

ACCESSIBILITY

MULTI-YEAR PLAN





Riverside Park in Preston

Land Acknowledgement

We embrace our shared responsibility with the First Nations peoples, to take care of this Earth and its creatures; we can only do so by walking the path as partners stewarding this land as we have been given the duty together to live in balance and harmony with all living things. We acknowledge and respect the Anishinaabe, Chonnonton and Haudenosuane people who came before us and who we live amongst. By honouring this truth of past and present may we come to true reconciliation through listening, reflecting and learning.

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Message from the Mayor and Members of Council

As Mayor of Cambridge, I am proud to introduce the City of Cambridge's Multi-Year Accessibility Plan for 2024-2028. This updated plan is an important step in our continued commitment to building a community that is accessible, inclusive, and welcoming for people of all abilities.

The City is dedicated to ensuring that every resident, visitor, and employee, regardless of ability, can enjoy full access to the services, facilities, and opportunities that make Cambridge such a friendly place to live, work, and grow. We believe that accessibility is not just a legislative goal but a fundamental right. Cambridge's vision for the future is one where barriers, both physical and social, are eliminated, creating an environment where everyone can thrive. This Multi-Year Accessibility Plan outlines our roadmap to achieve this vision. It emphasizes our commitment to meeting and exceeding the requirements of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) and sets out the concrete steps we will take to make our city more accessible. From improving access to our parks, playgrounds, and public spaces to enhance digital accessibility, we are working closely with community partners and our Accessibility Advisory Committee to ensure that our policies, services, and programs reflect the needs of everyone in Cambridge.

As we continue on this path, it is necessary to acknowledge that achieving full accessibility is a collaborative effort. Together, we can



ensure that Cambridge becomes a barrier-free city, a place where people of all ages, abilities, and backgrounds are embraced and can fully participate in community life.

I look forward to seeing the impact of these initiatives and to working with each of you as we build a more inclusive Cambridge for generations to come.

Mayor Jan Liggett
City of Cambridge



Message from the Cambridge Accessibility Advisory Committee

The Cambridge Accessibility Advisory Committee (CAAC) advises the City of Cambridge Council on how to make it easier for people living with disabilities to use our programs, services, and facilities. The committee is made up of passionate, insightful professionals and volunteers who are committed to creating an inclusive community for all. We aim to ensure that every community member has equal access to services, opportunities, and spaces. This plan builds on previous successes, identifies areas for improvement, and introduces new initiatives to remove barriers and enhance accessibility across all sectors. The committee represents local municipalities and people with diverse backgrounds and different abilities, which allows us to offer many perspectives on improving accessibility for Cambridge residents.

This updated City of Cambridge Multi-Year Accessibility Plan builds on the accomplishments of Cambridge's previous accessibility plans and activities to implement the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA). It also outlines the work ahead to help create an accessible Ontario by 2025 and beyond. Contributions from people of all abilities enrich Cambridge.

We look forward to the future and a barrier-free community where everyone belongs. It is our privilege to continue to advise Cambridge Council on identifying and removing barriers, changing attitudes, and raising awareness about all abilities and the importance of accessibility in the City of Cambridge.

The 2024- 2028 Multi-Year Accessibility plan reflects our unwavering dedication to removing barriers and ensuring accessibility is a core priority. We encourage everyone to review the plan, share feedback, and participate in our efforts to create a more inclusive community.

Together, we can build a future where everyone can fully participate and thrive.



Grand River in Galt



Introduction: The Plan

This Multi-Year Accessibility Plan (MYAP) outlines the City of Cambridge's long-term strategies to identify, remove, and prevent barriers in our programs, services, and facilities and highlight actions to make Cambridge more inclusive and accessible for everyone. The Plan updates and builds on the previous Multi-Year Accessibility Plan and aligns with the Strategic Plan.

The Multi-Year Accessibility Plan is titled "2024–2028" as it reflects the period it's intended to cover, consistent with the requirements under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA). While drafting began in 2024, unexpected delays prevented completion within the original timeline. Throughout this period, the City remained committed to ensuring the plan was developed thoughtfully and inclusively, with a focus on aligning it to the needs of the community.

This Plan is guided by the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA), supporting the goal of making Ontario accessible by 2025 and maintaining those improvements in the following years. It reflects the input of community members, Council, and staff and is supported by the Cambridge Accessibility Advisory Committee (CAAC). The City of Cambridge is committed to delivering accessible services that meet the diverse needs of our growing community. This commitment spans five key areas that impact daily life: information and communications, employment, the design of public spaces, transportation, and customer service. In addition to these areas, the AODA outlines general requirements and compliance standards that guide our efforts.





The AODA became law in 2005. Its overarching purpose is to make Ontario accessible by 2025. Under the AODA, the City of Cambridge must establish, review, update, and post a multi-year accessibility plan at least once every five years. The legislation also requires organizations to prepare annual status reports on actions taken to improve accessibility and implement legislated requirements.

Cambridge's Accessibility Vision

Aligned with our People goal of fostering a community with heart, where everyone belongs and is cared for equitably, the City of Cambridge strives to deliver programs and services that are inclusive, respectful, and accessible to all. Our vision is a barrier-free Cambridge shaped by inclusive design, strong partnerships, and a shared responsibility to embed equity and accessibility into every part of community life.

Barrier-Free Statement of Practice

The City of Cambridge is committed to meeting the needs of residents. City Council and staff work cooperatively with residents to create a barrier-free environment, recognizing their diverse needs and responding by providing programs, services, and facilities that are inclusive and accessible to all.

