

2024 Accessibility Status Report



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



Innisfil



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To request a copy of the annual Accessibility Status Report in another format, please contact us:

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2024 Accessibility Status Report

Creating communities where every person can participate fully is important for people, businesses, and community life. The Town remains actively 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 meaningful ways—physically, socially, culturally, and digitally.

This Accessibility Status Report provides an update on the measures taken by the Town of Innisfil to improve accessibility and implement the requirements set out by the Province of Ontario in 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 to implement the Town's Multi-Year Accessibility Plan.

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

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Legislative Background and Compliance with Actions

The *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)* became law in 2005 and was followed 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. Innisfil strives to go above and beyond the minimum standard where possible.

Below are key highlights of accomplishments and initiatives aimed at enhancing accessibility and removing barriers within the Town of Innisfil. This list aligns with the commitment targets of the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan and adheres to the core standards set by the AODA and IASR.

Ongoing Commitment

Town Staff across all service teams actively participate in developing and executing accessibility planning within the Town. Their efforts are directed by the Town's Multi-Year Accessibility Plan and supported by the Innisfil Accessibility Advisory Committee (IAAC).

In 2024, Innisfil Council endorsed a revised [Multi-Year Accessibility Plan](#) spanning the period from 2023 to 2027. This plan serves as a living document detailing strategies and initiatives to identify, eliminate, and prevent barriers for individuals with disabilities across our programs, services, facilities, and public spaces. It also guides Staff in proactive planning aligned with the Town's Strategic Plan pillars (grow, sustain, connect, and serve), while adhering to legislative requirements. Our commitment to ensuring Innisfil remains an accessible community for everyone is unwavering. To support this commitment:

- The Town, through Mayor Lynn Dollin, proclaimed May 26 to June 1, 2024 as National AccessAbility Week. This extended the Town's recognition for all persons with disabilities and offered our support and appreciation to the IAAC for making our town an inclusive community and opening the door to opportunities.



During National AccessAbility Week week:

- o The Town highlighted regulations regarding accessible parking and produced a video promoted on the Town's YouTube channel underscoring the significance of not occupying these spaces without a valid permit. Social media messaging was also posted to promote safety and education on accessible parking spaces.
- o The Town's By-Law team conducted a campaign to enforce accessible parking regulations in municipal lots and private properties with enforcement agreements, including Georgian Downs, Tanger Outlets, and plazas along Innisfil Beach Road. Throughout the year, By-Law Officers continued monitoring these areas as part of their proactive patrols.
- The Town, through Mayor Lynn Dollin, proclaimed December 3, 2024 as the International Day of Persons with Disabilities. The proclamation, in part, "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 further acknowledged the many achievements of persons with disabilities and reiterated the continued commitment of the Town to creating and maintaining an accessible and inclusive community. It also reaffirmed the Town's commitment to identify, prevent, and remove barriers to equitable access and inclusion for persons with disabilities who live, work, and visit the Town of Innisfil.
- The Town enhanced community awareness and understanding of accessibility through social media posts, promotional and educational materials, and media releases.

General

Community Accessibility Partnerships

Town Staff in People & Talent participate as a member of the Ontario Network of Accessibility Professionals (ONAP). ONAP takes a proactive approach to removing barriers and strives for a fully accessible Ontario. The group meets regularly to share information and best practices.



Our Accessibility Policy

The Town's Integrated Accessibility Standards Policy ensures compliance with the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (O. Reg. 191/11) of the AODA, including all regulatory policy requirements. This policy sets the strategic direction for identifying, removing, and preventing barriers to ensure that individuals with disabilities can access the Town's goods, services, and facilities. The policy is shared with all new and returning employees, volunteer firefighters, and those supporting or volunteering with the Town.

Training

Accessibility training is an important part of our education program and we provide learning opportunities in various formats to meet the needs of employees.

