

# 2023 Accessibility Status Report



Our Community: A Place Where  
Everyone Can Live, Work & Play



Innisfil





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**To request a copy of the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan or Status Report in another format, please contact us:**

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## 2023 Accessibility Status Report

Creating communities where every person can participate fully is important for people, businesses, and community life. The Town remains steadfastly committed to making the community and workplace environment barrier-free and accessible. We focus on ensuring opportunities exist for residents, businesses, and organizations to connect in ways that are meaningful—physically, socially, culturally, and digitally.

This Accessibility Status Report is the update the Town of Innisfil provides on the measures taken to improve accessibility and implement the requirements set out by the Province of Ontario within the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), 2005* and the *Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR)*. The Status Report also provides an update on actions taken to implement the Town's Multi-Year Accessibility Plan.

We are proud of the significant strides made over the years and dedicated to continuing to remove barriers and improve accessibility. In doing so, the Town is guided on the premise of integration, independence, dignity, and equal opportunity.

***Creating communities where every person can participate fully is important for people, businesses, and community life.***





## Legislative Background and Compliance to Actions

The *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)* became law in 2005 and was followed by the *Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR)* in 2011. The IASR sets out the minimum accessibility requirements an organization must meet in the areas of customer service, information and communications, employment, transportation, and the built environment.

The following items represent highlights of achievements and initiatives that have enhanced accessibility or removed barriers in the Town of Innisfil. The list is formatted to reflect the commitments to our Multi-Year Accessibility Plan and core standards of the AODA and the IASR.

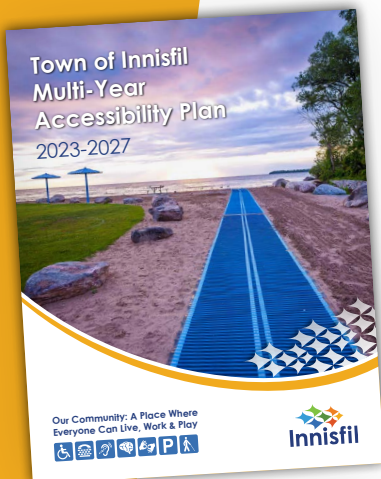
## Ongoing Commitment

Guided by the Town's Multi-Year Accessibility Plan and supported by the Innisfil Accessibility Advisory Committee, Town Staff from all service teams are involved in the development and implementation of municipal accessibility planning.

In 2023, Council endorsed a revised Multi-Year Accessibility Plan spanning the period from 2023 to 2027. This plan is a living document that outlines strategies and activities undertaken to identify, remove and prevent barriers for people with disabilities in our programs, services, facilities, and public spaces. It further guides Staff in proactive planning to support the Town's Strategic Plan pillars of 'grow, sustain, connect and serve' and is compliant with legislative requirements. We remain committed to making Innisfil a community that is accessible to all. In support of this commitment:

- The Town, through Mayor Lynn Dollin, proclaimed May 28 to June 3, 2023, as National AccessAbility Week. This extended the Town's recognition to all persons with disabilities and offered our support and appreciation to Innisfil's Accessibility Advisory Committee for opening the door to opportunities by making our Town an inclusive community.

Scan this QR code to access our Multi-Year Accessibility Plan



- The Town, through Mayor Lynn Dollin, proclaimed December 3, 2023 as the International Day of Persons with Disabilities. The proclamation recognized and celebrated the equal rights and dignity of disabled people everywhere and reaffirmed our commitment to building a world where people with disabilities are afforded the opportunities, independence, and respect they deserve. The proclamation also acknowledged the many achievements persons with disabilities have made and reiterated the continued commitment of the Town to creating and maintaining an accessible and inclusive community.
- Social media posts, promotional/educational materials, and media releases further advance our community's awareness and understanding of accessibility.

## General

### Community Accessibility Partnerships

Town Staff are part of the Ontario Network of Accessibility Professionals (ONAP). Staff attend ONAP meetings and share regular information and best practices. ONAP takes a proactive approach to removing barriers and strives for a fully accessible Ontario.

### Our Accessibility Policy

The Town's Integrated Accessibility Standards Policy facilitates regulatory compliance with the *Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation* (O. Reg. 191/11) of the AODA and all policy requirements of the regulation.

