A woman with dark hair, wearing an orange sweater and a patterned scarf, is seated in a wheelchair at a desk in an office. She is looking towards the camera with a slight smile. The background shows office equipment, including a computer monitor and a potted plant. The image is overlaid with a diagonal green and blue graphic.

Annual Accessibility Status Report

2024





Land Acknowledgement

We respectfully acknowledge that the City of Vaughan is situated in the Territory and Treaty 13 lands of the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation. We also recognize the traditional territories of the Huron-Wendat and the Haudenosaunee. The City of Vaughan is home to many First Nations, Métis and Inuit people today. As representatives of the people of the City of Vaughan, we are grateful to have the opportunity to work and live in this territory.

Table of Contents

Introduction 4

Accessibility Advisory Committee 5

 Accessibility Advisory Committee Members 5

Summary of Accessibility Advisory Committee Consultations 6

 Accessibility Champion Award..... 7

General Accessibility Accomplishments..... 9

 Progress on Policy Updates 9

 Spirit of Generosity Recipients 10

 Age-Friendly Community Action Plan 11

Information and Communications Accomplishments..... 12

Employment Accomplishments 14

Customer Service Accomplishments 15

Design of Public Spaces Accomplishments..... 17

 Accessible Infrastructure..... 17

 Accessible Recreation Facilities..... 17

 VMC Signage and Wayfinding Master Plan..... 18

What’s Next 20

 Better Your Business: Tourism Diversity..... 20

 Accessible Indoor Wayfinding Technology Pilot with
 Canadian National Institute for the Blind (CNIB) Access Labs and GoodMaps..... 20

 MoveSmart Mobility Management Strategy..... 21

Connect, Engage and Stay Informed..... 22

To request an accessible format of this report, contact accessibility@vaughan.ca or Service Vaughan at 905-832-2281 or by TTY at 1-866-543-0545.

Introduction

The City of Vaughan's 2023-2027 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan (MYAP) was developed through a robust community engagement process that included internal and external partners, City staff and Council, local community members and subject matter experts. The MYAP lays out how the City aims to achieve a barrier-free community with universal access to programs, services and facilities. Vaughan Council approved the plan on Nov. 14, 2023.

City staff spent the first year of the current MYAP benchmarking progress from the previous plan and collaborating with diverse partners and stakeholders to chart the way forward. Through the consultation process, the City gathered perspectives from people who live, work or do business in Vaughan, as well as visitors and guests. Recognizing that the latest Statistics Canada ([Canadian Survey on Disability 2022](#)) research finds 27 per cent of the population has at least one disability, it is crucial the City continues to engage with diverse community members, especially people with disabilities. This helps inform planning, policies, programming and processes to be as inclusive as possible.

Along with the in-depth consultation process and assessment of the current state, conducted in 2023, City staff have drawn on a comprehensive internal auditing and assessment of the City's processes, policies, public spaces and priorities. These efforts have helped the

City develop the current MYAP to be a forward-looking five-year plan that truly reflects the inputs, interests and concerns of diverse disability communities and the broader Vaughan community.

Learnings and opportunities emerging from the 2022-2023 in-depth consultations and from community engagement following the MYAP launch are useful for different municipalities. The City has shared information and promoted collaboration on accessibility and related issues through participation in the [Municipal Diversity and Inclusion Group](#) (MDIG) convened by York Region. The MDIG space brings together municipalities and key partners in healthcare, education, community safety and human services. The City's Inclusion and Community Outreach team also contributes to knowledge exchange through networks like the Ontario Network of Accessibility Professionals and the Accelerating Accessibility Coalition.

A commitment to data-driven, collaborative approaches to advancing accessibility also links to the City's participation in [World Council on City Data](#) reporting towards ISO standardized municipal information sharing to advance inclusive policy, programming and design. This report constitutes the second annual overview of the [2023-2027 MYAP](#), and shares progress towards the final closure of the plan.