- All new and returning employees are trained in the AODA, the IASR, the Town's Integrated Accessibility Standards Policy, and the 'Introduction to Accessible Documents' learning module. Records of training completion are kept as per legislative requirements.
- In September 2024, the IAAC hosted Breaking Down Barriers Awareness training sessions for employees. These sessions provided hands-on demonstrations to experience different challenges that people with disabilities face each day. Experiential learning included wheelchair demonstrations, hearing demonstrations, vision demonstrations, and interactive demonstrations (i.e. vision, sensory and cognitive functions and learning basic American Sign Language words). Over 100 employees participated in this incredibly insightful accessibility training that provided tangible outcomes for the teams to incorporate projects and service delivery for the community.
- Training on website accessibility is provided to content contributors for the Town's website, Get Involved Innisfil platform, and CivicWeb portal to ensure we are in compliance with provincial accessibility standards.



- Interactive learning and educational opportunities relating to accessibility are sought and implemented.
- The Town's course content software supports web content accessibility guidelines and is continually improving the accessibility features so that we can deliver online training for learners to enjoy.

Recreation Programs

The Town continues to offer full inclusion to all recreation programs. The Town continues to review and adapt offerings through the 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

Through the Town's Accessible Inclusive Recreation program and information package, Innisfil summer camps provide an accessible and integrated environment, welcoming participants with a range of abilities to sign up. Inclusive camp counsellors are available for participants who need assistance. Participants are further welcome to bring their own external support worker to help when the support needs exceed the capacity of our inclusion camp counsellors.



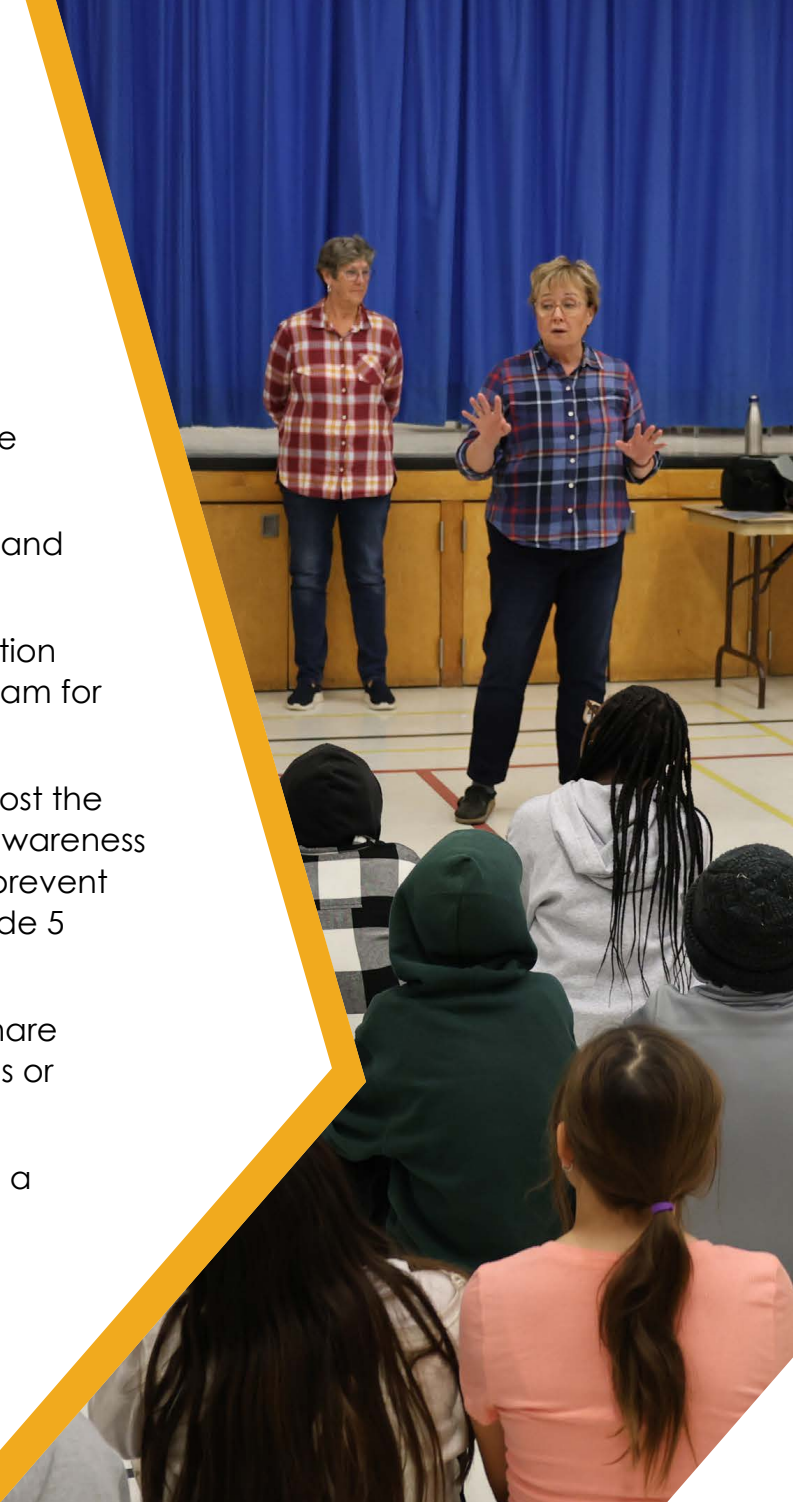
Innisfil Accessibility Advisory Committee

