

# Summary of MYAP Survey Responses

## Contents

- Introduction** ..... 2
- Demographic Patterns** ..... 2
- Positive Highlights, Common Challenges, and Opportunities for Improvement**..... 3
  - 1. Customer Service ..... 3
  - 2. Information and Communication ..... 3
  - 3. Employment and Volunteering ..... 4
  - 4. Moving Around Cambridge ..... 4
  - 5. Accessing City Facilities and Public Spaces ..... 5
  - 6. Additional City-Wide Recommendations ..... 5
- Overall Satisfaction Levels**..... 5

## Introduction

This summary presents an overview of the key findings from the recent accessibility survey conducted to inform the City of Cambridge's 2024-2028 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan.

The draft of the survey questions was reviewed with staff, leadership, and AAC members. The plan itself was presented to the AAC during the meeting on June 23, 2025, and was scheduled for July 2025.

The survey was available for online responses from June 16, 2025, to July 25, 2025. It was also presented at multiple in-person engagement sessions held in various locations throughout the city of Cambridge, including:

- Allen Reuter Centre (ARC)
- Cambridge Centre (two sessions)
- Langs Community Centre
- Buddy League
- David Durward Centre (DDC)
- Ted Wake Centre (TWC)
- YMCA

The survey and plan were further consulted with the AAC, and input was also gathered from staff.

More than 140 contributors participated, including people with disabilities, caregivers, business owners, and residents. The following summarizes the feedback we received, which will guide actions in the new Plan.

The analysis identifies themes and trends within the feedback, offering an overall picture of the responses. These insights will help inform the development and implementation of the 2025–2028 MYAP.

## Demographic Patterns

- **Age:** Majority of respondents were over 40 years old, with the largest age groups being 65–74 (22%), 45–54 (21%), and 55–64 (16%).

- **Disability identity and connections:** Over half (51%) identified as a person with a disability, and 49% as a family member, friend, or caregiver of someone with a disability.
- **Common disability types:** Physical/mobility disabilities were most reported (46%), followed by neurological (20%), learning/cognitive (18%), hearing (16%), and mental health (16%).

These figures highlight Cambridge's aging population and the need to prioritize planning and services for older adults and people with disabilities.

## Positive Highlights, Common Challenges, and Opportunities for Improvement

### 1. Customer Service

- **Satisfaction:** One-third of respondents (34%) said their accessibility needs were **always** considered, while 43% said “sometimes,” and 12% said “rarely.”
- **Challenges:** Qualitative responses often cited negative experiences, including inadequate assistance, unclear processes for requesting accommodations, and a lack of awareness about how to request accessible formats.
- **Suggestions for Improvement:**
  - Implement **mandatory and ongoing accessibility training** for all City staff, including seasonal and part-time employees.
  - Develop and promote a **clear, consistent process for requesting accessible services and formats** across all services (online and in-person).
  - Create a central accessibility contact point (phone and email) for residents seeking support.
  - Include accessibility standards in all **vendor and contractor agreements**.

### 2. Information and Communication

- **Digital Access:** 26% of respondents found the City’s website “very easy” to use, 45% “somewhat easy,” and 24% found it difficult.
- **Printed Materials:** 43% found them “very easy” to access, 36% “somewhat easy,” and 11% found them difficult.
- **Suggestions for Improvement:**

- Redesign and maintain the City website to meet **WCAG 2.2 AA compliance**.
- Use **plain language** and provide alternative formats (large print, braille, audio) upon request.
- Highlight accessibility feature icons and descriptions (e.g., automatic doors, adult change tables) in all facility and event listings.
- Establish a **feedback loop** for reporting communication barriers with a public tracker for fixes.

### 3. Employment and Volunteering

- **Perceptions:** Perceptions of an inclusive workplace were mixed, with 27% saying the City promotes an inclusive workplace and 27% saying “no.”
- **Accommodation Awareness:** Only 18% of applicants were aware that accommodations were available during hiring or onboarding.
- **Suggestions for Improvement:**
  - Clearly advertise accommodation availability in every **job and volunteer posting**.
  - Ensure accessible interview and onboarding processes, including alternative formats and accessible locations.
  - Offer flexible work arrangements, such as hybrid options, where possible.
  - Audit all volunteer and employment locations for physical, communication, and technological accessibility before placement.

### 4. Moving Around Cambridge

- **Sidewalks, Curb Cuts, and Trails:** Only 23% rated them as accessible or well-maintained, with 40% rating them “somewhat” and 35% rating them “no.” Key concerns included winter snow and ice clearance, cracked surfaces, and missing curb cuts.
- **Bus Stops and Crosswalks:** 33% of respondents experienced barriers, pointing to poor snow/ice removal, inconvenient crossing locations, and inadequate lighting.
- **Suggestions for Improvement:**
  - Increase **winter sidewalk and curb cut maintenance**, prioritizing high-traffic routes and bus stops.

- Install additional accessible curb cuts in resident-identified areas.
- Improve street lighting and **extend pedestrian crossing times** at busy intersections.

## 5. Accessing City Facilities and Public Spaces

- **Natural Spaces:** 23% found them “very accessible,” 51% “somewhat,” and 16% “not accessible.”
- **Built Facilities:** 33% found them “very accessible,” 47% “somewhat,” and 16% “not accessible.”
- **Suggestions for Improvement:**
  - Increase the number and enforcement of **designated accessible parking spaces**, ensuring they meet FADS standards.
  - Ensure clear, unobstructed pathways from accessible parking to building entrances, with prompt **snow and ice removal**.
  - Upgrade public washrooms to include **universal change rooms** and adult change tables.
  - Add rest seating at regular intervals along trails, park pathways, and in large facilities.

## 6. Additional City-Wide Recommendations

- Make accessibility a **default consideration** in all City projects, events, and procurement.
- Host regular community consultations and focus groups to test new accessibility initiatives.
- Expand event accessibility by consistently offering **ASL interpretation, captioning, and accessible seating**.
- Develop a **public accessibility dashboard/mechanism** to report on progress.

## Overall Satisfaction Levels

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

inclusive environment. Below are two examples of outstanding reflections from the survey responders.

- “Accessibility isn’t just about physical disabilities... It can be mental health, caregiving needs, socioeconomic barriers, or the lack of technology. The City needs to recognize all forms of accessibility and inclusion.”
- “Without accessible parking and clear sidewalks, nothing else matters. You can have the best facility in the world, but if people can’t get inside safely, they won’t use it.”

***“The City of Cambridge should continue to position itself as a leader in creating accessible experiences for everyone who lives, works and visits Cambridge.”***

## ***References***