An accessible community allows everyone to develop to their full potential, participate freely in society, and live with respect, dignity, and freedom from discrimination. The City of Cambridge continues to plan to make services accessible and welcoming for everyone. The City has developed a Barrier-Free Statement of Practice and associated action statements aligning with our strategic goals.

The City of Cambridge will be an example in accessibility excellence by:

- Setting an example for business, institutions, and community organizations in advancing access, inclusion and equity.
- Fostering a culture of equity and inclusion within the organization and throughout the community by challenging assumptions and biases when planning and delivering goods, services, and facilities.
- Ensuring that individuals with disabilities can obtain and benefit from the same goods, services, and facilities in an equitable manner.
- Providing alternative measures and accessible solutions for employees, residents, and visitors with disabilities to obtain and benefit from City goods, services, and facilities.
- Embedding accessibility in the earliest planning stages and throughout the design, development, implementation and procurement of City goods, services, and facilities to ensure accessibility is not an afterthought.
- Ensuring accommodation processes incorporate an approach that recognizes and addresses barriers to accessibility.
- Identifying that accessibility solutions may need to address multiple barriers and that a single solution may not meet or accommodate individual needs.
- Incorporating accessibility and inclusion lens towards continuous improvement of processes and procedures.
- Investigating technologies, products, and services that will improve accessibility for City employees, residents, and visitors with disabilities.

How the Plan is Developed

The City's MYAP is guided by engagement with the Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC), consultations, as well as input from the public and internal partners.

Summary of Consultations

In accordance with AODA requirements, the City's Multi-Year Accessibility Plan must be developed, reviewed, and updated in consultation with people living with disabilities and the Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC).

Engagement

The City of Cambridge has taken significant strides to ensure this plan is comprehensive, inclusive, and reflective of the diverse needs of the community. The process was collaborative, with multiple opportunities for residents and staff to share their thoughts and perspectives.

In the early development stage of this plan in 2022, a public survey was conducted, aimed at engaging the Cambridge community and gaining a deeper understanding of their accessibility concerns and expectations. The survey was accessible online, available in alternate formats upon request, and was available for over one month.

In 2025 to diversify the methods of public engagement, in addition to the online survey, staff participated in community initiatives and visited public locations to engage with residents **in-person** and gather diverse perspectives. As part of this, multiple in-person engagement sessions were held at different locations in Cambridge, including:

- Allen Reuter Centre (ARC)
- Cambridge Centre (two sessions)

- Langs Community Centre
- Buddy League
- David Durward Centre (DDC)
- Ted Wake Centre (TWC)
- YMCA

The input received was instrumental in identifying areas for improvement and opportunities to tailor approaches that address specific accessibility challenges within the City. A summary of the feedback received and common themes identified was shared with the AAC as part of the plan's development.

What We Heard

To inform the City of Cambridge's 2024–2028 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan, residents and stakeholders were invited to share their experiences and ideas through an online survey and community engagement. More than 140 contributors participated, including people living with disabilities, caregivers, business owners, and residents.

While many residents expressed appreciation for ongoing accessibility improvements and friendly service, the survey identified consistent barriers in both physical and digital environments. Respondents strongly emphasized accessible parking, winter maintenance, and clear communication as immediate priorities for Cambridge. The community demonstrated a willingness to collaborate with the City to create a more inclusive environment

The following summarizes the key findings and themes for each of the standards.



Information and Communications

- Many respondents said the City's website and digital platforms are somewhat easy to use, but nearly one-quarter found them difficult or very difficult.
- Printed materials such as brochures and signage were generally easier to understand, though some still reported barriers.
- Suggestions included:
 - Ensure the City's website and forms fully comply with WCAG 2.2 AA.
 - Use plain language and clear navigation in all communications.
 - Provide and promote accessible formats and highlight accessibility features of City facilities.

Employment and Volunteering

- Views on the City as an inclusive workplace were mixed: 27% said "yes," 27% "no," and 30% were "not sure."
- Few respondents knew accommodations were available during hiring or onboarding.
- Accessibility for volunteers was also mixed, with many unsure.
- Suggestions included:
 - Clearly communicate that accommodations are available in job postings and recruitment materials.
 - Improve onboarding processes to include accessibility supports.
 - Offer flexible work arrangements, accessible interview spaces, and assistive technologies.

Transportation and Mobility

- One-third of respondents reported barriers at bus stops and crosswalks.
- Only 23% rated sidewalks, curb cuts, and trails in their neighbourhoods as fully accessible and well-maintained.
- Suggestions included:
 - Prioritize snow and ice removal on sidewalks, curb cuts, and bus stop routes.
 - Add or repair curb cuts and tactile walking indicators at intersections.
 - Improve lighting and crossing times at busy intersections.

Public Spaces and City Facilities

- Just under half said natural public spaces were "somewhat accessible."
- Built facilities such as recreation centres and libraries were seen as "somewhat" or "very accessible," but barriers remain.
- Suggestions included:
 - Expand and strictly enforce accessible parking at all City facilities; residents identified this as a top priority.
 - Ensure clear, year-round pathways from parking lots to entrances, including snow clearing.
 - Upgrade washrooms to include universal change rooms and adult change tables.
 - Provide rest seating at regular intervals along trails and in large facilities.



Customer Service

- About one-third felt their accessibility needs were always considered at City services, while most said “sometimes.”
- Over half of those needing accommodations during service interactions reported negative experiences.
- Suggestions included:
 - Provide mandatory accessibility training for all staff, including seasonal and part-time workers.
 - Establish a central accessibility contact to help residents navigate requests for support.
 - Improve awareness of how to request accessible formats and accommodations.