Accessibility Advisory Committee

The City's Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC) is a statutory committee. All municipalities with 10,000 or more residents are required to convene a citizen's advisory committee under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* (AODA). Municipal AACs have been established as a means of informing urban planning and ensuring the voices and perspectives of diverse disability communities are being integrated into the working of the City. The process of consulting AACs on strategic decisions and policies that affect people with disabilities helps guide cities in removing and preventing barriers to accessibility in policies, practices, programming and services.

All municipal board and committee meetings are posted to a [meeting calendar](#) on the City of Vaughan's website.

Accessibility Advisory Committee Members

Gila Martow, Ward 5 Councillor, Chair
Michelle Goldstein Zaldin, Co-Chair
Michael Nigro
Nazila Isgandarova
Rudy Barell
Nida Khurshid
Noor Din
Paresh Jamnadas



2024 Accessibility Committee Members with Mayor, Members of Council, current and former City staff.

Summary of Accessibility Advisory Committee Consultations

In 2023, seven new public members joined the AAC, following the new term of Council in November 2022. This current AAC has held five meetings in 2024, during which the City informed or consulted with the AAC on the following items:

- Intelligent Traffic Signals Strategy
- Waste management strategy
- Accessibility Champions Awards process and voting
- 2023 Annual Report presentation and feedback
- My MS Family York Region presentation
- GoodMaps/CNIB Access Labs accessible wayfinding pilot reporting
- New governance structure/Inclusion and Community Outreach team
- MYAP activities updates
- Doctors McLean District Park renewal
- Community Spaces Plan
- 2025 schedule of meetings

Additionally, AAC members were invited to participate in public engagement activities relating to the Greenspace Strategic Plan, public engagement processes relating to recreation, wayfinding and other accessibility-related events or opportunities, and provincial consultation processes. Committee members will continue

to be alerted to relevant community consultations and opportunities to continue building and strengthening relationships with diverse disability communities.



5
meetings held



16
agenda items discussed,
including:

- **2023-2027 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan**
- **policies, pilot programs and planning proposals**
- **consultations with internal and external partners**



6
emails received about
consultations, capacity
building opportunities
and more

Accessibility Champion Award

The AAC established the Accessibility Champion Award in 2019. The awards are presented every other year to businesses, groups, non-profits or individuals who are helping foster a more accessible community in Vaughan.

From January 2024 to February 2024, the City received 17 nominations from community members who wanted to recognize organizations and individuals for being leaders in promoting a barrier-free city.

During a ceremonial presentation in May 2024, [five Accessibility Champions received awards](#):

- **Anthony D'Ambrosio** in the Student category: Anthony uses his experience of battling a rare form of joint cancer and going through a lower leg amputation to inspire

his community engagement. A Toronto Metropolitan University student, Anthony also volunteers actively to promote research, inclusion and accessibility for people with amputations, including with young people and mentees through York Region school boards, the Terry Fox Foundation and St. John's Rehab Hospital.

- **Deborah Helfand** in the Individual category: Learning to thrive with a mental health condition, Deborah plays a role in changing perceptions and promoting a more inclusive community every day. She has worked her way up to managing the DANI Café (Developing and Nurturing Independence) and she has supported the Café's growth into a training ground for others with



2024 Accessibility Champion Award winners with 2024 Committee Members, Mayor, Members of Council, current and former City staff.

developmental disabilities.

- **Mobile Radiance Dental Hygiene Services**

in the Small Business (For profit) category: Manuela Rosatelli founded Mobile Radiance Dental Hygiene Services to provide people access to quality dental care in the comfort of their homes, long-term care facilities, hospitals and rehabilitation centres, or in workplaces. Her years of experience and networks help her effectively support the dental health of clients across Greater Toronto, and she has brought many smiles to people who couldn't easily get to a hygienist appointment themselves. She also mentors in her field, ensuring her commitment to inclusion is passed on.

- **Sara Elizabeth Centre** in the Small Business (Non-profit) category: Founded in 2006 as part of Blue Veil Charity, the Sara Elizabeth Centre is a non-profit committed to empowering youth and young adults

facing physical and mental challenges. The Centre runs regular programming aimed at building self-esteem, self-advocacy, life skills, teamwork and independence, as well as arts and technology. The Centre works to remove accessibility barriers and foster an inclusive community where unique talents thrive.