The Innisfil Accessibility Advisory Committee (IAAC) provides guidance to Town Council and Staff on identifying, preventing, and removing barriers to Town services and facilities. Committee members are appointed by Town Council, which seeks the IAAC's advice on accessibility matters.

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

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

- The Town's first all-inclusive "Margaretta Park" which will begin construction in 2025 within the Sleeping Lion Development and make the IAAC's dream for the community a reality.
- Returning to in-person demonstrations at Innisfil elementary schools to host the [Breaking Down Barriers Awareness Program](#) and develop accessibility awareness tools to help people understand what accessibility means and how to prevent barriers. In 2024, IAAC attended eight schools and hosted over 400 Grade 5 students.
- Developing a Breaking Down Barriers Awareness Day success story to share with other communities to encourage Accessibility Advisory Committees or organizations to create this program outside of Innisfil.
- 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 facility 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 with 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 2025 and will fulfill the dream of your 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 great strides in removing barriers and encouraging 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.

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 adapt service delivery to suit the diverse needs of our residents and customers, no matter how they access Town services. This includes tapping into internal skills, including certified sign language interpreters, and offering a virtual commissioning service.

The Innisfil Town Hall service counter is equipped to process payments and serve customers using mobility aids. In 2024, Customer Service Staff presented the Town's centralized and full-service Customer Service model to the IAAC, highlighting how Town Staff break down barriers to deliver accessible customer service. The Customer Service team provides support on projects that explore new technologies and enhance the online customer experience through digital service offerings and online information.

Public Feedback Process

Feedback from the public on enhancing accessibility of Town facilities, goods, and services can be submitted in any format and directed 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 the primary liaison with the customer until the file is resolved. Complaints received regarding accessibility issues are forwarded to Clerk Services for review and IAAC consideration.



Information and Communication

Accessible Information

Notifications and information are provided in accessible formats and communication support is provided upon request. Emergency and/or public safety information is also made available to the public in accessible formats.

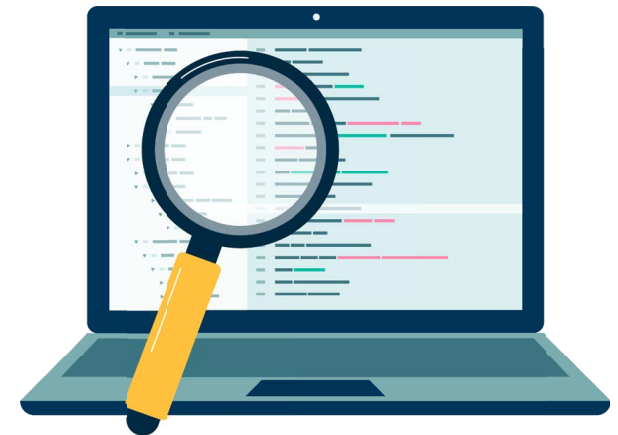
Accessible Engagement and Participation

The Town continues to review and enhance accessible engagement and participation.

