

7.7 Universal Accessibility

The University Districts serve a diverse community and will be designed to have equal participation by people of all ages and abilities. The framework encourages the application of universal design principles across campus to the degree possible.

General Guidelines

- Establish clear, intuitive connections between key spaces on campus, enhanced by wayfinding signage and lighting to increase ease of use.
- Design open spaces to be navigable, multi-sensory, and sensitive to the needs of all age groups and abilities.
- Increase safety and thermal comfort for pedestrians in the winter months, through heating technologies or weather protection, where feasible.
- Establish a well connected and legible network of pathways, supported with a wayfinding system, exterior lighting, and pathway design consistent with standards in the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)*.
- Utilize tactile elements and contrasting colours and materials for those with visual impairment to identify changes in function that can be detected with visual aids (i.e. tactile buffer strips at crossings, braille incorporated in wayfinding elements).
- Consolidate vehicle access points to minimize the number of breaks along pedestrian and bicycle routes.
- Design new facilities with main entrances that are clearly visible, well lit, and at grade to avoid the need for ramps. Also ensure new facilities have legible and welcoming through-routes accompanied with elevators for sites with large grade changes.
- Integrate new buildings into existing topography to moderate the elevation change, instead of “benching” the site.
- Where changes in grade cannot be avoided, accommodate those with mobility needs by providing ramps and switchbacks (as alternatives to stairs), gradual slopes, smooth paving surfaces, among others.
- Provide parking spaces for people with disabilities, within close proximity to the facility, and with drop-off areas close to and (where possible) visible from entrances.



Durham Residence and Academic Building, Trent University



Tactile Paving Used to Guide the Visually Impaired.
Source: Streets of Louga