- **Kayla Children's Centre** in the Medium Business category (Non-profit): Founded in 2017 as a school, therapy clinic and recreational centre for children with disabilities and complex medical needs, Kayla's supports children ages six weeks to 21 years old who have a wide range of disabilities, and provides a variety of specialized programs that enable them to flourish academically, socially and emotionally. Offerings include a licensed daycare, on-site therapy clinic, adapted sports, a state-of-the-art hydrotherapy centre, personalized family supports and more.



General Accessibility Accomplishments

The City's Accessibility Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) continues to monitor the activities of the MYAP in its second year, with representation from every City department. The Inclusion and Community Outreach team also continues its efforts to foster and grow relationships that have been forged and strengthened through the past years' MYAP consultations, development and roll-out. These relationships with disability communities in and beyond Vaughan are helping grow awareness, so people are informed on how to connect with the City about barriers or questions. This in turn works towards positioning Vaughan as an innovator and leader in inclusion and accessibility.

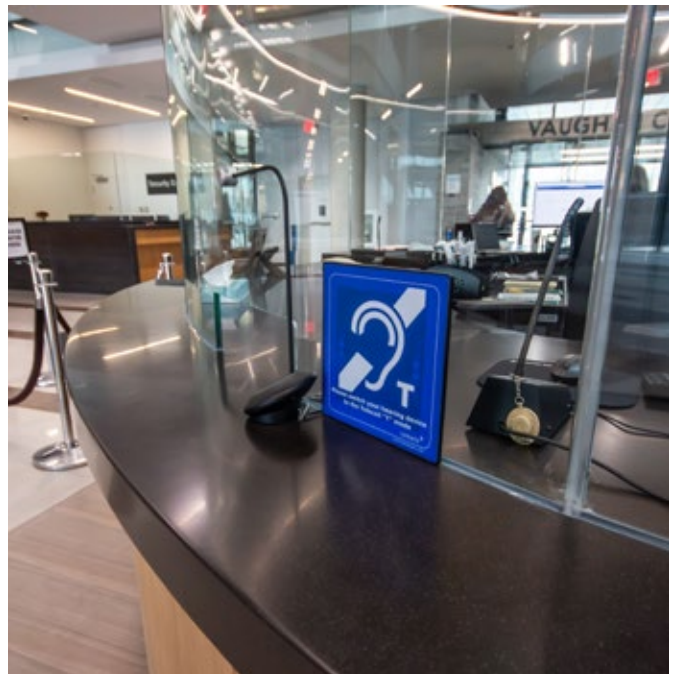
The Inclusion and Community Outreach team plays a pivotal role in advancing the City's commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion through the implementation of several key Council-approved documents. The unit collaborates closely with various stakeholders, including Vaughan Council, City staff, the Senior Leadership Team and several advisory committees focused on diversity, inclusion and accessibility. This collaborative approach ensures the needs and perspectives of diverse community members are integrated into the City's policies and programs.

Under its renewed mandate, the Inclusion and Community Outreach team has transitioned to the Strategic Initiatives Portfolio. Led by the Manager of Inclusion and Community Outreach, the team is dedicated to establishing a matrixed and integrated unit across the entire corporation.

This structure aims to foster a cohesive and effective approach to inclusion initiatives, ensuring they resonate throughout all levels of the organization and within the community.

Progress on Policy Updates

Continuing a policy revision process launched in the first year of the current MYAP, the City developed and rolled out a new online training to ensure staff are oriented to the updated Accessibility Policy (a general policy) and the Accommodation Policy (applies to all employees and Members of Council), as well as the Disability Management program for any staff who requires such support. Council also approved an updated [Accessible Customer Service Policy](#) (PDF) in 2024, covered under the Customer Service Standard.



Spirit of Generosity Recipients

The Spirit of Generosity initiative, founded in 2011, has had a profound impact on communities by supporting more than 200 non-profit and community organizations. These include groups focused on children and youth, healthcare, seniors' services and special needs programs.

