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News / Toronto

## Toronto activist pitches revamped wheelchair logo

Jonathan Silver says the existing International Symbol of Access is 'outdated' and should be replaced with something more empowering.



EDUARDO LIMA/METRO

Toronto's Jonathan Silver has created stickers with a revamped and more dynamic version of the International Symbol for Access.

By: [Luke Simcoe](#) Metro Published on Mon Sep 19 2016

Jonathan Silver is trying to make Toronto more accessible, one sticker at a time.

Silver, who previously distributed stickers that [replace the "litter" sign on city garbage bins with the word "landfill,"](#) has turned his attention to issues of accessibility.

He's made hundreds of decals with a [revamped version of the classic wheelchair logo](#) used to mark accessible entrances or parking spots. He'll be distributing them for free Sept. 24 at the Centre for Social Innovation.

The existing symbol, known as the International Symbol of Access (ISA), has been criticized for being too static and for emphasizing the wheelchair rather than the person in it. The new symbol – designed by the Accessible Icon Project in the U.S. – shows a person pushing a wheelchair forward.

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"The old symbol indicates we should identify people with disabilities as people who can't move or need help. The new one gets us to see the person before the wheelchair. We see them first and foremost as people. And they're moving," Silver said.

"It's empowering."

Silver stops short of suggesting people should apply the stickers to city or provincial property – doing so violates municipal bylaws – but said he has already seen them on parking signs and TTC stops.




Luke Anderson, founder of the [Stop Gap](#) initiative, which adds accessible ramps to businesses and buildings in the city, praised Silver's work.

"We need to start recognizing people for what they can do, not what they can't do. This kind of people-first imagery and language is important to crafting a society where people are empowered to reach their full potential," he said.



While the state of New York as well as the City of Nanaimo in British Columbia, have officially adopted the new accessible logo, it's unlikely Toronto will follow suit.

The Ontario Building Code, which Toronto adheres to, requires the existing symbol be used, and the new logo has not been adopted by the International Organization for Standardization, which oversees international symbols.

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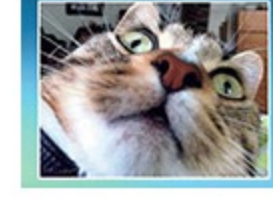
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