Multi-Year Accessibility Plan Initiatives

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2025 – 2030

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

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UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

Introduction

Welcome to the University of Toronto's Multi-Year Accessibility Plan.

The *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* (AODA) requires broader public sector institutions to establish, develop, and maintain multi-year accessibility plans. These plans must be updated every five years in consultation with persons with disabilities. The University of Toronto's *Statement of Commitment Regarding Persons with Disabilities* also affirms our institutional principles to create and maintain an equitable and inclusive environment. The University's previous Multi-Year Accessibility Plan (2018 – 2023) outlined efforts to increase awareness and understanding of the diverse lived experiences of people with disabilities and the key principles, practices, and tools that enhance accessibility in our learning and working environments. The University provides annual updates on the advancement and progress of these and other accessibility-related initiatives in the AODA Report.

Consultation Process

In 2024, the Institutional Equity Office (IEO) began the planning process to develop the University's next Multi-Year Accessibility Plan (MYAP). From the beginning, the intention of this process was to ensure that consultation was thorough, community-informed, expert-guided, and accessible. The IEO's AODA Officer struck a Multi-Year Plan Consultation Committee (MYPCC) of students, staff, faculty members, librarians, and senior leadership to advise on next steps. With the MYPCC's guidance, the University launched a multi-modal consultation approach for students, faculty members, staff, and librarians with disabilities through an online survey as well as group and individual consultation sessions. The Consultation process occurred over a six-week period, ending on April 7, 2025.

2025 – 2030 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

The initiatives outlined in this plan represent the University's commitments under the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan to be completed between 2025-2030 and are organized by the following themes:

1. Institutional Culture of Accessibility
2. Barrier-free Services
3. Information & Communications
4. Systems & Structures
5. Accessible Physical Spaces

Each theme includes a list of initiatives under the section “Sustaining current efforts” which signifies the University’s recognition that the work of accessibility is ongoing, and that each MYAP builds on previous efforts. The commitment aligns with existing AODA standards and strives to advance a more inclusive framework which deepens the integration of accessibility practices into the University’s daily operations. All initiatives will be undertaken in a collaborative manner with each responsible portfolio having input on approaches to implementation. The MYAP will next be reviewed in early 2030, at which time an appropriate process that meets the University’s legal obligations under the AODA, and our institutional commitments, will be engaged. The current MYAP development process may serve as a model.

Theme 1: Institutional Culture of Accessibility

Advancing an institutional culture of accessibility requires collective efforts across U of T's three campuses. Initiatives under this theme aim to increase understanding of the diverse lived experiences of persons with disabilities and build awareness of intentional strategies, tools, and resources to support accessible and inclusive environments.

Responsible portfolio(s):
Divisional EDI Leads; Division of People Strategy, Equity & Culture (PSEC); Division of the Vice-President & Provost; Institutional Equity Office – AODA Office

Relevant areas of the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation:

- General requirements
- Design of public spaces standards

Initiatives

Institutional Accessibility Advisory Committee

The University will establish a tri-campus Institutional Accessibility Advisory Committee of students, staff, faculty members, and librarians, including persons who identify as disabled or persons with disabilities, to serve as a resource to the broader University community. The Committee will offer their perspectives and insights on the accessibility of plans for projects, programs, websites, or construction as requested or legally required.

AODA/Accessibility Liaison model

The University will coordinate and launch an Accessibility Liaison Program to increase capacity in understanding the responsibilities under the AODA and to promote consultations and information-sharing within divisions and Faculties regarding accessible practices across the University.

Sustaining current efforts

- Review and update the content of the University's online AODA training modules to ensure information is updated and reflects advanced accessibility practices. Continue to offer and track completion of the AODA Online Training Module.

- Update and launch a refreshed Communications Plan to increase awareness among new staff and faculty members about their responsibilities under the AODA. Include information-sharing on alternative formats, web accessibility requirements, emergency preparedness, and accommodation.

