



TOWN OF AURORA

Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

2022-2026



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Message from the Chair of the Accessibility Advisory Committee

The Accessibility Advisory Committee is proud to present the 2022 - 2026 Accessibility Plan for the Town of Aurora. We are a committee designed and dedicated to making our town a more inclusive place - a place without barriers, restrictions, or roadblocks to access of any kind. The Accessibility Advisory Committee believes that a more accessible town, a more inclusive town, is in every respect, a better town.

This report will review the Town's recent achievements in the improvement of accessibility. These include but are not limited to our continuous work updating the Town's website to comply with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (W.C.A.G) requirements, installing automatic door openers, induction loops and wayfinding signage at municipal buildings, installing modern pool hoists, adult change tables, a Sensory Pathway at the Stronach Aurora Recreation Complex and the installation of audible pedestrian signals at key intersections.

With our focus on future accessibility endeavours, we will continue with the installation of our Power Door Operator project for all town facilities and audible pedestrian signals at other Aurora intersections, for the accommodation and safety of our community members with mobility devices and visual impairments.

As we work to improve the accessibility of our new and renovated town facilities, we will also be focusing on integrating the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act Standards and the new Ontario Building Code requirements into one comprehensive document.

As an outreach strategy, we will look to partner with local secondary schools to provide accessibility co-op positions and positions for persons with disabilities. Lastly, we will continue to bring accessibility awareness to the community through ongoing education campaigns.

On behalf of the Accessibility Advisory Committee, I would like to thank the members of Town Council and our community, who have collaborated with us over the years to breakdown barriers, improve accessibility in our community and make Aurora a leader in accessibility advancement and innovation.

Cheers to more positive changes for the future!

Sincerely,

Rachelle Stinson, Chair (2018-2022)
Accessibility Advisory Committee

Town of Aurora Multi-Year Accessibility Plan 2022 - 2026

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Executive Summary

The Town of Aurora is dedicated to the continuous improvement of accessibility within the community, and achieving the goals set out by the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (A.O.D.A). The development of the Town of Aurora's Multi-Year Accessibility Plan 2022 - 2026 illustrates how the Town will implement the legislative requirements of the A.O.D.A by identifying, removing, and preventing barriers for residents, employees, and visitors.

The plan is established in compliance with the requirements in the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (I.A.S.R). The plan is based on best practice research, input from the Town's 2018 - 2022 Accessibility Advisory Committee and Town staff, and is organized around the following standards:

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

Statement of Commitment

The Town of Aurora is committed to creating an accessible community that respects the dignity and independence of people with disabilities who benefit from the use of Town programs, services, and facilities. The Town will continue its work to identify and remove accessibility barriers and maintains its commitment to meet the requirements of the Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001 (O.D.A), Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (A.O.D.A), Accessible Canada Act (Bill C-81), and the Ontario Human Rights Code.

Background

The Town of Aurora celebrates its growing and diverse population as a source of strength, vitality and economic opportunity, and is committed to improving opportunities for people with disabilities. The development of the Town's Accessibility Plan illustrates how the Town will implement the legislative requirements of the A.O.D.A by identifying, removing and preventing barriers for residents, employees and visitors.

Over the past several years, the Town has undertaken several initiatives aimed at ensuring that the municipality remains inclusive and barrier-free by following the plans guiding principles. These include:

- Effective collaboration and engagement with the Accessibility Advisory Committee, residents and other community members to ensure that the Town makes informed decisions that shape our community.
- Be proactive and timely to meet the provincial compliance deadlines.
- Ensure fiscal responsibility that provides quality public services while maintaining a sustainable budget.
- Enhance training and leadership knowledge to ensure compliance with Town policies and provincial legislations.
- Create barrier-free public spaces using the standards above the minimum requirements of the Ontario Building Code and Design of Public Spaces to build a universally designed community for residents, employees and visitors.
- Innovate and improve modern technologies, solutions and approaches to accessibility.
- Support and respect all community members who use Town goods, services and facilities, and provide alternative options if necessary to enable people with disabilities.

