additional resources and technologies, such as Bluetooth and other audio signal transmission options for individuals with hearing impairments, are ongoing.

The alignment and integration of IDEA efforts are reinforced through strategic communication, learning opportunities, and measurement. This approach includes developing tools to raise staff awareness of IDEA principles, expanding cultural competence among staff, elected officials, and leadership, and fostering a deeper understanding of inclusion and belonging. The town also focuses on creating safe spaces, encouraging inclusive behaviours among leaders, and improving cultural competence to enhance overall customer experiences. These initiatives ensure the town continues to meet the evolving needs of its diverse community.

## Information and Communications

The Information and Communications Standard outlines how the town creates, provides and receives information and communications in ways that are accessible for people with disabilities, ensuring everyone has an equal chance to learn and participate in the community.

We're proud of our accomplishments in 2024, which reflect the town's commitment to creating a more inclusive and accessible community for residents, visitors, and staff. Key achievements this year in meeting or exceeding the requirements include:

- Enhancements to Online Accessibility:
  - Continued efforts to meet WCAG 2.0 Level AA requirements.
  - Conducted regular web content accessibility compliance monitoring using automated and manual checkers to identify and address issues proactively.
  - Began reviewing and assessing the current state of inaccessible online documents, with the objective to develop recommendations and next steps for providing more accessible documents on oakville.ca.
  - Worked with third-party vendors to improve the accessibility of web applications.
  - Submitted the town's first compliance plan with the province with the focus on making more documents accessible online, which includes beginning the work to secure a vendor of record for communication supports.
  
- Enhancing Accessibility Information and Tools:
  - Improved how information is shared with the community about accessible spaces and amenities available at town facilities.
  - Began consultation and development of accessibility enhancements and information updates to the [interactive accessibility map](#), improving its usability for residents and visitors.
  
- Community Engagement and Education:
  - Launched community safety and awareness campaigns related to cross walks, bike lanes, and other infrastructure to promote accessible and safe mobility for all users.
  - Created virtual tours of town facilities to help potential visitors understand layouts and amenities available on arrival.
  
- Improving Digital Content Standards:
  - Enhance staff capacity by delivering training on producing inclusive digital content across diverse platforms and formats.
  - Promoted the use of plain language guides and best practices to ensure information is clear and inclusive for all audiences.

Staff across the organization will continue engaging with the community by building on previous accomplishments and exploring new ways to ensure accessible information and communication is provided across all channels to residents, visitors, and employees. This includes continuing to work to ensure all town websites and web content conform to the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 Level AA. We offer multiple feedback options, including phone (toll-free, TTY, and Bell Relay), mail, and an accessible online

customer service feedback form. Statements about the availability of accessible formats and communication supports, including for key documents such as the [Multi-Year Accessibility Plan](#) and [Annual Report](#), are posted on the town's website. We also highlight accessibility supports for meetings, events, surveys, and any instance where feedback is requested, ensuring accommodations are proactively planned and arranged in alignment with the town's [Planning Accessible Meetings Procedure](#).

We provide accessible formats and communication supports upon request, consulting with individuals to meet their accessibility needs. We notify the public of these accommodations and ensure accessibility standards are followed for external meetings. Captions are included on all pre-recorded videos on the [Town of Oakville's YouTube channel](#), as well as for live broadcasts of Council and committee meetings. To further improve the consistency and accessibility of video content, the town maintains its standards to offer more universal templates and ensure all videos include features such as captions and transcripts. Emergency evacuation maps and instructions are posted at key locations, such as accessible building entrances, stairwells, elevators, and areas of refuge, and are available in accessible PDF format with QR codes providing translations in 10 languages.

## Oakville Public Library

Oakville Public Library (OPL) remains committed to fostering accessibility and inclusivity for all customers. The library will continue its partnership with the Centre for Equitable Library Access (CELA) and Bookshare while exploring new technologies to better support individuals with disabilities. Expanding its offerings in 2024, OPL introduced dementia-friendly reading material through its new Cognitive Care kits, addressing the unique needs of individuals with cognitive challenges.

OPL continues to enhance its services to ensure accessibility. The Delivery by Mail service remains a priority, providing customers unable to visit the library with access to materials delivered to their homes. Staff training initiatives focus on equipping customer experience employees with the skills to recommend appropriate formats for individuals with print disabilities. Also, this year OPL updated public access computers with a wider range of accessible features to improve usability for all customers. These efforts reflect OPL's ongoing dedication to creating an inclusive and welcoming environment.