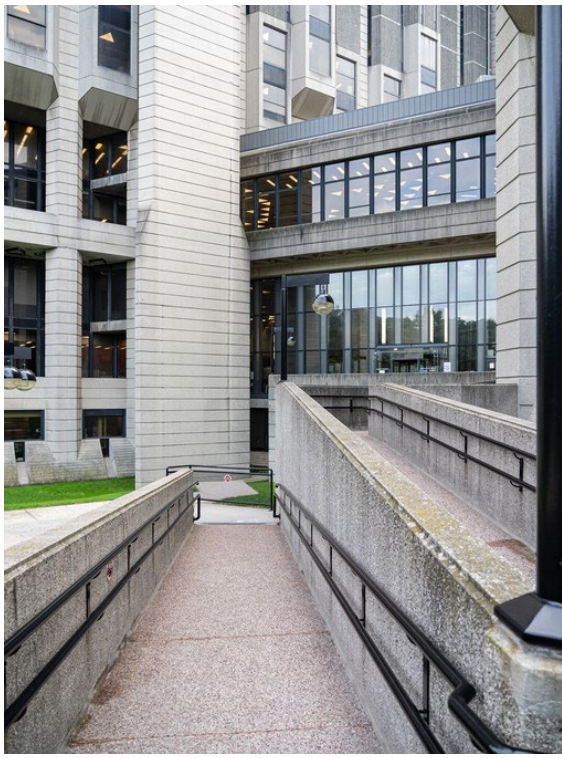
Theme 2: Barrier-free Services

The University is committed to providing barrier-free learning and working environments that are accessible to all individuals. Initiatives under this theme aim to advance accessible practices in student support, administrative processes, event planning, and customer service protocols.

Responsible portfolio(s):
PSEC – Health & Wellbeing Programs & Services; Vice-Provost, Faculty & Academic Life; tri-campus student services; Student Housing & Experience; tri-campus residences; tri-campus safety offices; Institutional Equity Office – AODA Office

Relevant areas of the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation:

- General requirements
- Employment standards
- Transportation standards
- Customer service standards



Initiatives

Individualized Emergency Response Plans

The University will review and update, as needed, institutional processes to support employee requests for individualized workplace emergency response plans. All stages of the accommodation plan development process, from point-of-request to plan implementation and information-sharing, will be included in this review.

Accessibility training for academic administrators

The University will review and update existing educational resources to assist academic administrators in supporting faculty members through accommodation processes, with the goal of enhancing information-sharing about roles, responsibilities, resources, and available tools.

Awareness of accommodations process among people leaders and HR professionals

The University will develop education resources for people leaders and human resources professionals about the employee accommodation process. These resources will emphasize roles, responsibilities, and available tools.

Guide on service animals in University residences

The University will convene a working group and engage consultations to develop a Guide on Service Animals in Residence to enhance understanding and education about the roles and responsibilities when providing services to residents with service animals.

Emergency procedures, plans, and public safety information

The University will review and update, as needed, institutional information about emergency procedures for persons with disabilities to ensure they remain in compliance with the AODA. Additionally, the University will develop training and awareness resources on accessibility and emergency procedures for Campus Safety professionals.

Sustaining current efforts

- Continue to provide accessible customer service training within the AODA Online training offerings, and via Accessible Events workshops.
- Raise awareness about the Service Animal Guideline across the University and provide ongoing consultations on welcoming service animals and support persons through the University's AODA portfolio.
- Amplify the mechanisms to provide feedback on the accessibility of the University's goods, services, and facilities.
- Continue to raise awareness of the availability of accessible transit options for the UTM shuttle bus.

Theme 3: Information & Communications

Ensuring the accessibility of information and communications tools used across U of T's three campuses requires coordinated and proactive efforts by many stakeholders at the University. Initiatives under this theme aim to enhance accessible practices in information and communications development by focusing on web accessibility, support for assistive technologies, and accessible public-facing content.

Initiatives

Web accessibility compliance resources

The University will review the metrics, key indicators, and benchmarks used to confirm web accessibility compliance and continue to review institutional websites for compliance.

Institutional accessibility resource hub

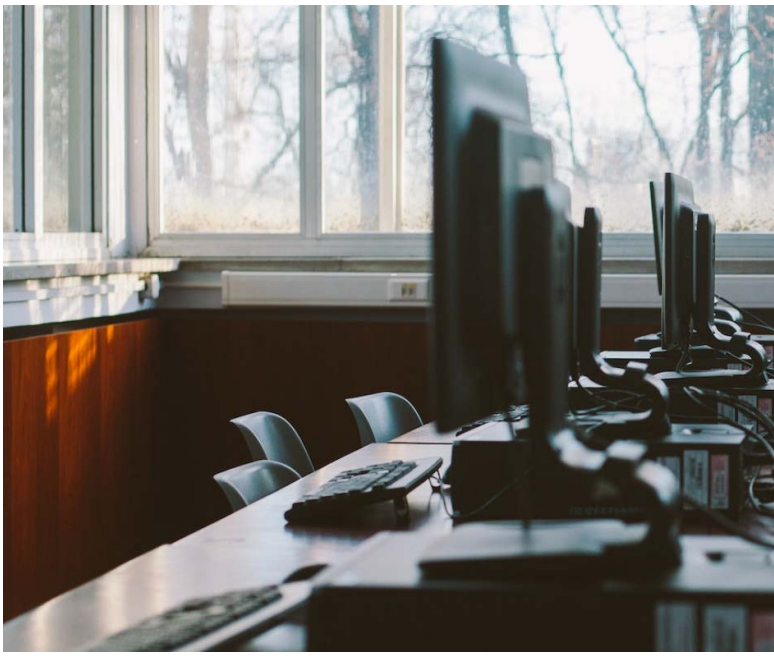
The University will establish a resource hub that will host existing resources and guidelines on accessible communications in one location.