The policy outlines the overall strategic direction the Town follows in the identification, removal, and prevention of barriers to persons with disabilities to ensure access to the Town's goods, services, and facilities. The policy is shared with all new and returning employees, and education on accessibility is also provided.

### Training

Accessibility training is an important part of our training program.

- All new and returning employees, Council, and volunteers are trained on the AODA, the IASR and the Town's Integrated Accessibility Standards Policy. Records of training completion are kept as per legislative requirements.

- Training on website accessibility was provided to content contributors for the Town's website, Get Involved Innisfil engagement platform, and CivicWeb portal to ensure we are in compliance with provincial accessibility standards.
- Interactive learning opportunities are sought and implemented relating to accessibility.

### **Accessible Purchases**

Staff continue to include AODA requirements for projects in procurement documents.

### **Recreation Programs**

The Town continues to ensure that all recreation programs are fully inclusive. As of fall 2023, the public skating rules were modified to include sledges (in addition to previously permitted wheelchairs, strollers, and skating aids) to accommodate wide participation within all Town arena facilities.

The Town has launched an inclusive Mobile Seniors Active Living Centre (M-SALC) to respond to an evolving and increasingly active older adult demographic. The M-SALC travels within Innisfil communities providing opportunities for seniors to stay healthy, fit, and socially connected.







## Innisfil Summer Camps

All Town summer camps are accessible and inclusive for children and youth of all abilities. Inclusion counselors are available through registration to work one-on-one with children and youth who may need additional assistance and adaptations to programming to allow for an integrated camp experience for all.

Sensory stencils are also in place at the Innisfil Beach Park Pavilion as part of the accessible summer camp experience.



## Innisfil Accessibility Advisory Committee

The Innisfil Accessibility Advisory Committee (IAAC) advises Town Council and Staff on ways to identify, prevent, and remove barriers for all Town services, programs, and facilities. Members of the Committee are appointed by Town Council who seek the advice of the IAAC in matters of accessibility.

A dedicated Communications and Community Engagement team employee participates in the IAAC to ensure initiatives are shared appropriately across the community.

Town Staff continued to provide support to the dedicated IAAC, and assist with key initiatives, such as:

- The Town's first all-inclusive "Margaretta Park" which will begin construction in 2024 within the Sleeping Lion Development and make the IAAC's dream for the community a reality.



**Read about the naming of Margaretta Park at:**

**[Innisfil building \\$5M park in accessibility advocate's honour, Innisfil News \(innisfiltoday.ca\).](#)**





- Assisting the IAAC in resuming in-person demonstrations at Innisfil elementary schools for the **Breaking Down Barriers Awareness Program**, which aims to educate students about accessibility and how to prevent barriers. In 2023, the IAAC attended five schools, reaching over 225 Grade 5 students.
- Engaging with partners to help improve awareness and make our Town a barrier-free community.
- Providing updates on Town community projects, such as master plans, parks, trails, sidewalks, and facilities improvements to ensure a barrier-free community.



## Message from the Innisfil Accessibility Advisory Committee

Members of your IAAC are committed to applying the principles of inclusiveness and integration in reviewing projects and supporting various initiatives. We continue to work as strong advocates to improve accessibility in the Town's services, programs, and facilities. Your IAAC supports creating a welcoming and accessible community that allows everyone to engage and participate. Our educational program "Breaking Down Barriers Awareness Day" provides our local elementary schools hands on demonstrations that support education in wheelchair use, vision, hearing simulations, and interactive demonstrations that include sensory challenges, cognitive functions, dementia, autism and fall prevention. Your IAAC is excited that the all-inclusive "Margaretta Park" (in honour of the late Margaretta Papp-Belayneh) will commence construction in 2024 and will fulfill the dream of the IAAC for an inclusive park that everyone can enjoy. We envision and strive to build an accessible society that allows for meaningful opportunities for everyone of all abilities. Members of your IAAC take pride in providing leadership and expertise on accessibility issues and make great strides in removing barriers and encourage our business community to remove barriers to promote a barrier-free marketplace. We look forward to working with the community and stakeholders in the future and can be reached at [removingbarriers@innisfil.ca](mailto:removingbarriers@innisfil.ca).