Structure and Governance

Implementation of the A.O.D.A falls within the Town's Corporate Services Department and Accessibility Office. Accountability for the I.A.S.R is a shared responsibility with various departments. The Accessibility Office has an overarching responsibility to ensure that respective clauses are executed according to legislative requirements pertaining to the service they deliver. For example:

- Bylaw Services is responsible for Accessible Taxis.
- Corporate Communications is responsible for website compliance and information and communication supports.
- Human Resources is responsible for employment requirements.
- Operational and Engineering Services are responsible for the Design of Public Spaces.
- Aurora Public Library is responsible for access to or arranging for the provision of access to accessible materials where they exist in the public library.

General clauses are led by the Corporate Services Department through the work of the Accessibility Office. Responsibilities of the Accessibility Office include, but are not limited to:

- Development of the Corporate Accessibility Plan.

- Implementing legislative consultation processes.
- Working with all levels of government on accessibility-related issues.
- Developing and reviewing policies.
- Creating training modules and materials.
- Reporting on compliance to the Province of Ontario.

Accessibility Advisory Committee

The Accessibility Advisory Committee is a municipal requirement of the A.O.D.A. The objective of the Accessibility Advisory Committee is to provide focus on Town initiatives ensuring that goods, services and facilities will be offered in a manner that respects the inherent dignity, diversity and abilities of all individuals.

Accessibility Advisory Committee Members:

- Rachelle Stinson (Chair) (2018 - 2022)
- Councillor Harold Kim (Chair) (2023 - 2024)
- Matthew Abas (Vice Chair) (2018 - 2022)
- Peter Angelo (Vice Chair) (2023 - 2026)
- Hailey Reiss (2018 - 2026)
- Max Le Moine (2018 - 2023)
- John Lenchak (2018 - 2026)
- Jo-anne Spitzer (2018 - 2026)
- Alison Hughes (2023 - 2026)
- Lois Davies (2023 - 2026)
- Jeffrey Preston (2023 - 2026)
- Councillor Rachel Gilliland (2018 - 2020)
- Councillor John Gallo (2020 - 2022)

The Town of Aurora and its Accessibility Advisory Committee are committed to ensuring people of all ages and abilities have the same opportunities as they live, work, or visit the Town of Aurora.

Duties and functions of the Accessibility Advisory Committee

The Town of Aurora's Accessibility Advisory Committee is responsible for providing advice to the municipality on a wide range of processes to ensure public services and facilities are accessible to everyone. The three main activities of the Accessibility Advisory Committee are to:

1. Advise municipal Council about
 - the requirements and implementation of accessibility standards.
 - the preparation of accessibility reports.
 - other matters for which the council may seek its advice.

2. Review site plans and drawings described in Section 41 of the Planning Act that the committee selects.
3. Perform all other functions specified in the regulations.

The Town will consult the committee on the following specific matters:

- When establishing, reviewing and updating multi-year accessibility plans.
- When developing accessible design criteria in the construction, renovation or placement of bus stops and shelters.
- When determining the proportion of on-demand accessible taxicabs needed in the community.
- On the need, location and design of accessible on-street parking spaces when building new or making major changes to existing on-street parking spaces.
- Before building new or making major changes to existing recreational trails to help determine specific trail features.
- On the needs of children and caregivers with various disabilities in their community when building new or making major changes to existing outdoor play spaces.
- On the design and placement of rest areas when building new or making major changes to existing exterior paths of travel.
- On site plans and drawings from developers, when requested.

2022 - 2026 Priorities and Commitments

The Town of Aurora's Multi-Year Accessibility Plan 2022 - 2026 includes new and continuing initiatives and outcomes that will help the Town meet its commitment to an accessible community. The Town is committed to improving opportunities and eliminating barriers to provide equal access for all residents, employees, and visitors of Aurora.

General Requirements

The general requirements of the I.A.S.R under the A.O.D.A require the Town of Aurora to have accessibility policies, a statement of commitment and a Multi-Year Accessibility Plan. In addition to the requirements, the Town is working to increase accessibility for residents, employees and visitors by creating non-legislated initiatives that ensure barriers to accessibility are identified and addressed across the organization.

General Requirement Outcomes

- Continue updating Town of Aurora bylaws, policies, procedures and guidelines to reflect the requirements of the A.O.D.A.
- Review established Accessible Customer Service Standard and Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation policies as per the Town's retention bylaw.