Below are the accessibility-focused recipients of the 2024 Spirit of Generosity grant:

- Brighter Path 4 Autism
- Blue Veil/Sara Elizabeth Centre
- Clarico Place of York Region
- Creating Alternatives
- Flex for Access
- Meta Foundation
- Muscular Dystrophy Canada
- My MS Family
- Parkinson Canada Inc.
- Reena Foundation
- Shining Through Centre for Children with Autism
- Waves of Changes for Autism



The My MS Family organization was a recipient of the grant and also had the opportunity to attend an AAC meeting, where they provided the committee with an overview of their work and highlighted the impactful services they offer in Vaughan and York Region. Moving forward, having the Spirit of Generosity grant recipients at AAC meetings will strengthen partnerships with these incredible accessibility-focused organizations, further enhancing the support and services available to Vaughan residents.

Age-Friendly Community Action Plan

Recognizing there are some significant overlapping needs and interests between disability communities and the aging population, an overview of the [Vaughan's Age-Friendly Community Action Plan](#) progress is provided here.

The City continues to develop as an age-friendly city through the advancement of several priorities outlined in the [Vaughan Age-Friendly Community Action Plan](#). In 2024, the City received international recognition when it was accepted into the [World Health Organization's Global Network for Age-Friendly Communities and Cities](#), demonstrating an ongoing commitment to supporting the pillars of healthy aging for seniors in the community.



**WHO Global Network
for Age-friendly Cities
and Communities**

Additionally, ongoing consultation with the [Age-Friendly Vaughan Advisory Committee](#) on corporate policies and strategies, such as the Greenspace Strategic Plan and the Community Spaces Plan (formerly the Active Together Master Plan), ensures accessibility needs of older adults will be integrated in City infrastructure for years to come.

In 2024, the City also received funding from the provincial government through the [Seniors Community Grant Program](#) to offer a variety of free programs — including basic first aid training and educational workshops — aimed at enriching the lives of older adults and empowering them to lead safe, healthy and active lifestyles.



To further demonstrate the City of Vaughan's commitment to advancing a more inclusive and accessible community, the City held a special ceremony on May 28, 2024 to dedicate the accessibility ramp outside Vaughan City Hall in memory of the late David C. Onley, former Lieutenant Governor of Ontario. Mr. Onley's wife, Ruth Ann, joined Mayor Steven Del Duca and Members of Council to unveil The Honourable David C. Onley Accessibility Gateway.

Information and Communications Accomplishments

The City relaunched vaughan.ca in March 2023 to comply with accessibility guidelines as outlined in the AODA Information and Communications Standards, reaching global [Web Content Accessibility Guidelines](#) (WCAG) 2.0. This website relaunch introduced a cleaner interface and enhanced accessibility functions, including mandatory image captions and a tool that translates the website into more than 50 languages commonly used in York Region.

Since then, the City has also rolled out mandatory training for all staff on creating accessible content. The process included the launch of a new e-learning that focuses on the creation of accessible content. As of 2024, it is required for all incoming staff. To support this initiative, an accessible digital content creation toolkit was developed to provide staff with necessary resources. Additionally, representatives from each department have been trained in using analytics tools to ensure the City is maintaining and monitoring compliance across vaughan.ca.



To evaluate accessibility compliance, identify opportunities and establish benchmarks, the City contracted a vendor to conduct a comprehensive assessment of its digital assets. This includes a current state assessment of the City's web components including vaughan.ca, City-owned websites, third-party applications policies, procedures and content. Based on the findings, the vendor will provide recommendations and develop implementation plans to ensure the City meets and exceeds AODA Information and Communications Standards requirements, aiming to achieve WCAG 2.2 compliance, and establishes a sustainable framework.

Last year, the City began implementing a streamlined accessibility feedback process. Anyone with questions relating to accessibility and the City can contact accessibility@vaughan.ca, or share experiences with barriers through the online [Accessibility Feedback Form](#) or an [accessible fillable PDF form](#) (PDF). Residents or visitors with accessibility-related questions can also contact [Service Vaughan](#), which has TTY-enabled phone options.