Collaboration and Ongoing Engagement

Addressing accessibility barriers requires a collaborative approach and is a shared responsibility of City divisions, staff, the community, and City Council. Accessible employee engagement and public engagement processes will help the city make more informed decisions and build strong relationships with the communities the City serves.

The City will:

- Commit to ongoing, meaningful engagement with employees and residents living with disabilities when designing and implementing goods, services, and facilities.
- Consult with the Accessibility Advisory Committee on decisions related to accessibility planning, as outlined in Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005.
- Ensure that employee and public engagement activities are accessible and available in alternative formats.
- Ensure that City divisions work together to align and advance accessibility priorities.



John Dolson Centre



Plan in Action: Ongoing Actions and Accomplishments

The City of Cambridge launched its first Multi-Year Accessibility Plan (MYAP) in 2018. Since then, we have made steady progress in meeting the requirements of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) for public sector organizations. Building on this foundation, we are committed to going beyond compliance by planning thoughtfully, engaging with our community, advisory committees and collaborating across departments. Our goal is to continue advancing accessibility and inclusion in meaningful, practical, and lasting ways. The City of Cambridge will continue to meet and, in some cases, exceed the AODA requirements.

What We've Done

- Since 2022, the **Cambridge Accessibility Advisory Committee (CAAC)** has actively shaped accessible development and policy. The Committee provided formal recommendations on 39 projects in 2022, reviewed 18 projects in 2023, including five major capital files, and reviewed over 20 projects in 2024.
- In 2025, **accessibility walkthroughs** have been conducted at key city facilities, involving representatives from the Facilities and Emergency Preparedness departments. These walkthroughs aim to evaluate accessibility and safety conditions. Upgrades have already started at City Hall and will continue throughout 2025. The initial audits focused on City Hall, where both short-term and long-term enhancements are planned. One of the positive outcomes from this process has been the addition of evacuation chairs at City Hall to ensure safe evacuations.
- The City continues to support Inclusive Seasonal Programming like Sensitive Santa and offers accessible resources for residents, including free "Treat Accessibly" lawn signs and plain-language visual aids to support participation for all.
- The City of Cambridge has actively participated in an **intermunicipal collaboration** with the City of Kitchener and the City of Waterloo since 2022 to support NAAW (National AccessAbility Week) events, including the 2025 Accessibility Week Tradeshow and Conference.
- The City of Cambridge partnered with neighbouring municipalities to host a successful NAAW Book Club featuring *Demystifying Disability* by Emily Ladau. Through four engaging sessions, including three virtual discussions and an in-person panel with disability advocates on May 24, staff and community members came together to learn, reflect, and connect. The positive feedback highlighted the impact of this initiative and reinforced our commitment to building awareness and advancing disability inclusion.
- In 2024, the City launched the Winter Sidewalk Clearing Program to support qualifying residents with physical and financial limitations by assisting with winter sidewalk maintenance.



Ongoing Actions

- Continuing to embed accessibility reviews into the early stages of all capital and site plan projects, with CAAC involvement and staff consultation.
- Review all city-owned buildings regarding accessibility and safety in collaboration with the accessibility coordinator, the fire department, the safety department, and facilities.
- Ensure accessibility criteria are key requirements of the procurement process when acquiring or purchasing goods, services, and or facilities.
- Develop a standardized list of accessible fixtures, features, and equipment.
- Implement an inclusive training program that incorporates an intersectional approach and covers various types of disabilities, including mental health or cognitive conditions, invisible and episodic disabilities.
- A new **public notice policy** includes QR codes and accessible colour-coded signage.

Looking Ahead

- Working with all departments to ensure all their work/reports are submitted in **Alternative Formats** and the **Remediation Process** is transparent for all external and internal stakeholders.
- Plans are underway to establish a dedicated budget line for corporate accessibility projects.

- Working with external website provider to cleanup and migrate content to a new website in 2025/26 to better meet AODA standards and improve usability for all residents, including those using assistive technologies.
- Embed accessibility into the City's Older Adult Strategy as work proceeds on accessible and age-friendly commitments and recommendations.

What We're Proud Of

As part of the City of Cambridge's ongoing commitment to fostering a culture of respect and well-being, 2024 marked the launch of our first annual National AccessAbility Week (NAAW). This meaningful initiative has since become a cornerstone of our efforts to increase awareness, celebrate diversity, and advance disability inclusion across the organization.

NAAW at the City is more than just a week, it reflects our values and a growing movement to ensure everyone can participate in the workplace with purpose, dignity, and belonging.

These initiatives, supported by staff and leadership alike, demonstrate the City of Cambridge's continued commitment to building an inclusive organization that reflects and celebrates our community's diversity.



Plan in Action: Key Areas Going Forward



Information and Communications

What We've Done

- The City is committed to communicating in ways that respect and support the diverse needs of individuals with disabilities. In 2024, we proudly re-launched the **Activities Guide** in an accessible digital format, its first release since 2020. Designed with inclusive features such as screen-reader compatibility, clear layout, and adjustable text sizes.
- Collaborated with the **Electronic Document Management (EDM)** team to ensure newsletters and publications meet AODA standards, including alt text, proper heading structure, and screen reader compatibility.
- Continue to ensure any new, mandatory PDFs on City website meet accessibility requirements before upload and that social media images include accessible elements such as alt text.
- Initiated **department-wide AODA training** for accessible print, web, and signage materials.
- Piloted a **new public notice template** using plain language, QR codes, and accessible colour-coded formatting.
- A Plain Language Toolkit will be created to support clear communication across departments and ensure everyone can access information regardless of ability.