- Continue procuring goods, services, facilities and kiosks that include accessibility criteria and features.
- Continue updating the multi-year accessibility plan to identify, remove, and prevent barriers for people with disabilities.
- Continue to show the progress being made in accomplishing goals of the Town of Aurora's Multi-Year Accessibility Plan.
- Continue to complete mandatory A.O.D.A training appropriate to the person's role in a timely manner and in a variety of formats.
 - Continue to educate and train staff to consider accessibility impacts of all new planning, projects, policies and initiatives.
 - Continue to record and track employee learning and development activities specifically related to A.O.D.A and accessibility requirements.
 - Continue to ensure that all training, activities, course materials and learning approaches are created and delivered in accessible formats.
- Continue to engage and consult with the Accessibility Advisory Committee to advance accessibility.
- Continue to host employee meetings and public events in facilities and public spaces that are accessible.

2022 - 2026 General Requirement Goals

- Establish Town employee resource groups to advance accessibility and inclusion. Employee resource groups will be created for one-time consultation on a specific topic or established for ongoing engagement within a specific area.
- Enhance accessibility awareness within the organization and the community through education and awareness campaigns.
- Establish annual departmental implementation plans which will include detailed deliverables and timelines.
- Enhance leadership knowledge and skills to ensure compliance with Town policies, Human Rights legislation, A.O.D.A and other related legislation.

Customer Service Requirements

The Town of Aurora is committed to providing excellent customer service for all residents, employees and visitors with disabilities. The Customer Service Standard under the I.A.S.R requires the Town to provide accessible public services for people with disabilities and to ensure that policies and procedures are in place to support this requirement.

Customer Service Outcomes

- Continue to complete mandatory A.O.D.A training, including customer service training for to staff, volunteers and third parties to gain resources and tools on how to better assist a customer with a disability.
- Receive and respond to feedback about in which goods, programs, services and facilities are provided to persons with disabilities.

- Continue providing accessible processes for receiving feedback.
- Continue providing service disruption notices in a timely manner.
- Continue to ensure that people with disabilities receive goods and services of the same quality and within the same timeline as others and benefit equally from customer service initiatives.

2022 - 2026 Customer Service Goals

- Establish a comprehensive accessibility plan for municipal elections.
- Evaluate Town programs and services through Town employee resource groups to ensure inclusion and equitable participation of residents, employees, and visitors with disabilities in Town operated programs.

Information and Communications Requirements

The Information and Communications Standard under the I.A.S.R requires the Town to communicate and provide information in ways that are accessible to people with disabilities. The Town of Aurora's Information and Communications Standard Policy was established to ensure digital accessibility in all services and information the Town provides to residents, employees and visitors.

Information and Communications Outcomes

- Ensuring that Town processes for receiving and responding to feedback are accessible to people with disabilities by providing or arranging for the provision of accessible formats and communication supports.
- Continue to arrange for accessible formats and communication supports by consulting with the person making the request to determine suitable accessible formats or communication supports in a timely manner at no additional cost.
- Continue to inform the public of the availability of accessible materials and provide accessible formats and communication supports upon request.
- Continue to evaluate and remediate the Town's website and web content to conform to W.C.A.G 2.1 in accordance with the timelines set out by the I.A.S.R.
- Continue to evaluate and remediate the Town's website and web content to exceed accessibility compliance requirements by providing the appropriate frameworks, tools, guidelines and training for all Town staff.
- Continue to ensure that the Town's website and web content incorporate the Information and Communications Standard Policy.
- Continue reformatting and building corporate templates to meet W.C.A.G 2.1 in accordance with the timelines set out by the I.A.S.R.
- Continue conducting reviews of the Town's Information and Communications Standard Policy and update to reflect current best practices in digital accessibility.

2022 - 2026 Information and Communications Goals

- Research and develop a streamlined process for Town employees to access American Sign Language (ASL), Communication Access Real-Time Translation

(C.A.R.T) and other accessibility services and supports to provide equitable access to residents, employees, and visitors with disabilities.

- Ensure that employees and members of Council have the tools and resources to develop and provide information in an accessible format through various platforms.