The updated feedback process was launched with the new website in 2023, and since then, regularly draws queries from Vaughan residents, community organizations or staff and other municipalities. These relate to accessible programs or format requests, supports with navigating the City for people with disabilities and barrier reporting. A positive note is the regular outreach from other municipalities asking to learn more about how the City manages accessibility matters, including engagement and consultation processes. At times, the Inclusion and Community Outreach team has to inform people about the [City's areas of jurisdiction](#) if the site of a barrier report is commercial or pertaining to a different level of government, neighbouring municipality, etc. The team makes all efforts to redirect to partners such as York Region, York Region Transit or the Provincial government or a neighbouring municipality where that is needed.

A comprehensive audit of community centre signage was completed by the Recreation Services department to identify and address accessibility gaps. These findings will guide the department's ongoing remediation efforts and the development of new, accessible wayfinding signage standards for the City. In addition, the department continues to refine the Recreation Services webpages in an effort to meet and maintain web accessibility compliance. This includes progressive updates to web copy, the conversion of PDFs into accessible web formats and ensuring all necessary PDFs meet accessibility standards. When it comes to recreation programs, the inclusion portfolio of offerings will now benefit from targeted marketing initiatives to boost awareness of these much-needed services. This will involve tailored marketing messaging and visually accessible graphics shared across multiple platforms, including the City's website, social media channels, digital advertising channels, email marketing and much more.



Employment Accomplishments

The City continues to prioritize inclusive employment in various ways. The School Crossing Guard Program, in the Transportation and Fleet Management Services department, has built new relationships with Jake's House and with the Ready Willing and Able program at Kerry's Place over the past year. A full evaluation process and functional assessment of the position's needs and requirements was completed over the summer. Staff continue to collaborate with the organizations on recruitment efforts and facilitating the onboarding process. To date, one person has been successfully placed as a School Crossing Guard in Vaughan.



The Recreation Services department received funding through the Ministry of Seniors and Accessibility's [EnAbling Change Program](#) to launch Project NextGen, an employment skills development program for youth with disabilities. This funding has been instrumental in empowering young people with the tools, skills and support needed to succeed in the recreation workforce.

The Workplace Emergency Evacuation Form process has been updated, formalized and integrated into onboarding packages across the City, including Vaughan Fire and Rescue Service and Vaughan Public Libraries. This is an important part of inclusive emergency response planning, ensuring any staff member with a disability, injury or condition requiring support can share with People Leaders what is required in the unlikely event an emergency evacuation of the workplace occurs.

With a commitment to continuous development and learning, the City launched four new training programs for staff. These include two self-guided online trainings on how to create accessible documents and an orientation to the City's accessibility, accommodations and disability management policies and processes. Additionally, the City introduced two new real-time facilitated trainings, one on the AODA and accessibility, and another on the Ontario Human Rights Code and diversity, equity and inclusion in 2024.

Customer Service Accomplishments

The Facilities and Parks Delivery department strives to ensure community engagement processes are safe and inclusive of everyone in the Vaughan community and is committed to supporting the MYAP for this iteration (2023-2027) and beyond. With support from the Inclusion and Community Outreach team, and in collaboration with departments across the organization, Facilities and Parks Delivery will continue refining community engagement processes with equity-deserving communities for parks planning, design and development projects, and will identify capital projects as needed to support key actions identified within the plan, through the capital asset replacement program.

The Recreation Services department continued the effort to expand its inclusion programs with the goal of making services and community centres more accessible for individuals with diverse needs. The department saw a 40 per cent increase in services and a 10 per cent rise in participant enrollment, indicating the community's positive reception of these initiatives. To support this growth, 664 staff members and 123 volunteers received training on AODA and accessibility; Ontario Human Rights Code; diversity, equity and inclusion; disability awareness; program adaptations; behaviour management; and creating inclusive spaces, ensuring staff are equipped to meet diverse needs effectively.