**Councillor Robert Saunders,**  
Chair, Innisfil Accessibility Advisory Committee



*"Your IAAC supports creating a welcoming and accessible community that allows everyone to engage and participate."*

## Customer Service

### Accessible Customer Service

Our Customer Service team and all Town Staff are dedicated to upholding the Customer Service Standard and are trained to tailor their communication and service delivery to suit the diverse needs of our residents and customers, no matter how they access Town services. The Customer Service team provides support on projects that enhance digital service offerings and adapt services to meet the needs of the customer. This includes tapping into internal skills, including certified sign language interpreters and interpreters.

The Innisfil Town Hall service counter is equipped with a lower counter to serve customers using mobility aids, and in 2023, a wireless PIN pad was installed to enable ease of payment for enhanced accessibility.

The Town is continually exploring creative and innovative ways to break down service delivery barriers for persons with disabilities across all service channels.

### Public Feedback Process

Feedback received from the public related to improving the accessibility of Town facilities, goods, and services is accepted in any form and channeled through Customer Service. Customer Service logs and acknowledges all feedback received and facilitates internal collaboration and action over the course of the customer journey, acting as primary liaison with the customer until the file is resolved. Complaints received regarding accessibility issues are forwarded to Clerks Services for review and IAAC consideration.

## Information and Communication

### Accessible Information

The Town provides accessible formats of information, documents, and/or communication supports upon request, including emergency and public safety information.

### Accessible Engagement and Participation

The Town continues to enhance accessible engagement and participation.



- Council meetings continue to be livestreamed on the Town's YouTube channel and the recorded meetings are available to view with closed captioning.
- Council meetings continue to be accessible to the public through virtual participation, as may be required.
- Committee of Adjustment meetings have been made more inclusive and accessible with the transition to hybrid meeting options.
- Equipment upgrades (i.e. monitors, audio and cameras) were completed to provide for better, high-quality virtual and/or hybrid meetings and livestreaming.

### **Accessible Website and Web Content**

The Town completed the remediation of documents on the Town's website to ensure AODA compliance in accordance with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 Level AA. This includes ensuring readability, alternative text, compliant graphics, and conducting page-by-page accessibility audits. Town websites are accordingly in alignment with legislative requirements. Appropriate Staff have undergone training, and appropriate new Staff are trained in creating accessible documents and web content to ensure AODA compliance before posting any documents to the website.

## **Employment**

### **Accessible Employment – Recruitment**

Accommodation is provided upon request during all stages of the Town's recruitment process. The availability of accommodation is advertised on all job postings and the People & Talent team engages with candidates to identify and provide appropriate supports.

People & Talent team members are trained to provide accessible customer service and possess a range of skills and resources to accommodate various accommodation requests from candidates.

### **Emergency Response Plans for Our Staff**

Members of the Innisfil team who may need additional support in an emergency may request an individualized

emergency response plan tailored to their needs and work environment. People & Talent and the Leadership Team will collaborate with the employee and subject matter experts (as needed) to develop and implement a robust plan that meets the specific needs of the Staff member. Public emergency response plans are available in accessible formats upon request.

### **Ongoing Accessible Employment**

Accommodations are made as necessary throughout the employment relationship. Employees are advised through the recruitment process and via employment contracts of accessible employment. The Town's commitment to accessible employment is further reinforced through individual accommodation plans and return to work processes, as applicable. People & Talent and our Leadership Team work collaboratively with Staff in meeting accommodation needs.

## **Built Environment (Design of Public Spaces)**

### **Accessible Playgrounds, Parks, and Waterfront**

The Town continues to incorporate accessible features into our playgrounds, parks and waterfront. Through the Parks and Recreation Master Plan, the Town continues to engage the IAAC during the replacement and development of new playgrounds and parks to ensure they are inclusive, similar to the existing accessible playground at Innisfil Beach Park.







Highlights from 2023 include:

- Emberton Way (Sleeping Lion Development) Skate Park with trail connection right to sidewalk.
- Adult change table in the accessible washroom located at Town Square.

### Facilities

The Town continues to collaborate with our IAAC to complete accessibility audits of our community facilities. The audits identify accessibility barriers, prioritize opportunities for improvement, and make recommendations to prevent or remove barriers. Staff maintain and regularly inspect all existing accessibility features within Town facilities and public spaces. These include, but are not limited to, ramps and lifts for wheelchair access, handrail supports, accessible washrooms, accessible parking with signing, and visual fire alarms with flashing lights for the hearing impaired (at some locations).

In 2023, enhancements were made to the Morgan Russell Memorial Arena & Community Centre, including the installation of a new accessibility ramp and an accessible push button on the lobby doors.