## Employment

The Employment Standard outlines how the town makes employment practices and its workplace more accessible to potential and existing employees with disabilities. The town remains committed to providing accessible programs, services, and facilities for staff as outlined in the Employment Standard. In addition, the new IDEA Multi-Year Plan underscores key focus areas, including policy and procedure reviews, along with staff and leadership training.

Staff across the organization are actively working to uphold accessible employment practices, ensuring inclusivity for all employees while building on existing initiatives and addressing community and staff feedback. Current efforts focus on improving policies and procedures to remove barriers and support a diverse workforce. The town maintains an accessible accommodation process, exploring and assessing requests to meet individual needs. Employees requiring temporary or permanent accommodations are supported through a consistent return-to-work and employment accommodation program. Individual accommodation plans are created and reviewed annually to ensure ongoing relevance and effectiveness.

Accessible formats and communication supports are provided to employees upon request, with workshops and training sessions offered at accessible locations or in accessible formats. New employees are informed of the town's accommodation procedures during the town's online onboarding process and orientation, including policies supporting employees with disabilities. This process includes surveying new hires about accommodation needs and assistance during emergencies, ensuring a smooth and inclusive transition into the workplace.

The town's [Respectful Conduct Policy](#), which incorporates accessibility accommodations, is reinforced through annual performance review sign-offs. Recruitment practices further reflect the town's commitment to accessibility, with job postings, application acknowledgments, and candidate notifications all emphasizing the availability of accommodations throughout the hiring process.

To strengthen awareness and foster inclusivity, the town is streamlining and enhancing broader training for staff and management on accessibility, diversity, unconscious bias, and other key topics. This aligns with the ongoing implementation of the [IDEA Multi-Year Plan 2024-2028](#), which includes review and updates to the accommodation procedure. These initiatives demonstrate the town's dedication to removing barriers, promoting inclusivity, and creating a supportive workplace for all employees

## Transportation – Moving Around Oakville

The Transportation Standard outlines how the town will make it easier for anyone to use its public transportation services.

### Oakville Transit

Each year, Oakville Transit prepares an [Annual Accessibility Plan](#), which ensures continual progress toward improving accessibility of its services. In addition, Oakville Transit prepares an [Annual Transit Plan](#), which aligns with other planning documents and planning work underway in the town, ensuring a coordinated approach to accessibility and inclusivity across the community. In 2024, Oakville Transit achieved significant milestones

that reflect the town's commitment to creating a more inclusive and accessible community for residents, visitors, and staff. They include:

- Expansion of [Oakville Transit's On Demand](#) Service to new areas and review of opportunities to convert conventional fixed route service to on demand. Ride On Demand is a curb-to-curb shared-ride service provided with fully accessible vehicles.
- [Oakville Transit's On Demand](#) mobile app allows customers to book, cancel and confirm their own rides through the app, providing more flexibility. Customers can also get automated reminders for their trips.
- Reviewed bus schedules to improve schedule adherence.
- Implementation of a procedural change, which now requires all drivers to lower conventional buses for all customers, to improve access for all.
- Route number markers added to bus stop signs.
- Installation of *Clever Vision Digital Information Screens* on the On Demand fleet.
- Completed Transit's Five-year business plan, which includes details on compliance with AODA regulations and improving overall access to transit services.

Oakville Transit remains committed to supporting the town's dedication to accessible programs, services, and facilities through a range of ongoing initiatives. Continual enhancements to transit infrastructure include upgrading bus stop landing pads and platforms to improve accessibility and ease of access. Oakville Transit is also committed to providing no-charge fares for support persons accompanying individuals with disabilities for all services. In addition, children, youth and seniors 65+ have improved access opportunities with free fares when tapping their PRESTO card.

Collaborative efforts continue with Oakville, Burlington, and Milton for the review of specialized transit applications and the appeal process through third-party providers. The transit system remains fully compliant with accessibility requirements, including a fleet of 100 per cent low-floor buses. Mobility aids and assistive devices are securely stored and accommodated in all transportation vehicles, and drivers are trained on the safe handling of such devices, with this service provided at no additional charge. Oakville Transit also reviews fleet size regularly to meet the evolving needs of the community, conducts routine fleet audits to enhance the audio and visual system, and reviews required modifications to ensure ongoing compliance.