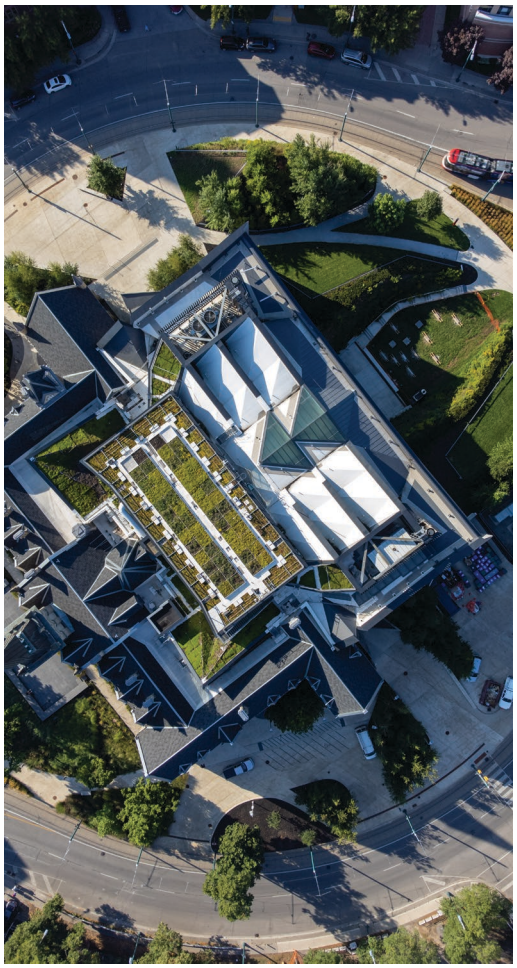
Accessible educational materials processes

The University will identify, enhance, and communicate existing pathways for students to request and receive accessible educational materials.

Responsible portfolio(s):
Information Technology Services; Associate Vice-President & Vice-Provost, Digital Strategies; University of Toronto Communications; tri-campus Accessibility Services; tri-campus teaching and learning centres; University of Toronto Libraries; Institutional Equity Office – AODA Office

Relevant areas of the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation:
Information & communications





Sustaining current efforts

- Continue to build capacity for web and digital accessibility across the University to ensure all persons responsible for websites are aware of and implement legislative requirements.
- Increase promotion of the range of accessible supports and resources available to all instructors through the Centre for Teaching Support & Innovation and campus teaching and learning centres.
- Continue to support working groups from tri-campus teaching centres and teaching and learning support offices across the University in reviewing programming and resources on inclusive and accessible teaching, including Universal Design for Learning.

Theme 4: Systems & Processes

The University community uses multiple systems and processes to access information and engage administrative services every day. The University will continue to ensure its institutional systems are accessible and support the facilitation of barrier-free spaces. Initiatives under this theme aim to enhance institutional processes as required by and outlined in the AODA.

Responsible portfolio(s):
Associate Vice-President & Vice-Provost, Digital Strategies; Procurement Services; Information Technology Services; Institutional Equity Office – AODA Office; University of Toronto Communications

Relevant areas of the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation:

- General requirements
- Information & communications
- Customer service

Initiatives

Institutional Digital Accessibility Guideline

The University will develop an Institutional Digital Accessibility Guideline that aligns with the IT@UofT Strategic Plan to support AODA compliance and maintain current digital accessibility practices.

Sustaining current efforts

- Continue to provide, in partnership with Procurement Services, Accessibility & Procurement training sessions for all members of the University community. Continue advising relevant administrative units on how to embed accessible procurement requirements into existing processes.

Theme 5: Accessible Physical Spaces

The University is committed to designing physical spaces that are barrier-free while carefully considering ways to update existing environments. Initiatives under this theme will support University processes for designing, maintaining, and enhancing accessible physical spaces and aim to create inclusive environments for all community members.

Initiatives

Review and document processes supporting preventative and emergency maintenance of accessible elements

The University will document the processes for the preventative and emergency maintenance of accessible elements in public spaces, including procedures for dealing with temporary disruptions.

The University is committed to maintaining accessible public spaces through a proactive and responsive approach that prioritizes safety, inclusivity, and continuity of access. Strategies include regular inspections, collaborative reporting, and 24/7 monitoring to help identify and address issues promptly. In winter, snow and ice removal efforts prioritize accessible exterior paths of travel, such as ramps.

Temporary disruptions are managed with timely, clear communication to ensure the community is informed and alternative access is provided whenever necessary.

Accessible features, navigation, and wayfinding information

The University will coordinate a review of U of T Maps and other tools to update the information provided on accessible spaces and features across the three campuses.