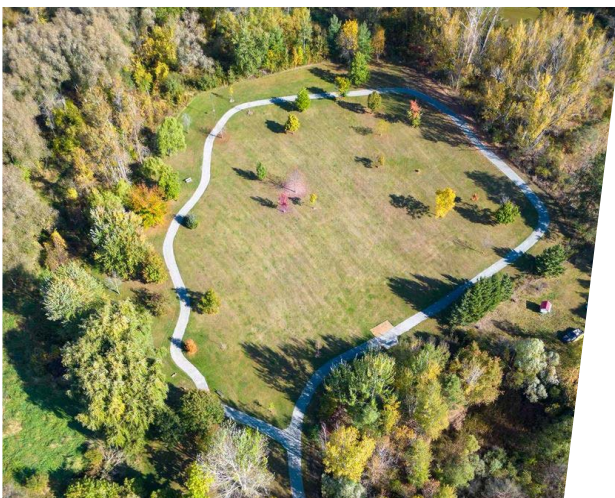


### Trails

Guided by our Trails Master Plan, the Town continues to plan for the creation and redevelopment of accessible trails throughout Innisfil. Town Staff make accessible trails a priority when redeveloping or creating public spaces.

In 2023, accessible trails included:

- Centennial Park: limestone screenings trail
- South Innisfil Arboretum - Limestone screenings trail
- Nantyr Drive & Ralston Loop - Asphalt trail joining the two roads/subdivisions



## **Audible Pedestrian Signals**

Town Staff continue to collaborate with the IAAC on the replacement of crossing signals to Audible Pedestrian Signals (APS).

## **Sidewalks**

Town Staff continue to assess sidewalk needs as replacements and/or new sidewalks are constructed and ensure they are compliant.

In 2023, tactile plates have been added as part of the Sidewalk Rehabilitation Program to:

- Rose Lane: at the intersection of 25th Sideroad, the intersection of Della Street, the intersection of Candaras Street, and at the end of the sidewalk by 741 Rose Lane.
- Oriole Crescent: (east and west entrances) on both sides of the intersection of Leslie Drive.
- Westmount Avenue: at the intersection of Annecca Street in front of 1093 Westmount Avenue.
- Ashwood Avenue: at the intersection of Westmount Avenue.

## **Site Plan Reviews**

Town Staff from Planning Services and the Community Development Standards Branch (CDSB) have implemented the Site Plan Accessibility Review Checklist. This checklist, developed collaboratively with the IAAC, is utilized by both applicants in preparing Site Plans and Town Staff when evaluating accessibility concerns in Site Plan Applications. The Building department of the CDSB continues to ensure that all new construction meets the Ontario Building Code's current requirements for Barrier-Free Design through the design review process of proposed new construction and through the site inspection process.

## **Building Permit Process**

CDSB staff have introduced a Cloudpermit online platform, making building permits applications and associated communication an accessible process. This service enhancement no longer requires an individual to attend the Town Hall to conduct business related to a Building Permit.





### **Parking Penalty Process**

Staff from the Municipal Law department of the CDSB introduced the Administrative Monetary Penalty System (AMPS) online platform as a more accessible process for individuals to appeal parking penalties. This accessible service enhancement allows individuals to dispute penalties without attending Town Hall. Individuals can choose to speak to a Staff member over the phone or via e-services to discuss and resolve their penalty.

## **Transportation**

### **Innisfil Transit**

Accessibility was a key factor of consideration through the implementation of Innisfil Transit (powered by Uber). The Town has continued to partner with Barrie-Innisfil taxi to provide subsidized wheelchair accessible trips through Innisfil Transit. Innisfil has also partnered with GoGoGrandparent to make Innisfil Transit more accessible for residents that do not have a smartphone or the ability to request their own trips.



## Creating an Accessible Community

Improving quality of life and creating a community where every person can participate fully is important for people, businesses, and community life. Accessibility not only helps people with disabilities, it benefits everyone.

**The Town of Innisfil is creating a community where every person can live, work and play.**

### Your Feedback is Important to Us!

Members of the public are encouraged to provide feedback, provide accessibility-related comments, or seek additional information on the Town's Multi-Year Accessibility Plan, Annual Status Report, and accessibility matters in general.

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Includes photography by Jim Craigmyle.