- Council meetings are live-streamed on the Town's YouTube channel, and the recorded meetings are available to view with closed captioning.
- Council meetings are accessible to the public through virtual participation, as may be required.
- Committee of Adjustment meetings provide a hybrid meeting option for increased inclusiveness and accessibility.
- We regularly assess and upgrade equipment, such as monitors, audio, and cameras, to ensure high-quality virtual, hybrid meetings, and livestreaming.

Accessible Website and Web Content

The Communications & Community Engagement team undertakes quarterly audits of the Town's website to ensure content meets AODA requirements. This includes ensuring readability, alternate text, and compliant graphics, etc. To facilitate ongoing web compliance, a team member completed enhanced AODA compliance training. The team continues to advise service areas and consultants on ways to make public documents AODA compliant. A review of by-law enforcement webpages was conducted to update information and ensure full accessibility of the content.





Employment

Accessible Employment – Recruitment

The Town's recruitment program is fully accessible. Accommodation is provided upon request during all stages of the 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 accommodation and support to meet the needs of candidates.

Emergency Response Plans for Our Staff

Employees who may need additional support in a workplace emergency situation may request an individualized emergency response plan unique to their needs and work environment. People & Talent and their team leader collaborate with the employee and subject matter experts (as needed) to ensure a robust plan is developed that meets the specific needs of the employee. Public emergency response plans are available in accessibility formats upon request.

Ongoing Accessible Employment

Employees are advised of accessible employment, through the recruitment process and via employment contracts. Individual accommodation plans are developed and adjusted for employees as necessary throughout the employment relationship. Individualized modified work and/or return-to-work plans are also developed to support employees with temporary accommodation needs. People & Talent and Leaders work collaboratively with employees to meet their accessibility needs.

Built Environment (Design of Public Spaces)

Accessible Playgrounds, Parks, and Waterfront

The Town incorporates accessible features into our playgrounds, parks, and waterfront. The Town continues to engage the IAAC during the replacement and development of new playgrounds and parks to ensure they are inclusive.

Highlights from 2024 include:

- Eastern Lakeside Park: Completed construction with major accessibility upgrades, including a new accessible parking space and accessible ramp leading to a new viewing dock. An accessible picnic table will also be added in 2025.
- McNeil Park: Added a new walkway and landscaping, with storyboards and benches planned for 2025.
- Mumberson Park: Installed a new playground with curb cutouts for easy access, a trail around the playground, concrete bench pads with space for wheelchair parking beside benches, and an accessible trail connection to the Trans Canada Trail.
- Grainger Loop Park: Added a new playground with curb cutouts, a trail around the playground, and concrete bench pads with space for wheelchair parking beside benches.





- Huron Court Park: Completed enhancements, including:
 - Installed a large new playground (with curb cutouts), including two ziplines and playground equipment that meet accessibility requirements for children of all ages and abilities.
 - Added concrete bench pads with space for wheelchair parking beside benches.
 - Replaced exiting asphalt walkway and added new walkways.
 - Added new fixtures and furniture, including an accessible picnic table.
- Innisfil Beach Park: Received feedback and recommendations from the IAAC on the Innisfil Beach Park Implementation Plan to help finalize the design for Phase 1 of construction. This includes accessibility enhancements such as widening pedestrian bridges and washroom design adjustments to better accommodate wheelchair users (i.e. increasing the turning radius to better accommodate larger electric wheelchairs and improve the positioning of fixtures).

Facilities

Staff continue upkeep of all existing accessibility features with regular maintenance within Town facilities and public spaces, including but not limited to: ramps and lifts for wheelchair access, handrail supports, accessible washrooms, accessible parking with signage, and visual fire alarms with flashing lights for the hearing impaired (available at select locations).