Employment Requirements

The Town of Aurora is committed to creating an inclusive environment with equality for all who work, live and play here. The Employment Standard under the I.A.S.R sets out accessibility requirements that the Town must follow to support the recruitment and accommodation of employees with disabilities.

Employment Outcomes

- Continue to ensure all employees and successful applicants with disabilities are informed of available supports and accommodations.
- Continue to ensure all applicants are informed of available accommodations during the recruitment, assessment, and the selection processes.
- Continue to consult with employees to provide and arrange for accessible formats and communication supports upon request.
- Continue to provide employees individualized workplace emergency response information upon request.
- Continue to maintain a return-to-work process and provide individual documented accommodation plans for employees with disabilities as required.
- Continue to ensure the needs of employees with disabilities considered for the purposes of performance management, career development, advancement, and redeployment.
- Continue preparing individualized accommodation and emergency response plans for Town employees with disabilities.
- Continue to conduct employee equity surveys to inform workforce planning priorities through data-informed decision making.

2022 - 2026 Employment Goals

- Establish an outreach strategy and partner with local secondary schools to provide accessibility co-op positions and opportunities for persons with disabilities.
- Foster a culture of employee engagement and inclusion through analysis of the Employee Engagement Survey and the development of action plans in partnership with the Equity and Inclusion Advisory Group.

Transportation Requirements

The Transportation Standard of the I.A.S.R sets out the requirements to prevent and remove barriers to make public transportation and related services more accessible. Both the Town of Aurora and the Regional Municipality of York share this Standard. York Region is responsible for and creates action items for removing barriers and specialized

transportation services. While the Town is not responsible for all components of the Transportation Standard, the Town has obligations under the Duties of Municipalities and Taxi Cabs.

Transportation Outcomes

- Continue to consult with the Accessibility Advisory Committee, the public and persons with disabilities to determine the proportion of on-demand accessible taxicabs required in the community.
- Ensure that owners and operators of licensed taxicabs are prohibited from:
 - charging a higher fare or an additional fee for persons with disabilities than for persons without disabilities for the same trip.
 - charging a fee for the storage of mobility aids or mobility assistive devices.
- Ensure that owners and operators of taxicabs place vehicle registration and identification information on the rear bumper of the taxicab.
- Ensure that owners and operators of taxicabs make available vehicle registration and identification information in an accessible format to persons with disabilities who are passengers.

2022 - 2026 Transportation Goals

- Prepare the Town for self-automated vehicles, ensuring accessibility considerations are incorporated in the early planning stages.
- 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.
- Conduct a review of parking 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.
- Explore a low-cost vehicle sensor program to help manage parking and curb space.
- Explore the possibility of introducing accessible scooter parking and charging stations.

Design of Public Spaces (D.O.P.S) Requirements

The Design of Public Spaces Standards of the I.A.S.R provides technical requirements that ensure newly constructed or redeveloped public spaces are designed to allow for people with disabilities to move through and use amenity spaces comfortably. In addition to these requirements, the Town must also comply with the Ontario Building Code's requirements for accessibility in the built environment, often exceeding the requirements through the application of the Town of Aurora Accessibility Design Standards.

Design of Public Spaces Outcomes

- Integrate the Town of Aurora Accessibility Design Standards to incorporate the requirements of the A.O.D.A., the I.A.S.R and the new Ontario Building Code requirements into one accessible document.
- Prioritize and retrofit existing built environment barriers at recreational trails, outdoor public use eating areas, outdoor play spaces, exterior paths of travel, accessible parking, and facilities.
- Improve the accessibility of public spaces and workplaces by incorporating accessible design during renovations and redevelopments of recreational trails, outdoor public use eating areas, outdoor play spaces, exterior paths of travel, accessible parking and facilities.
- Continue to prevent and remove barriers within Town recreational trails, outdoor public use eating areas, outdoor play spaces, exterior paths of travel, accessible parking and facilities using the new Town of Aurora Accessibility Design Standards.
- Maintain accessible elements in public spaces through monitoring and regularly planned preventative maintenance.
- Respond to temporary disruptions when accessible elements in public spaces are not in working order by notifying the public and prioritizing remediation.