Inclusive events and social engagement are key to healthy communities. The Vaughan Celebrates program—featuring Winterfest, Concerts in the Park and Canada Day—continues to deliver family-friendly, accessible experiences that attract thousands to Vaughan's indoor and outdoor venues. In 2024, these events again featured free activities, entertainment and giveaways. Accessibility features included designated parking and shuttle service; accessible pathways, washrooms and picnic tables; and wheelchair-accessible spaces near the stage at events. Vaughan Celebrates Winterfest also enhanced its programming with inclusive activities, such as tai chi, yoga, Zumba and bracelet making—all designed to engage adults, older adults and people with a range of abilities. New this year, event recap videos were close captioned, and online registration forms replaced PDF forms to enhance digital accessibility.

Vaughan once again served as a Festival Hub for Ontario Culture Days, hosting 80 free events across multiple venues between Sept. 20 and Oct. 13, 2024. The City prioritized accessibility and inclusion, welcoming participation from all residents. Some key accessibility highlights of the festival were:

- Ten events focused on people with disabilities, some led by the City in partnership with organizations such as Variety Village and Special Olympics. Other events were led by

youth and seniors with learning disabilities and included drama workshops, adaptive games and outdoor pop-up runs and walks.

- A collaborative mural project was organized in partnership with the York Catholic District School Board to promote inclusivity and creativity. This initiative engaged youth with disabilities, empowering them to express themselves through visual arts. The mural was unveiled at Vellore Village Community Centre on Oct. 8, 2024, giving students the opportunity to celebrate their achievement with family, friends and peers.
- The City also encouraged the participation of older adults by organizing more than 10 events centred on or led by seniors' groups. Seniors showcased their talents through fitness aerobics, walks, dances and solo performances.

The City's updated [Accessible Customer Service Policy](#) (PDF) was approved by Council in 2024, and applies to all City employees, Members of Council, appointees, resident members of committees, contractors and vendors who provide goods, services or facilities on behalf of the City.

Throughout 2024, the Communications, Marketing and Engagement (CME) team successfully ran a communications campaign to share information and updates about the City's efforts to continue to advance accessibility. The campaign included internal communications to

educate staff, as well as external components, which leveraged the media, the City's corporate social media channels, television screens in Vaughan City Hall and community centres, the City's website and much more, to raise the public's awareness. Campaign topics included how to make an accessible format request, how to provide accessibility feedback to the City, accessible parking rules and the rights of individuals with service animals.

Through efforts to ensure equal access to information for all users, regardless of their abilities, the CME team continued to include closed captioning in all videos posted to the City's YouTube channel, enhance website content and focus on continuous improvement in accessible graphic design elements.

The CME team also enhanced the accessibility of the 2024 Citizen and Business Surveys by widely promoting how residents and businesses could get accessible alternate formats of the surveys on request.



Design of Public Spaces Accomplishments

Accessible Infrastructure

The City continues to follow the technical requirements of the AODA Integrated Accessibility Standards and other relevant legislation and codes as they relate to infrastructure delivery.

In 2024, the City completed Building Accessibility Assessment (BAA) reports for 76 City-owned or operated sites, prepared by CBRE. The BAA covered five main areas: exterior, interior, washrooms, emergency systems and circulation, with each BAA report closing with a prioritization list for any areas needing remediation for compliance or to follow best practices. The BAA reports have been analyzed through an asset management and risk lens to start prioritizing upgrades and renovations based on urgency and an equitable spread of limited resources.

In the coming year, the City will begin working on a schedule of upgrades following the remediation plans for the most highly visited sites, with a series of site visits by accessibility experts to review the upgrades beginning in 2026. Given the full costs of the remediation plans for all 76 sites, follow-ups to all the BAAs will comprise a longer-term project whose scope will outlive this current MYAP (2023-2027), so the City's reporting on progress will straddle multiple accessibility plans. Regular annual reporting will share updates to the community as BAA implementation continues in the years ahead, providing a summary and review before the 2028-2032 MYAP is finalized.

The City is also updating the [2020 Inclusive Design Standards](#) (PDF), a set of guidelines developed for the City to encourage not only meeting, but also going beyond AODA, Ontario Building Code and other applicable provincial guidelines and legislation where possible. The updated edition will take account of best practices and innovations since the last guide, and incorporate community engagement through the AAC and the City's networks of subject matter experts in urban planning, accessible design and disability inclusion.

