

**Date:** 2021-11-15

**Subject:** **2021 Accessibility Year-End Update**

**Contact:** Janice Adshead, Deputy Clerk  
Legislative Services, Ext. 2109

**Report Number:** Legislative Services-2021-1224

**Recommendations:**

1. That the report dated November 9, 2021, from Janice Adshead, Deputy Clerk to the Accessibility Advisory Committee meeting of November 30, 2021 re: **Accessibility at the City of Brampton Update**, be received.

**Overview:**

- **The City of Brampton's Accessibility Office works collaboratively with the Accessibility Advisory Committee as well as City departments in facilitating and supporting the City's goal of creating a Brampton that is accessible to individuals of all abilities.**
- **This report provides the Committee and Council with an annual update on the City's responsibilities and progress related to accessibility, and future direction in both meeting legislative requirements and enhancing accessibility at the City.**

**Background:**

This report provides an update on the City's progress meeting and/or exceeding accessibility requirements, as identified by the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* (AODA) and the Integrated Accessibility Standards (IASR) (*Ontario Regulation 191/11*). The current Multi-Year Accessibility Plan ([MAP](#)) was approved in December 2019 and a compliance report was filed with the Province in November 2021.

This status report identifies the initiatives that were completed in 2021, as outlined in the MAP, as well as identifies items that were designed to identify, prevent and remove barriers, while meeting the requirements of the AODA and IASR.

This 2021 annual status report will be made available on the City's website under [www.brampton.ca/accessibility](http://www.brampton.ca/accessibility). It will also be provided to anyone who requests a copy, in addition to providing in alternative formats upon request.

### **Current Situation:**

The City of Brampton has taken, and continues to take, a progressive approach to addressing barriers to accessibility. Not only has this commitment improved the quality of life for residents of Brampton, it has provided a foundation upon which the City will continue to build an inclusive community that meets the needs of individuals of all ages and abilities.

In response to an Audit by the Ministry of Seniors and Accessibility, staff undertook a review of the City's existing accessibility program, identified areas of focus, and continued to work towards meeting legislative requirements and improving accessibility within the community. Although a formal "measuring" process does not exist, the City has identified a number of key performance indicators to start tracking levels of compliance starting in 2022.

### AODA Compliance

As reported in the City's current MAP, the City continues to strive to achieve compliance with the AODA requirements as per the associated timelines. In 2021, staff have identified a few areas where more focus is needed to ensure those legislative requirements are met, and continue to be met. Specifically, in the 2021 year-end report to the AODA, it was identified that there are 3 areas that the City needs to improve upon including:

1. We are required to have seven (7) members on the AAC who have a disability, and we currently do not meet these legislative requirements.
2. Compliance with the WCAG 2.0 standards. January 1, 2021 was a key deadline whereby municipalities were required to make all websites and web content accessible. The Digital Innovation and Information Technology (DI&IT) Team has been working on this component over the past few years and have implemented digital architecture, various software programs, tools and resources to help the City meet this mandate. The Accessibility Team and DI&IT continue to consult on this requirement and commit to provide resources and guidance to City departments to meet objectives with respect to any content they maintain or place on the City's website. The Accessibility Team has been reviewing web content and providing feedback to the Departments. Together we can meet the legislative requirements, safeguard the City's reputation and provide all residents equal access to information.

3. Our MAP needs to be updated. While the City has maintenance plans in place as part of the Asset Management Plan; however, it hasn't been specifically identified in the MAP.

## 2021 Accessibility Achievements

### 1. Accessibility Awards

At the 2020 Accessibility Awards event which took place on June 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2021, the City recognized the achievements and efforts of some of the people, businesses, organizations and programs that demonstrate a commitment to accessibility and inclusion of people with disabilities. Award recipients include Michelle McLeod, in the Community Member category; Kerry's Place Autism Services, in the Not-for-Profit Organization category; CSR Wealth Management, in the business category; and Embrace in the Accessibility Program/Initiative category.

### 2. Accessibility Awareness Activities

The Accessibility Team has promoted Accessibility through a variety of initiatives throughout the year. A couple of the initiatives to highlight include:

- **Treat Accessibly:** A program which provides people with free Accessible Trick-or-Treating lawn signs, promoting accessible and inclusive change. The sign indicates to the neighborhood, that children with disabilities can participate in barrier-free Halloween activities at the homes where these signs are displayed.
- **Economic Development and Accessibility** partnered to deliver a workshop for local businesses titled "How to make your business more accessible." This workshop identified guidance and advice on improving accessibility including, updating signage; using proper terminology; website accessibility; accessible customer service; welcoming support persons and service animals, etc.

### 3. Accessibility for Life Training

To build greater awareness of how to plan, support and cater to people with physical and hidden disabilities, we have developed the "Accessibility for Life" online training program. This is a required training as part of the AODA and is aligned with Council's priority of Brampton is a Mosaic.

The online training is mandatory for all corporate employees, full-time, part-time, and contract employees, and volunteers. The training program included an overview of

legislative requirements, understanding disabilities, how to identify and remove barriers when engaging or serving people with disabilities, and how to make City facilities, programs and services more accessible to everyone. The training was made available on March 5, 2021, and within 3 months, over 80% of staff completed the training program.

#### 4. AODA Audit

In December 2020, the Ministry for Seniors and Accessibility selected the City of Brampton for an AODA Desk Audit to confirm the City's compliance with AODA and its associated accessibility standards. The audit report identified some key areas that needed to be addressed to help improve and enhance accessibility, specifically with regard to updating policy and processes. The gaps identified in the audit were successfully closed in July 2021, with the implementation of new policies and procedures.