2022 - 2026 Design of Public Spaces Goals

- Installation of Audible Pedestrian Signals to advise individuals who are visually impaired when they have the right-of-way to cross at a signalized intersection and in which direction, they may cross the intersection:
 - Yonge Street and Kennedy
 - Yonge Street and Henderson
 - Wellington and Wells Street
- Installation of Power Door Operators at all Town facilities lacking barrier-free entrances and providing accommodation for persons using mobility assistance devices.
- Develop universal design policy, encouraging developers to offer accessible features in homes.
- Procured a consulting firm to assist in the review of facilities to identify opportunity to install universal washrooms at:
 - Town Hall
 - Aurora Family Leisure Complex
 - Aurora Community Centre
 - Victoria Hall
- Procured a consulting firm to assist in the review of Victoria Hall, providing a cost analysis and identifying barriers to be removed:
 - Ramp at front entrance
 - Level main floor to provide equal access to all amenities

- Universal washroom
- Procured a consulting firm to assist in the review of facility rinks, providing a cost analysis and identifying barriers to be removed:
 - Custom clear ice rink boards
 - Accessible change rooms
 - Accessible entrance into ice rink
- Acoustic accessibility to be addressed, reducing sound quality (echo) issues. Acoustic accessibility is achieved when what is spoken is received by the listener at a volume that allows the words to be clearly heard and understood:
 - Stronach Aurora Recreation Complex
 - Aurora Family Leisure Complex
- Conduct a Building Code Assessment to determine where Town facilities are deficient regarding barrier-free access. Further capital projects to be developed based on the report and areas of non-compliance.
- Comprehensive review of park and trail systems to identify barriers to be removed.

Procedures for Preventative and Emergency Maintenance

To guarantee the ongoing functionality and accessibility of elements within public spaces, The Town has processes for both preventative and emergency maintenance. This includes regular inspections, timely repairs, and scheduled maintenance of all accessible elements as required.

- **Preventative Maintenance:** We will conduct routine inspections and maintenance checks to proactively identify and rectify any potential issues with accessible elements in public spaces. This will involve regular assessments and upkeep schedules to ensure the continual functionality of these elements.
- **Emergency Maintenance:** In the event of sudden breakdowns or malfunctions of accessible elements, The Town will respond accordingly. This includes establishing emergency contact information, immediate repair procedures, and interim measures to mitigate accessibility disruptions.

Procedures for Dealing with Temporary Disruptions

Recognizing the possibility of temporary disruptions to accessible elements, The Town has processes to address these situations promptly and effectively.

- **Identification of Disruptions:** We will promptly identify and acknowledge any temporary disruptions or non-functionality of accessible elements in public spaces.
- **Communication and Notification:** Clear communication channels will be established to inform the public about temporary disruptions. This will include posting notices, [updating websites](#), utilizing social media, and providing alternative accessibility solutions during the period of disruption.

- **Timely Resolution:** A commitment to resolving disruptions swiftly by prioritizing repairs, ensuring alternative accommodations, and maintaining regular updates on the progress of restoration efforts.

The information enclosed in the 2022 - 2026 Accessibility plan outlines the goals and processes for identifying, removing, and preventing barriers for residents, employees, and visitors. For more information or feedback on this Accessibility Plan or Accessibility in Aurora please contact the Accessibility Advisor at (365) 500-3172 or accessibility@aurora.ca.

Document Accessibility Acknowledgement

The Town of Aurora is committed to ensuring the accessibility of our documents to all individuals, in compliance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (A.O.D.A.). We have made every effort to achieve full compliance with accessibility standards in the preparation of this document.

Please note the following:

- This document has been prepared to conform to the accessibility standards outlined in the A.O.D.A. and the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (W.C.A.G.) 2.0, Level AA. Our aim is to provide an inclusive experience for all users.
- At the time of posting this document, it complied with the accessibility standards in effect. However, as accessibility standards may evolve over time, we cannot guarantee ongoing compliance. We encourage you to contact us if you encounter any accessibility issues.
- If you require further assistance or have any concerns regarding the accessibility of this document, please contact us at accessibility@aurora.ca

We are dedicated to addressing your concerns and providing reasonable accommodations whenever possible.