

The City of Calgary's Accessibility Strategy 2020

As a committee of Council, The Advisory Committee on Accessibility (ACA), provides strategic advice and makes recommendations to City Council and City Administration in addressing issues, needs and services for people with physical, sensory and cognitive disabilities in order to provide a high level of accessible City services.

An update to the Accessibility Strategy is intended to support Administration increasing the coordination of accessibility work across The Corporation and to further embed accessibility in The City's planning, policies, practices and systems work. The result of this updated strategy will be a city that is accessible for everyone.

Elements that have informed this updated strategy include:

- An internal scan examined how different City of Calgary Business Units (BUs) integrate accessibility into overall work functions, how service lines engage with the Advisory Committee on Accessibility, and how service lines work together to deliver accessibility initiatives (cross corporate alignment). This scan documented current processes used by The City to establish accessibility benchmarks.
- Social Well-Being Policy and Principles.
- An annotated bibliography was created to list accessibility related reports and policy documents with key findings on accessibility issues and solutions, and implementation processes to help embed accessibility in government.
- A literature and policy review for embedding accessibility that explored the strategies and solutions for enhancing accessibility used by other Canadian municipalities.
- Disability-specific and relevant measures will inform the work of this strategy.

The updated strategic areas have been combined into five key areas of accessibility for The City of Calgary:

- 1) Physical Infrastructure
- 2) Communication
- 3) Transportation
- 4) Housing
- 5) Emerging Issues

1. Physical Infrastructure

Goal: Public capital projects are reviewed for accessibility so that everyone can access all public spaces.

Strategy A: Involve the Cross -Corporate Public Accessibility Advisory Team	
Partners	City of Calgary: Transportation, Utilities & Environmental Protection, Community Services, Planning & Development and Deputy City Manager's Office (Facility Management)
Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the review and update the Access Design Standards incorporating the new National Building Code-Alberta Edition, Public Realm information, Rick Hansen Foundation Accessibility Certification Gold Level Standards and other best practices. • Work with the Public Projects Accessibility Advisory Team to develop mechanisms for liaising with the Advisory Committee on Accessibility (ACA) and the Access Design Sub-committee in providing input into accessibility projects and reports. • Improve the access review process and compliance for corporate capital projects. • Participate, review and provide recommendations on key infrastructure projects (e.g. Rivers District, Stephen Avenue Mall, Beltline Public Realm Improvements, Green Line.) • Promote the Cross-Corporate Public Accessibility Advisory Team on an ongoing basis, so employees and community are aware of the activities they have been involved with to embed accessibility.
Strategy B: Integrate the Corporate Accessibility Policy into City practices	
Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create policy statements which provide a coordinated approach to the inclusion of persons with disabilities and the accessibility of all City programs and services. • Embed accessibility into decision making processes, using a disability and accessibility perspective through involvement, oversight, participation, awareness and compliance. • Include components of the Accessibility Policy into Service Lines & Budgets, as it pertains to barriers in physical infrastructure. • Create measurement/benchmarking/status updates on Accessibility. • Identify the barriers and focus on effective remedies for people with disabilities in the areas of procurement, elections, emergency management.

2. Communications

Goal: People with disabilities have equitable access to City communications.

Strategy A: Advocate for the use of communications access	
Partners	City of Calgary: Calgary Neighbourhoods, Customer Service & Communications
Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocate for consistent application of accessible communications across The Corporation (Council, public engagement, elections, emergencies, Calgary.ca website, events and meetings). • Establish education and awareness communications (i.e. promoting National AccessAbility Week activities, International Day of Persons with Disabilities, etc.). • Promotion of plain language, assistive and interpretive communications.
Strategy B: Provide customer service training activities about visible and invisible disabilities	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure 'Serving People with Disabilities' training is offered/available to employees. • Support Accessibility Experiential Tours for employees. • Create an accessible environment for communications for Administration, for internal and external events i.e. festival and event checklist.

3. Transportation

Goal: People with disabilities can move around the city easily.

Strategy A: Ensure all transportation services are barrier-free.	
Partners	City of Calgary: Calgary Transit, Calgary Roads, Community Services & Transportation Infrastructure
Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborating with Calgary Transit and Calgary Transit Access ensuring availability of accessible services. • Work with City of Calgary transportation providers ensuring 24/7 on-demand wheelchair taxi service. • Advocate for the pervasive use of audible pedestrian signals in order to make Calgary safer for people with vision loss. • Calgary Neighbourhoods, Calgary Roads and Calgary Transit to collaborate on the Priority 1 Snow & Ice Control (SNIC) for the clearing of 1100 bus stops, windrows and pathways. • Advocate for adequate and appropriate accessible parking stalls. • Incorporate an accessibility lens in all Urban Strategy, Calgary Transit and Transportation Infrastructure initiatives and advocate for the appropriate allocation of funding.

4. Housing

Goal: People with disabilities have the security of an appropriate home.

Strategy A: Collaborate with Housing Providers to Meet the Accessibility and Affordability Needs of Persons with Disabilities.	
Partners	Calgary Housing, Calgary Housing Company
Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leverage the Access Design Sub-committee to review plans and provide recommendations on The City's new affordable housing projects for the inclusion of adaptable dwellings and barrier-free units. • ACA to advocate for the same level (6%) of other major municipalities in affordable and accessible housing stock in Calgary's development and building industry that is affordable and accessible. • ACA to educate the development and building industry to increase available accessible units. • Leverage work being done with the Seniors Age-Friendly Strategy, Social Well-Being, and the Mental Health and Addictions Strategy. • ACA to work with other levels of government to enhance access to programs, grants, and services which improve accessibility or help assist citizens age in place.

5. Emerging Issues

Goal: Attention is brought to issues related to accessibility and the avoidance of barriers that may impact the quality of life for persons with disabilities.

Strategy A: Monitor trends/issues in the community that may impact people with disabilities.	
Partners	City of Calgary
Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be aware and informed of current trends, emerging legislation, best practices, and social media concerns for persons with disabilities. • Current issues may include, but is not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Accessible Canada Act ○ E-scooter and E-Bicycle sharing programs ○ Human Trafficking of people with disabilities ○ Single Use Plastics ○ Accessible Elections ○ Emergency Contingency Plans for vulnerable persons (ie: COVID-19 and Medic Alert) ○ Inter-City Transportation (ie: Greyhound no longer in the marketplace)