The Economic Development team, working in cooperation with an Innisfil property owner, successfully reached an agreement for a new lift at the DMZ Innisfil office that will provide access to the second-story office space. Construction will commence in 2025.

Trails

The Town continues the planning process of creating and redeveloping accessible trails throughout Innisfil when creating and/or redeveloping public spaces.

Audible Pedestrian Signals

Town Staff update the IAAC on replaced crossing signals with Audible Pedestrian Signals (APS).

Sidewalks

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

In 2024, 47 tactile plates have been added as part of the Sidewalk Rehabilitation Program. Tactile plates are intended to be detected underfoot or by a cane to alert individuals with low or no vision of potential hazards. They are a textured ground surface indicator and/or have a high tonal contrast. Tactile plates installed this year include:

Stroud	
In front of 7814 Yonge Street	2
Stroud Arena parking lot - SW corner	2
Yonge Street and Victoria Street - Northwest corner	4
Yonge Street and Victoria Street - Northeast corner	2
Yonge Street and Victoria Street - Southwest corner	2
Yonge Street and Victoria Street - Southeast corner	4
Yonge Street and Sunnybrae Avenue - Southeast corner	2
Lynn Street and Small Street - Southeast corner	2
Yonge Street and Lynn Street - Northwest corner	5
North Gate and Chantler Street - Northwest corner	2

Alcona	
Innisfil Town Square and Spring Street - Northwest corner	4
Innisfil Town Square and Spring Street - Northeast corner	2
Leslie Drive and Mildred Avenue - Southeast corner	2
Leslie Drive and Mildred Avenue - Southwest corner	2
In front of Holy Cross Catholic School - North side of road	2
In front of Holy Cross Catholic School - South side of road	2

Cookstown	
Church Street & King Street North - Northeast corner (re-placed and reconfigured)	2

Gilford	
In front of 1222 Gilford Road - North side of road	2



Site Plan Reviews

The Site Plan Accessibility Review Checklist, developed in partnership with the IAAC, is provided to applicants for use in site plan preparations and for Town Staff in evaluating accessibility issues in Site Plan Applications.

The Building Department continues to ensure that all new construction meets the *Ontario Building Code's* current requirements for Barrie-Free Design through the design review process of proposed new construction and subsequently through the construction site inspection process.

Building Permit Process

- The online building permit application, correspondence, and inspection portal ("Cloudpermit") continues to be improved and enhanced to provide accessible communication electronically and remotely, negating the need to visit Town Hall in person. On an ongoing basis, the software and the team's processes around the program's use and accessibility features continue to be improved.
- The *Ontario Building Code*, updated on January 1, 2024, includes several enhancements to barrier-free design requirements for buildings. These changes include the need for all ground-floor entrances (excluding single-family residences) to be barrier-free, a direct Path of Travel, expanded Barrier-Free signage requirements, increased ramp widths, and more. The Building Inspection team ensures compliance with these and all accessibility requirements during inspections.
- Two additional inspection tablets were purchased to enable more building inspectors to access data and complete reports on-site. This enhances accessibility and improves communication with residents and community members regarding building permits and inspections.

Parking Penalty Process

The Administrative Penalty System is an accessible process for appealing parking penalty matters. Ticket holders can access all information and forms online, in-person, or by phone.

Transportation

Innisfil Transit

Accessibility continues to be a key focus for Innisfil Transit (powered by Uber). The Town maintains a partnership with Barrie-Innisfil Taxi to offer subsidized wheelchair-accessible trips through Innisfil Transit. Additionally, Innisfil collaborates with GoGoGrandparent to provide accessible transit options for residents without smartphones or the ability to request trips independently. In late 2024, the Transit Master Plan project was launched, with the first round of community engagement starting in December. This plan will include considerations for accessible transportation.



Creating an Accessible Community

Elevating the quality of life and building a community where everyone can participate fully is vital for individuals, businesses, and community vibrancy. Accessibility enhances life for people with disabilities and offers benefits to everyone. The Town of Innisfil is committed to fostering a community where each resident can live, work, and enjoy leisure activities.

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.