Ongoing driver training is critical. All driving staff receive mandatory accessibility training, with specialized and enhanced sessions for care-A-van staff. Training emphasizes understanding diverse accessibility needs, including the specific requirements of individuals with hearing or vision impairments and other known or unknown disabilities.

To further support accessibility, Oakville Transit maintains ongoing staff representation on the town's Accessibility Advisory Committee. Emergency preparedness and response

procedures are available in accessible formats upon request. Continuous reviewing of the Licensing By-law with an accessibility lens, which includes looking at requirements for licensing related accessible taxicabs and Transportation Network Companies (TNCs). Through these comprehensive efforts, Oakville Transit upholds its commitment to fostering an inclusive and accessible community.

## Transportation Master Plan

The town remains committed to creating an inclusive and accessible community through innovative transportation initiatives that meet and often exceed AODA standards. Building on previous plans and studies, the Transportation Master Plan (TMP) emphasizes accessibility to create walkable, cycle and transit friendly neighbourhoods integrated with accessible transportation options. The TMP, scheduled for public release in early 2025, prioritizes updates to transportation system for all modes, establishing safe, accessible bike and pedestrian lanes, and creating multi-purpose walkways, particularly for those who are visually impaired.

The town also coordinates accessibility enhancements through initiatives such as the Neighbourhood Traffic Safety Program and the [Pedestrian Safety Program](#). These efforts aim to identify diverse pedestrian crossing types, promote safe navigation, and enhance the overall pedestrian experience. While not required, the town adheres to the province's Minimum Maintenance Standards, reflecting our dedication to providing safe, accessible transportation infrastructure.

In 2024, we proudly advanced these priorities with several notable achievements. Through the [Bronte Village Streetscape Study](#) and [Kerr Village Streetscape Study](#), planning is underway to enhance the streetscape in key shopping areas, ensuring accessibility while exceeding legislated standards. Similarly, the town-wide [Parking Management Study](#) is underway, which focuses on meeting diverse mobility needs while preparing for future urban growth.

Collaboration with the Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC) remains integral to our efforts. Staff regularly consult with the AAC to gather valuable insights and enhance the design and accessibility of parking-related projects.

As we move forward, the town will continue assessing and managing current and future urban mobility needs through comprehensive parking studies, ensuring our transportation systems remain inclusive and adaptable for all users.

## Design of Public Spaces and Built Environment

The Design of Public Spaces Standard outlines how the town will make it easier for everyone to use its public spaces. This standard only applies to new construction and major renovations.

We're proud of our accomplishments in 2024, which reflect the town's commitment to creating a more inclusive and accessible community for residents, visitors, and staff. Key achievements this year in meeting or exceeding the requirements include:

- The release of the [Oakville Universal Design Standards \(OUDS\) 3.0](#), replacing Version 2.1, to ensure an inclusive and accessible approach to all new construction, renovations and upgrades to town facilities. This updated version introduces strategies to support neurodiverse individuals by integrating initiatives such as designing restorative spaces that offer adjustable privacy and sensory conditions, and also has a new section on maintenance, which places a priority on accessible paths of travel like improved snow clearing and repairing door opener devices. As a made-for-Oakville standard, the OUDS is mandatory for all construction projects at town-owned, leased and operated facilities, including new builds, additions, renovations, and capital replacements. The development of OUDS 3.0 involved extensive consultation and public engagement. Following its release, staff received training to ensure the effective implementation of the updated standards across the town's projects and services, continuing to implement OUDS accessibility requirements in all renovation and construction projects at town properties.
- The implementation of recommendations to complete the town-wide accessibility audit results of town-owned buildings constructed before AODA legislation in 2005. Items that are non-compliant with the current Ontario Building Code and OUDS in the areas of washrooms and changerooms will be prioritized and remediated in the built-environment from 2025-2029.
- Further progress on the [Downtown Cultural Hub \(DCH\)](#), which aims to explore opportunities to update and improve downtown cultural and performing arts spaces that contributes to the vibrancy of our cultural spaces and local economy. The Town of Oakville and OPL began exploring amenities, programs and services for the new central library branch in downtown Oakville in June, and a public engagement survey was launched to gather the community's input on ideas for the new library branch.
- Oakville's commitment to accessibility was recognized as three more town facilities received Rick Hansen Foundation Accessibility Certification (RHFAC). The new Sixteen Mile Community Centre and Library that is currently under construction achieved the Rick Hansen Foundation Accessibility Certified 'Gold' rating for accessibility, even before its planned opening in 2025. Trafalgar Park Community Centre and Queen Elizabeth Park Community and Cultural Centre also achieved certifications. As part of its [Buildings Without Barriers Challenge](#), the Town of Oakville has continued its commitment to accessibility by entering these three additional buildings to be evaluated under the RHFAC rating system in addition to Oakville Trafalgar Community Centre and Town Hall – both sites received RHFAC Gold in 2021.