Accessible Recreation Facilities

In addition to expanding program offerings, the Recreation Services department worked closely with the Facility Management Operations department to address physical accessibility challenges. Accessible change tables have been installed in seven community centres to enhance the safety and dignity of program participants with disabilities. The Recreation Services department has outfitted all community centre pools with extra adaptive flotation devices to enhance water safety and accessibility for individuals with diverse abilities who may need additional support. The department also acquired accessible ice sledges, now available at three City ice rinks, ensuring individuals with disabilities can fully and actively participate in recreational skating and hockey. The Facility Management Operations department installed E-vac chairs in six community centres to ensure a more efficient way to evacuate individuals with



mobility challenges during emergencies. These initiatives ensure equitable access to recreational programs and services and promote inclusive facilities that attract and retain a diverse range of users, while supporting skill development and fostering confidence and enjoyment for all users and their families.

Additionally, the City has acquired or installed additional automatic door openers and four E-vac chairs in City Hall, and is looking to add new hearing loop systems across City facilities.

The Recreation Services – Events team is actively working with Facility Management Operations to improve event accessibility. A key example is the addition of an accessibility lift to ensure safe stage access for attendees to City Hall events who use wheelchairs, mobility scooters, walkers or those with limited mobility. Additionally, new handrails for the City Hall stage stairs

were purchased in November 2024 and will be installed for all events hosted at City Hall moving forward.

VMC Signage and Wayfinding Master Plan

As part of the strategy to promote the implementation of an interconnected parks and open space network in the downtown area, a Vaughan Metropolitan Centre (VMC) [Signage and Wayfinding Master Plan](#) was developed to define how residents, visitors and businesses perceive and navigate through the VMC. The VMC Signage and Wayfinding Master Plan provides guidance for the development of a wayfinding system and signage in the VMC, with a particular focus on parks, trails and public amenities. The VMC Signage and Wayfinding Master Plan was created to support the goals and intent outlined in the [VMC Streetscape and Open Space Plan](#) (PDF) and the [VMC Parks and Wayfinding Master Plan](#) (PDF).

The first phase of this effort involved the creation of the VMC Signage and Wayfinding Master Plan prepared for the City by Cygnus Design Group, a sub-consultant, to guide the development of signage in the downtown area as it evolves. This included designing a cohesive family of exterior pedestrian and cyclist signs specifying materials, details, specifications and potential locations of these signs. The consultant developed and refined potential options for the VMC signs, with significant

input and evaluation from various City departments and transit authorities.

The second phase of the study involved the VMC Signage Pilot, which tested signage prototypes in key areas of the VMC. Four signage prototypes were installed at the end of 2023 near the VMC Subway Station and SmartVMC Bus Terminal to assess their effectiveness and durability. In the first half of 2024, City staff gathered internal and public feedback on these prototypes through various engagement methods. Public engagement methods included:

1. an online survey that was available for all residents and visitors of the VMC to complete via a QR Code and the City's website.
2. a User Advisory Group with four community members providing detailed feedback on



the functionality, design, accessibility and overall effectiveness of the signage through a prepared workbook assignment.

3. an in-person pop-up at a Concerts in the Park event in Transit Square, where staff engaged with residents and visitors about the signage pilot and collected opinions.

The signage prototypes will be further refined following the evaluation of the VMC Wayfinding Signage Pilot. The feedback received through the various engagement tactics will be used to enhance and further develop the VMC Wayfinding Signage.

What's Next

In the year ahead, the City will continue monitoring the progress of the 2023-2027 MYAP, assessing its halfway point and assessing what remains to be achieved. This work requires the active collaboration of an Accessibility TAC where all departments are represented and ensures the City is meeting its commitments to Vaughan's diverse residents and communities.

Better Your Business: Tourism Diversity

The second iteration of the City's Better Your Business: Tourism Diversity program will open for intake in early 2025. This program will connect up to eight local tourism operators with qualified consultants to build an implementable strategic plan that creates new – or enhances already existing – tourism products, services and/or experiences with a focus on one of the following three categories:

1. 2SLGBTQIA+ tourism
2. BIPOC tourism
3. Accessible tourism



Accessible Indoor Wayfinding Technology Pilot with Canadian National Institute for the Blind (CNIB) Access Labs and GoodMaps

In 2024, the City, working in partnership with [CNIB Access Labs](#), completed the LiDar (Light Detection and Ranging) scanning of six City facilities in order to roll out a pilot of an indoor wayfinding mobile app called [GoodMaps](#).