Ongoing Actions

- Ensure processes for receiving and responding to feedback are accessible to people living with disabilities.
- Provide and arrange for the provision of accessible formats and communication support upon request, in consultation with the requestor and considering the person's accessibility needs. This includes emergency plans and public safety information.
- Continue to update the guidelines on Information and Communications Standards and enhance access to training, resources, and support for staff in their adoption and application of the guidelines. This includes updated corporate brand standards and resources, accessible Word and PowerPoint templates and style sheets, understanding of colour contrast ratios, and increasing adoption of accessible best practices in communications.
- Ongoing improvements to the website in collaboration with the website provider and City staff from all divisions, including ensuring PDFs are created accessibly and addressing any online features or apps that may not be compliant with WCAG 2.0 guidelines and AODA Level AA standards.

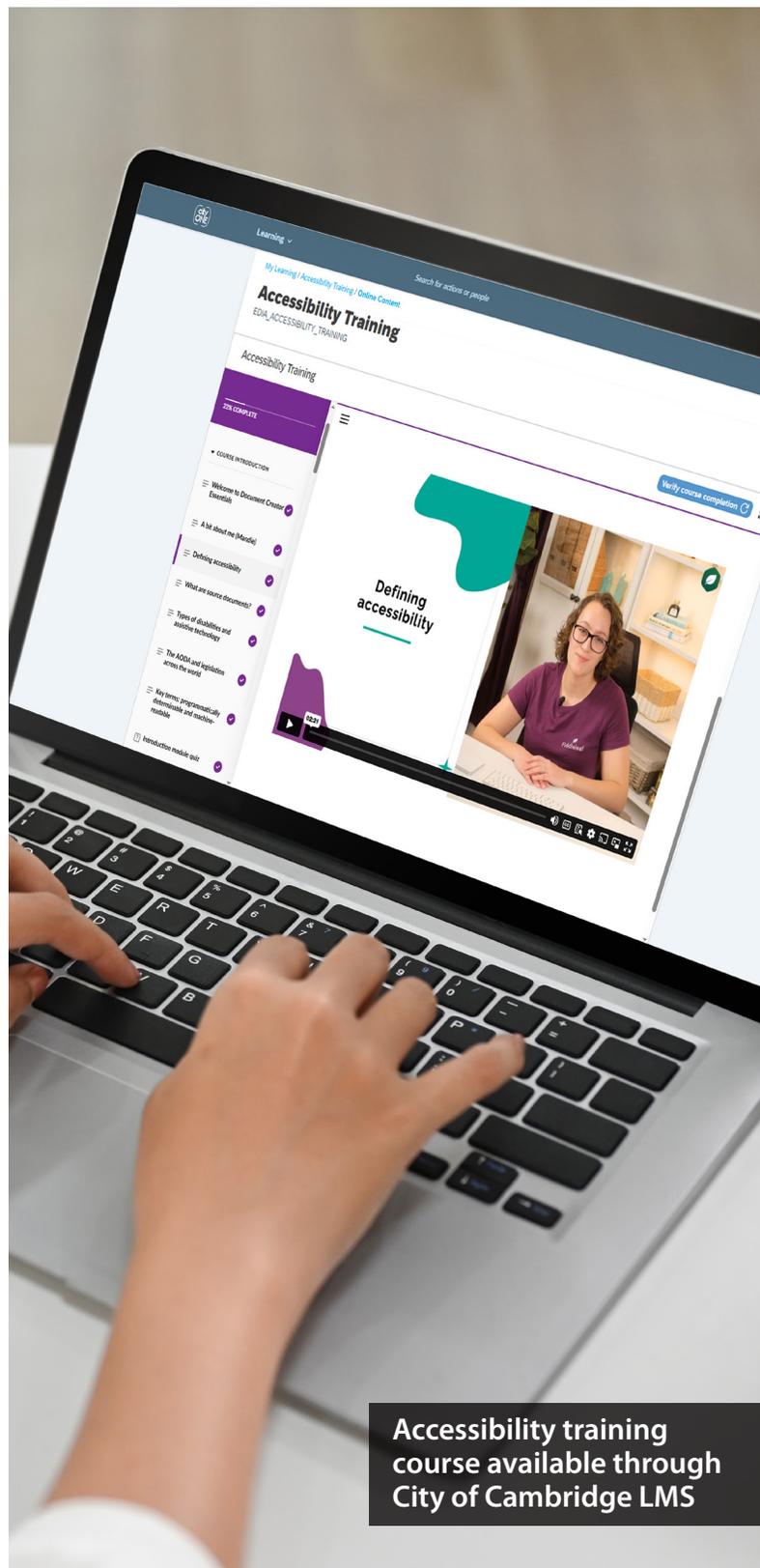
Looking Ahead

- Collaborate with departments to ensure that all necessary software tools for creating accessible documents are acquired and made available to all staff who need them.
- The City’s accessible format request system will be expanded with a centralized platform.
- Accessibility testing tools will be introduced to identify non-compliance issues before publication.

What We’re Proud Of

The City of Cambridge is proud to offer new Accessible Documents training through our Learning Management System (LMS), reflecting our ongoing commitment to accessibility and inclusive service delivery. Developed by experts in accessibility compliance and AODA standards, this training equips staff with the knowledge and skills needed to create documents that are usable by everyone, including people living with disabilities.

The course is structured across three levels—beginner, Intermediate, and advanced—to support staff at all stages of learning. Whether it’s internal reports or public-facing materials, this training helps ensure that our communications are clear, inclusive, and barrier-free. This supports our goal of embedding accessibility into our everyday work and fostering a culture of inclusion across the organization.