- [Enhanced support options](#) available through our Recreation and Culture programs and facilities.
  - Offering support services available for those with intellectual or physical disabilities, attention or behaviour difficulties, vision or hearing impairments, learning disabilities, allergies or medical conditions.
  - Offering new sensory swims and/or skates.
  - Making available for use while at the facility, sensory kits containing noise cancelling headphones, colouring worksheets, pencil crayons, and fidget toys.

Accessibility related areas of focus of the Parks, Recreation and Library Facilities Master Plan that the town will maintain its commitment to accessible infrastructure, features, and amenities, include:

- Extending operating hours for park bathrooms during the off-season.
- Adding accessible picnic tables and clear pathways in all outdoor eating areas.
- Planning and development of improvements to beach and waterfront access, including Bronte Beach and its surrounding landscape; and the Shipyard redevelopment, which will feature accessible parking, furnishings and roadwork. Construction to begin in 2025.
- With funding received in part from the Government of Canada's Enabling Accessibility Fund, renovations were completed in June 2024 to make Wedgewood Pool more accessible. Improvements included adding ramps to the two outdoor showers, complete with handrails and visual contrasting strips, as well as a portable pool lift.
- Redevelopment of [Wallace Park](#), is near complete, scheduled to open January, 2025. Redevelopment involved a new building complex, including a washroom building, a mechanical building, and a breezeway in between, ensuring accessibility.
- Ongoing accessibility conversions of playgrounds and splash pads as they come up for replacement including considerations for sensory seeking play equipment, surfaces, and shade options.
- The town continued to implement the recommendations from the [Trail Accessibility Audit and Strategy](#) outcome, including better signage and rest station options, additional paved trail options, more accessible pathways, safer pedestrian crossing options on trails that intersect streets, and continued collaboration across departments.

Staff across the organization remain committed to engaging with the community to ensure the accessible design of public spaces and the built environment. Building on previous accomplishments and exploring new initiatives, staff will maintain or exceed AODA requirements. This work includes regular monitoring and maintenance of town amenities and public spaces, such as curbs, sidewalks, trails, and pathways. By ensuring these areas are well-maintained and meet provincial Minimum Maintenance Standards, as followed by Roads and Works and Transportation and Engineering, the town fosters a more inclusive

environment, allowing all residents, including those with diverse needs, to navigate and enjoy community spaces with ease.

A significant focus is placed on planning projects that address and remove barriers in the built environment. This involves routine collaboration with project managers to advise on accessibility criteria, which encompasses proposed materials and finishes, public art murals, and feasibility planning to add or expand accessible elements. Additionally, the town will continue its commitment to increasing the number of audible pedestrian crossings annually, ensuring compliance with the Ontario Traffic Manual and AODA standards. Dialogue with the Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC) remains central to these efforts.

Efforts to enhance outdoor accessibility include the use of mulch top-ups with added ramps where necessary, improving exterior lighting to meet or exceed standards prescribed by the Illuminating Engineering Society of North America (IESNA) or the Ontario Building Code, and adding benches and seating options along rest areas on beach routes, trails, and parks. Enhanced collaboration between facilities and parks aims to improve seating options, including the incorporation of covered seating solutions. Outdoor pool redevelopment plans now routinely incorporate accessible pool access. The town also sets an annual target for retrofitting signalized intersections with accessible pedestrian signals (APS), ensuring steady progress toward completing all retrofits. This ongoing work reflects a holistic approach to improving accessibility across the community, ensuring public spaces and amenities are inclusive and welcoming for all residents.

Recreational and social opportunities are supported through the ongoing conversion of sloped limestone screening trails to asphalt and the rehabilitation of allotment gardens, which include the addition of accessible garden plot tables. Accessibility conversions for playgrounds and splash pads are prioritized as they come up for replacement, with considerations for sensory-seeking play equipment, surfaces, and shade options. A notable project for 2024 includes the replacement of the [Wynten Way Park Splash Pad and Playground](#).