#### 5. Established an Accessibility Internal Working Group

The City has established an Internal Accessibility Working Group, who will act as ambassadors providing advice, leadership and coordination to their department and all its divisions promoting within the City. Employees in this informal role, have agreed to:

- Become more aware about accessibility and identifying areas within their department that can be further improved or enhanced;
- Contribute to the bigger picture and helping achieve consistency;
- Communicate information to and from their teams; and,
- Influence their team(s) to consider accessibility in everything they do.

The first meeting was held in September, and discussions focused on member roles, and digital accessibility. Tips for meeting requirements included providing information in an alternate format; contrasts; fonts; screen reader compatibility; alternative text; reading order; captions; and use of plain language. Accessibility has been kept top of mind, with a monthly email identifying Accessibility-related updates and reminders.

#### 6. National AccessAbility Week (May 30 – June 5, 2021)

During the week of May 30 – June 5, the City celebrated National AccessAbility Week by in several ways, including a flag raising ceremony; providing communications about accessible parking spaces; hosting an Accessibility Scavenger Hunt; and re-promoting a virtual conversation the City previously recorded with accessibility activist Maayan Ziv.

7. Published a new Accessibility Policy, and 6 related Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)

The Accessibility team worked closely with all City Departments to create a new comprehensive accessibility policy, and six (6) supporting SOPs. The SOPs are aligned with the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR). Specifically, these SOPs are:

1. Accessibility – Customer Service SOP
2. Accessibility – Design of Public Spaces SOP
3. Accessibility – Employment SOP
4. Accessibility – General Matters SOP
5. Accessibility – Information and Communication SOP
6. Accessibility - Transportation SOP

The Accessibility Policy and related SOPs form the framework for the Accessibility program, and will enable the City to continue to take a very progressive approach to addressing barriers to accessibility. Not only has this commitment improved the quality of life for residents of Brampton, it has provided a foundation upon which the City will continue to build an inclusive community that meets the needs of individuals of all ages and abilities. The Policy and SOPs have been made publicly available on [www.brampton.ca/Accessibility](http://www.brampton.ca/Accessibility).

8. Review and provide comments on site plans and capital projects

As a core component of the Accessibility program, the team reviews and provides comment on both Site Plans and Capital Projects. Capital projects are reviewed during various states of construction to ensure that new and refurbished facilities are designed and built to provide access for all.

In 2021, comments were provided for the following projects: Chris Gibson; Victoria Park Arena; Fire Station 201; HURLT; Transit Facility; Brampton Tennis Club; Rose Theatre; Downtown Revitalization; 185 Clark (Transit); Balmoral; Century Gardens Pool Changing Rooms; Chinguacousy Wellness Centre; Earnscliffe; Fire Station 214; Fitzpatrick House; and the Williams Parkway Fire Campus.

## 9. Rick Hansen Foundation Certification of 10 City Facilities

Ten of the City's facilities underwent inspections as part of the [Rick Hansen Foundation Accessibility Certification \(RHFAC\)](#). These inspections measure the level of meaningful access beyond building code, and is based upon the holistic user experience of people with varying disabilities affecting their mobility, vision, and hearing.

The facilities were rated at the following levels:

1. City hall - 75%
2. Brampton Gateway- 74%
3. Brampton Transit Terminal -74%
4. BFES Facility - 73%
5. Gore Meadows Community Centre – 72%
6. Springdale Library – 71%
7. Cassie Campbell – 71%
8. Rose Theatre- 70%
9. Lester B Pearson Theatre – 70%
10. POA Courthouse: 68%

These ratings are positive reflections of the work carried out over the years to make City facilities more accessible. Within the rating report are some key areas that help improve and enhance accessibility at our facilities. Brad McCannell, Vice President of Access and Inclusion at the Rick Hansen Foundation, said:

“I want to congratulate the City of Brampton for achieving RHF Accessibility Certified for 10 Sites and taking the first step toward developing a welcoming environment for everyone, everywhere. The City of Brampton is demonstrating real leadership in an industry that holds the key to the full participation of people with disabilities, their friends, and their families.”

### **Corporate Implications:**

Currently the Accessibility Function maintains a nominal base budget for general training, awards and event expenditures with special projects budgeted when they are required. Financial resources captured within each department's capital and operating budgets are utilized to address their respective areas of responsibility; however, the resources are not explicitly designated for accessibility.

### Financial Implications:

The accessibility program is included in the City Clerk's current budget process and staff will continue to budget accordingly for future years.

Other Implications:

Establishment of an internal working group will require designated time commitment from existing staff from defined departments throughout the year.

**Term of Council Priorities:**

This report fulfills the Council Priority of the City of Brampton as a Mosaic, recognizing the City's continued commitment towards accessibility for all residents of Brampton. The City Clerk's Office strives to promote accessibility for all as a key priority in its day-to-day business and future planning.

**Conclusion:**

City staff have reviewed its current Accessibility program and completed a comparison consultation with other Ontario municipalities to confirm the City is in alignment with consistent accessibility practices. The review highlighted areas of success for the City as well as areas for improvement. Staff continue to work diligently to meet and exceed the AODA requirements. With Council and Senior Leadership direction and support, we will continue to collaborate to continually enhance accessibility within our facilities, programs and services. The City strives to make Brampton a place for people of all abilities.

Authored by:

Reviewed by:

---

Janice Adshead, Deputy Clerk

---

Peter Fay, City Clerk

Approved by:

Submitted by:

---

Marlon Kallideen, Commissioner,  
Legislative Services

---

David Barrick,  
Chief Administrative Officer