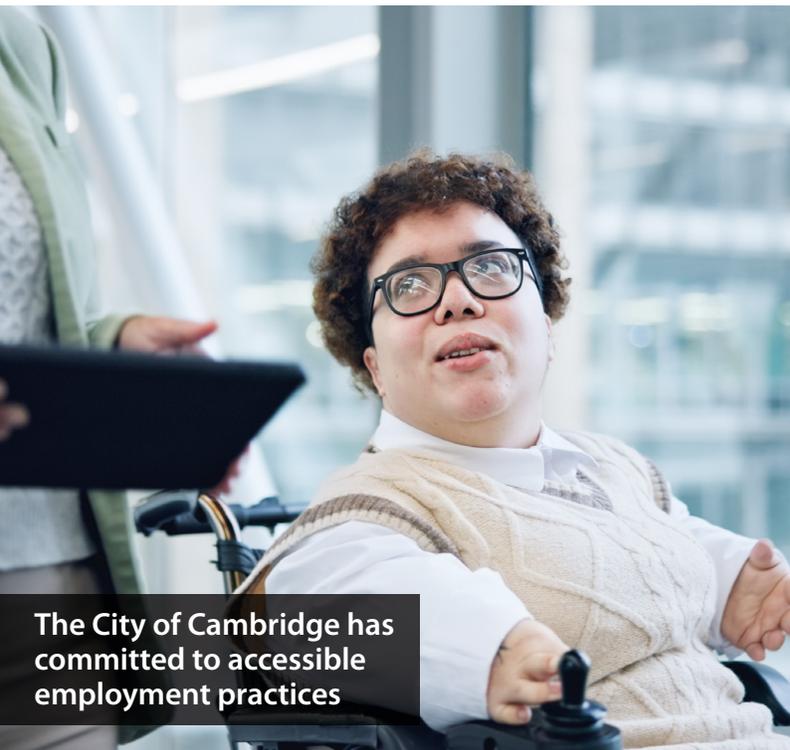
Accessibility training course available through City of Cambridge LMS



Employment

What We've Done

- The City is committed to accessible employment practices and policies to attract and retain employees with disabilities. It is committed to providing accommodation to employees with disabilities in a way that best respects their dignity and allows them to carry out their essential job duties and take part fully and meaningfully.
- **AODA-compliant onboarding and inclusive hiring practices** have been embedded across departments.
- Cambridge Fire Services introduced **inclusive and accessible programming for staff** and community (since 2023).
- New City employees receive information and training on employees' rights and responsibilities under the Code, the AODA and policies that foster an inclusive workplace. These include a customer service policy on providing goods and services to people living with disabilities and a commitment to promote a scent-sensitive office space.
- The City completed two Staff Diversity and Engagement Surveys in 2022 and 2025 to assess equity, belonging, accessibility, and accommodation practices across the organization.
- Job postings and hiring workflows now clearly state that accommodations are available at every stage of the recruitment process, reinforcing the City's commitment to inclusive and barrier-free hiring.
- The City of Cambridge provides an accessible, quiet room for both staff and visitors. This space enhances accessibility for individuals with disabilities who may need a private area to take medication or rest. Additionally, it accommodates the needs of staff and visitors of various creeds, ensuring everyone has a comfortable environment.



The City of Cambridge has committed to accessible employment practices



Ongoing Actions

- Regular review of policies and procedures to identify, prevent and remove barriers to employment and development opportunities.
- **Departmental Tracking of Accessibility Practices** is underway, especially in hiring, training, and workplace accommodations.
- Provide employees with individualized workplace emergency response information, upon request.
- Consult with employees to provide and arrange for accessible formats and communication support.
- Ensure the needs of employees with disabilities are considered in performance management, career development, advancement, and redeployment.
- HR is working with leadership to develop consistent, **Accessible Onboarding** and support pathways.
- Maintain a return-to-work process and provide individual documented accommodation plans for employees with disabilities when required.
- Undertaking an equity audit to review Human Resources policies from an inclusion, diversity, equity and accessibility perspective.

Looking Ahead

- A Cambridge Employee Accessibility Resource Guide is in development, with information on ergonomic supports, mental health services, and adaptive technology.
- Peer support and knowledge-sharing models are being piloted across departments.
- Universal Design for Employment principles will be integrated into HR policies and workplace tools.

- Collaborate closely with CCRW (Canadian Council on Rehabilitation and Work), CNIB (Canadian National Institute for the Blind), and other organizations focused on disability inclusion in the workplace to implement training and meaningful activities that enhance education, raise awareness, and prepare organizations to create more inclusive working environments for talented individuals with disabilities.

What We're Proud Of

At the City of Cambridge, we're proud to create a workplace where inclusion and accessibility are more than just goals - they're part of who we are. We're committed to ensuring that every employee, regardless of ability or background, feels supported, heard, and empowered to succeed.

By providing accessible resources, meaningful accommodations, and ongoing support, we work to remove barriers and open doors for everyone. Our culture is built on respect, collaboration, and the belief that everyone deserves the opportunity to contribute, grow, and thrive. We're proud to stand behind a workplace that reflects the diversity of our community and champions accessibility at every level.