The GoodMaps app was created to provide both verbal and visual wayfinding instructions to users who have vision-related disabilities, but the tool has been found valuable for other users as well. For example, the app can provide navigation directions that avoid staircases for users who use mobility devices. The app helps visitors navigate the interiors of buildings the way that apps mapping roads direct people using Global Positioning.

The public launch of the app took place in December 2024, and the GoodMaps platform has the following six buildings available:

1. Vaughan City Hall
2. Civic Centre Resource Library
3. Pierre Berton Resource Library
4. North Thornhill Community Centre and Pleasant Ridge Library
5. Chancellor Community Centre and Ansley Grove Library
6. Dufferin Clark Community Centre and Dufferin Clark Library

The City is planning to hold focus groups and user testing in 2025 to assess the response and utility of the app for Vaughan residents and visitors, particularly people with disabilities. Research on the utility and reception of the app by the community will be shared with regional and sectoral colleagues, such as the Ontario Network of Accessibility Professionals, the York Region Municipal Diversity and Inclusion Group and other relevant networks, to continue fostering a broader culture of accessibility and inclusion. Community members interested to participate in in-depth user testing or focus groups are encouraged to email accessibility@vaughan.ca.



MoveSmart Mobility Management Strategy

The MoveSmart Mobility Management Strategy includes actions to update policies, guidelines and engineering standards that support the planning, design and implementation of infrastructure in compliance with accessibility standards. Transportation infrastructure, including traffic calming, pedestrian crossings and intersections, will continue to follow

provincial requirements, including enhanced accessible features.

As part of the Intelligent Transportation System Strategy under the MoveSmart Mobility Management Strategy, the City upgraded its traffic signal systems. This included replacing controllers and cabinets in the field and implementing a new Traffic Signal Control System as the foundation of the Advance Traffic Management System. These upgrades enable proactive and remote monitoring, management and accessibility of traffic signals, enhancing traffic flow, improving flexibility and supporting efficient mobility management across the City's transportation network.

In addition, selected intersections were redesigned to meet AODA standards. Accessibility improvements included touchless pedestrian sensors, variable audio chirps, tactile walking surface indicators and curb ramps. The City also explored and piloted smart technologies at intersections to enable advanced detection of various road users, including pedestrians, cyclists, micromobility users and vehicles.

The City will also participate in the Ontario Vehicle Innovation Network Demonstration Zone pilot, testing new technology that can differentiate between vehicles, cyclists, pedestrians and various modes of traffic. This pilot helps to inform technologies and infrastructure to improve accessibility for all road users, regardless of age or ability. The pilot will take place at the Millway Avenue and Apple Mill Road intersection.

Connect, Engage and Stay Informed

The MYAP is the result of community, internal, regional and sectoral collaborations that rely on continuous engagement. The City will revisit this plan regularly in the years ahead and provide annual reports to the public that share updates on progress to continue to foster communication, transparency and Service Excellence.

The City is grateful for questions, thoughts and constructive feedback, and encourages residents and visitors to reach out with any input. Contact accessibility@vaughan.ca or Service Vaughan at 905-832-2281 or by TTY at 1-866-543-0545 with any feedback or inquiries, or to request an accessible format of this report.

You can also [subscribe](#) to receive information, email updates and notices of community engagement activities relating to the City's current MYAP.

For more information on the *Ontarians with Disabilities Act (ODA)* and AODA, contact:

Ministry for Seniors and Accessibility
777 Bay St., Suite 601A
Toronto, ON M7A 2J4

Telephone: 416-849-8276

Toll Free: 1-866-515-2025

TTY: 416-326-0148

TTY Toll Free: 1-800-268-7095

Fax: 416-325-9620

accessibility@ontario.ca

[Ministry for Seniors
and Accessibility webpage](#)