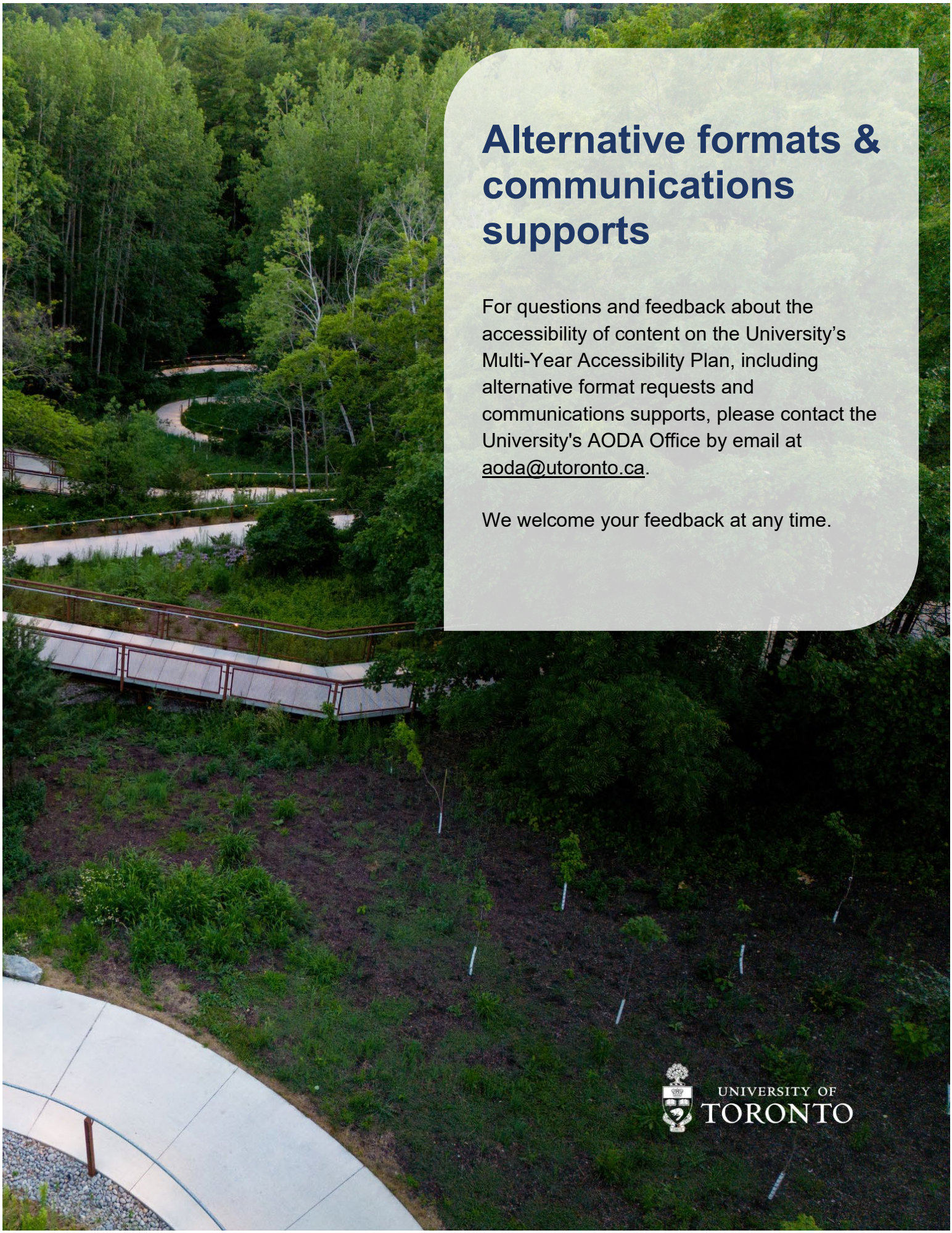
Responsible portfolio(s):
University Planning; tri-campus facilities management offices; University of Toronto Communications; Institutional Equity Office – AODA Office

Relevant areas of the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation:

- General requirements
- Design of public spaces standards
- Customer service standards

Sustaining current efforts

- Continue to support University planners through consultation as required under the AODA on Design of Public Spaces Standards projects.
- Continue to embed accessible design into new projects and renovations through implementation of the University Facility Accessibility Design Standards.
- Identify and coordinate opportunities with tri-campus facilities management units, University of Toronto Communications, and other relevant divisions to amplify notices of temporary disruption through internal communication mechanisms (e.g., service alerts).
- Continue to provide notices of temporary disruption through existing services (e.g., Building Access Notices at the St. George campus).



Alternative formats & communications supports

For questions and feedback about the accessibility of content on the University's Multi-Year Accessibility Plan, including alternative format requests and communications supports, please contact the University's AODA Office by email at aoda@utoronto.ca.

We welcome your feedback at any time.

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