Screen readers create a more inclusive working environment



Design of Public Spaces (Built Environment)

What We've Done

- Continue to ensure new or redeveloped public spaces comply with specific accessibility design requirements. The **2024 Facility Accessibility Design Standards** guides all new and renovated municipal infrastructure.
- The redesign of the Ed Newland Pool beach entry, including renovations to the front pedestrian and vehicle entrances of Ed Newland Pool.
- New accessible features were built into the **Preston Memorial Auditorium** expansion and the Cambridge Recreation Complex, collectively projected to serve over 1.7 million visits annually.
- New sidewalks and multi-use trails were installed with accessibility surfaces, signage, and curb cuts; This Includes Dunbar Road and Franklin Boulevard (from 401 to the nearest intersection in conjunction with Ministry of Transportation work).
- Accessibility enhancements were completed across all five Cambridge Public Library branches to enhance inclusive access and improve the user experience. These upgrades include:
 - multiple at-grade entrances with automatic push-button doors,
 - barrier-free interior layouts that support ease of movement around stacks and public spaces,
 - accessible washrooms (including all-gender and single-use options) with automated entries, and elevators providing full access to all public floors at Queen's Square, Old Post Office, Preston, Clemens Mill, and Hespeler Library locations.

Ongoing Actions

- Continue phased renovations and accessibility audits of fire stations and public-facing service areas.
- Ensure project designs are viewed with an inclusion lens and consideration to maximize accessibility.
- Universal design principles have been embedded in all **New Park and Trail Developments**.
- **Speed limits were reduced** in select areas to improve safety and accessibility for pedestrians and cyclists. Review and update procedures for the preventative and emergency maintenance of the accessible elements required in the Design of Public Spaces Standards, such as curbs and ramps, handrails and tactile indicators on stairs
- Ongoing collaboration with Transportation and team, aiming to improve and enhance accessibility of parking spaces in the City's municipally operated parking lots and align with the City's most recent version of FADS (Facility Accessibility Design Standard).
- Review and update procedures for dealing with temporary disruptions when these accessible elements are not working.
- The CAAC continues to review and offer recommendations on both operational and capital projects.



Looking Ahead

- Prioritize city-wide accessibility upgrades, including **tactile wayfinding**, **automated doors**, **barrier-free seating**, and **audible pedestrian signals**.
- Continue to evaluate all new capital projects to ensure full compliance with AODA and Section 3.8 of the Ontario Building Code related to Barrier-Free Design.
- Redevelop 19 Cambridge Street into a future **Arts and Culture Hub**, showcasing how accessibility can be integrated into community-center design and heritage restoration.
- **Incorporate inclusive features** into recreational spaces such as the Lions Can-Amera and Soper Park Spray Pad.
- Review of all City owned parking lots and access conditions of accessible parking spaces. Signage and painted lines will be updated where applicable to ensure legislative compliance.
- The **Parks Master Plan (2025-2055)** is committed to increasing accessibility in the city's parks and amenities. The City currently has 63 Standard playgrounds and 4 Premium playgrounds. Premium "fully accessible" playgrounds offer play value and challenge for a range of ages and abilities, and a rubberized surface, and are located in larger Community Parks, which also have supportive amenities such as washrooms, accessible path of travel, and parking. Standard playgrounds are located in Neighbourhood Parks (and currently in nine Community Parks) and include accessible elements and an engineered wood fibre surface. The City intends to have the City park (Riverside) and all 14 Community Parks feature Premium playgrounds upon replacement. City Park and Community Park playgrounds in the capital budget forecast that will be replaced (as Premium) include the following parks: Riverside and Churchill. Community Parks that will see a transition from Standard to Premium playgrounds

include: Hespeler Optimist, Willard, Soper, Hancock, Churchill, and Lions Can-Amera. Playgrounds in remaining Community parks are listed below and do not currently have a replacement schedule within the 10 year capital forecast but will all transition to Premium playgrounds in the future: Victoria Park (Galt) – replacement of existing Premium, Victoria Park (Hespeler) – replacement of existing Premium, Dickson, Duncan Ferguson, Lincoln, Bismark, Gordon Chaplin, and Wesley Blvd. (new park and Premium playground to be constructed in 2026).

What We're Proud Of

With the Council's leadership and the valued guidance of the Cambridge Accessibility Advisory Committee, the City of Cambridge continues to make meaningful progress in creating more accessible and inclusive public spaces.

From the upcoming Cambridge Recreation Complex—designed with accessibility at its core and set to open in 2026, to recent upgrades at the Soccer Complex, and Witmer Park, each project reflects our commitment to removing barriers and supporting community participation for all. Together, these enhancements show how we are intentionally shaping a more inclusive Cambridge—one where every person feels welcome, valued, and empowered to participate in community life.

Did You Know

The City of Cambridge is proud to participate in the **AccessNow Map Mission**, a collaborative initiative aimed at enhancing accessibility awareness within the community. This mission involves assessing and sharing accessibility information about local spaces, helping residents and visitors identify venues that are accessible to individuals with disabilities. By contributing to this user-generated database, the City supports efforts to create a more inclusive environment, ensuring everyone can access and enjoy public spaces throughout Cambridge.



Transportation (As Relevant to Cambridge)

Note: Public transit services are delivered by the Region of Waterloo, while the City of Cambridge is responsible for ensuring accessibility of sidewalks, trails, and roads.

What We've Done

- **Constructed new sidewalks** and **improved pedestrian crossings** to enhance the accessibility of our bus stops, etc., including a significant underpass at Beverly Street.
- **Lowered speed limits** in several zones to improve safety and accessibility for pedestrians and cyclists.
- Installed new curb ramps with tactile warning indicators at key intersections and crossings.
- Expanded multi-use trail systems with accessible surfacing and connecting links.

Ongoing Work

- **Coordinating with Grand River Transit** and the Region of Waterloo to ensure accessible connections between municipal infrastructure and regional transit.
- **Embedding accessible street-level features** into all new construction and redevelopment projects.
- Continue to seek improvements and acknowledge the importance of maintaining sidewalks and pathways winter.

Looking Ahead

- City-wide pedestrian mapping project will identify and label accessible trails, crossings, and transit links.
- Upcoming projects will feature accessible rest areas, seating, and improved night lighting.
- Exploring pilot initiatives for innovative mobility infrastructure, such as textured navigation zones and rest stations.

What We're Proud Of

In 2024, the City of Cambridge secured \$4.4 million in infrastructure funding through the Provincial Building Faster Fund—an important milestone in our efforts to enhance accessibility across the community. This investment supports the development of walkable, inclusive, and well-connected infrastructure that reflects the diverse needs of our residents, including those with disabilities.

The City is actively working to reduce mobility barriers by prioritizing accessible pathways, safer intersections, and more connected public spaces. Our goal is to create a city where everyone, regardless of age or ability, can move through Cambridge safely, independently, and with confidence. This funding helps advance that vision and reinforces our ongoing commitment to building an accessible and inclusive community.



Accessible Trail in Soper Park



Customer Service

What We've Done

- Digitized the **Personal Assistance Leisure (PAL) Card** application process to enhance accessibility and improve the user experience. This upgrade allows residents to apply for and renew their PAL Cards online.
- CAAC contributed to service standard reviews and provided direct feedback on signage, facilities, and communication support.
- In 2024, **Sensitive Santa** had improved sensory-friendly features, welcoming 81 families and 163 children. The experience provided a calm, inclusive environment for 80 children with special needs and their siblings to enjoy a magical visit with Santa.
- Staff from various departments supported **WithoutWalls (WOW)** phone-based programming for residents with limited mobility or access to in-person events.
- Front-line staff received updated AODA training in accessible service delivery and communication.
- Provide notice of temporary service disruptions to programs, services or facilities.

Ongoing Actions

- Continue to evaluate City programs and services through an inclusion lens.
- Determine the most appropriate outlet to share information about fun, adaptive, Inclusive recreation programs, to ensure the inclusion and equitable participation of individuals with disabilities in recreation programs.

- Enhancing accessibility across hybrid customer service platforms, such as virtual appointments to better support users with disabilities.
- An accessible formats request tool is in development to centralize and standardize public service delivery.
- Enhanced training is planned for Fire Services, Recreation, and Environmental Services to improve interactions with residents living with disabilities.
- Train all employees, volunteers, and agents on the AODA, the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation, and Ontario's Human Rights Code pertaining to people living with disabilities.

Looking Ahead

- Plain language scripts and training materials will be introduced for consistent, inclusive customer service.
- The City will audit and retrofit meeting spaces and counters to ensure barrier-free access.

What We're Proud Of

In 2024, more than 7,125 individuals participated in swim lessons through the "Accommodations Available" model, which allows individuals to request supports that meet their unique needs.

The City also introduced specialized leadership programs to encourage participation from youth with disabilities, supporting skill development in welcoming and adaptable environments.

These initiatives reflect our ongoing dedication to removing barriers and ensuring that all residents can access services equitably and with dignity.



Next Steps

The City of Cambridge is committed to continuous improvement and will take the following next steps to maintain and strengthen accessibility across all programs, services, and facilities; this will include:

- Continue integrating accessibility reviews into early phases of all municipal projects, supported by the Accessibility Coordinator and the Cambridge Accessibility Advisory Committee (CAAC).
- Establish a dedicated accessibility budget line to fund high-impact improvements aligned with AODA priorities and community feedback.
- Expand the availability of plain-language resources, digital accessibility training, and inclusive design tools for staff across all departments.
- Launch targeted evaluations of key service areas (e.g., customer counters, public meeting rooms, fire stations) to identify and remove accessibility barriers.
- Deepen partnerships with community organizations to improve outreach and engagement with people living with disabilities.
- Pilot emerging technologies to enhance accessibility in digital platforms, transportation infrastructure, and public engagement tools.

General Requirements

- Review and update the City's accessible procurement practices and procedures. The City must include accessibility criteria when buying or acquiring goods, services, facilities and self-service kiosks. The City will review and update current processes to ensure the processes and resources are up to date and reflect best practices.
- Revise language in all bidding documents and contracts to incorporate explicit accessibility and training requirements exceeding the standard AODA statement. And ensure vendors follow applicable guidelines or standards on topics such as accessible documents, presentations, meetings, features and tools, and incorporate requirements into procurement evaluation criteria.

Information and Communication Standards

- Review corporate resources, accessible Word and PowerPoint templates, eScribe reports, and understanding of colour contrast ratios, and increasing adoption of accessible best practices in communications.
- Proactively plan and arrange for accommodations and ensure participants are provided with clear instructions on how to request any additional support.



Design of Public Spaces Standards

- Develop an implementation plan for the 2024 Facility Accessibility Design Standards to identify challenges and determine a path that supports the highest level of accessibility, and support the City's commitment to creating inclusive, accessible environments for all.
- Prioritize building upgrades based on a Building Accessibility Assessment, starting with sites with the highest actual and potential use by people living with disabilities, showing progress each year, and conducting an inventory of accessibility gaps, determining the level of urgency and need for upgrades, current and upcoming.
- Formalize a process to include AODA compliance in development application plan reviews for both developer build and capital projects, incorporating consultations with the AAC.

Customer Service Standard

- Conduct an internal needs assessment to determine opportunities for continuous improvement in serving customers with disabilities.

- Update the Customer Service Policy to ensure continued relevance and effectiveness and provide accessible customer service training that exceeds AODA requirements and promotes inclusive language, increasing awareness of disabilities, and improved program implementation, adaptation and behaviour management.
- Develop a strategy for training and raising awareness among employees, the public, and third parties providing services on the City's behalf about the rights of people living with disabilities to enter City facilities with a support animal, and the right of support persons to have free access to recreational services.

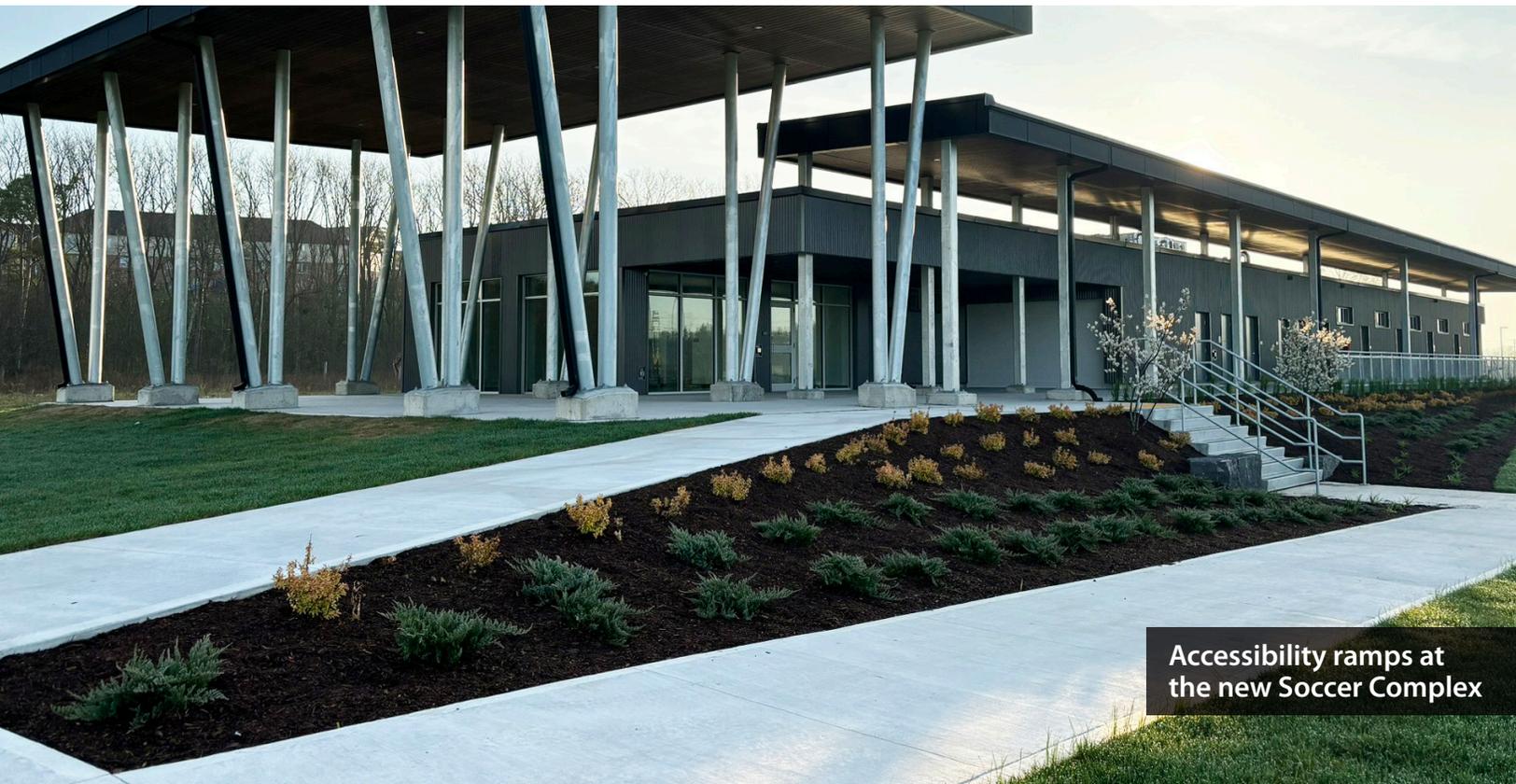
The City is committed to ongoing improvement and will continue to explore new ways to enhance accessibility for all residents. Through regular reviews, community feedback, and collaboration across departments, we aim to identify and remove barriers in our programs, services, and digital platforms to support an inclusive and welcoming community.



Actions to Monitor, Evaluate and Report on AODA Requirements

To ensure transparency and accountability, the City of Cambridge will:

- Submit accessibility compliance reports to the Government of Ontario every two years, as required under the AODA.
- Publish an annual status report that outlines progress on the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan and identifies any areas for additional action.
- Maintain active collaboration between CAAC, staff, and Council to monitor accessibility initiatives and advise on improvements.
- Review and update this Multi-Year Accessibility Plan at least once every five years, with community consultations and accessibility audits guiding revisions.
- Track accessibility feedback received through public channels and service touchpoints to inform ongoing improvements.
- Ensure alignment with updates to provincial legislation, accessibility standards, and best practices in universal and inclusive design.



Accessibility ramps at the new Soccer Complex



Let us know what you think.

We welcome your feedback. Please let us know your thoughts about the City of Cambridge's 2024 to 2028 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan and general accessibility matters.

To view this plan online,
visit cambridge.ca/accessibility

To request a copy of the plan in another format or to send us your comments or questions,
please get in touch with us at:

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