



Advisory Committee on Accessibility

Mandate and Composition

Mandate	To provide strategic advice and make recommendations to City Council and City Administration in addressing issues, needs, and services for people with physical, sensory, and cognitive disabilities; including, but not limited to: infrastructure, transportation, technology, communication, affordable/accessibly housing, social and economic accessibility issues in order to provide a high level accessible City services for people with disabilities.
Composition	6 Members with disabilities representing a range of people with physical, sensory and cognitive disorders 2 Members representing the seniors community 3 Citizens-at-Large who may or may not have a disability, but who are interested in access issues 3 Members of City Administration (e.g., Planning and Development, Calgary Transit, and Calgary Recreation)

Details

Chair	Chair-Greg McMeekin, Vice-Chair-Christopher Gordon
Summary of initiatives, projects or work completed or ongoing in the last year.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for ongoing Snow & Ice Control (SNIC) to provide a barrier-free path of travel, removal of windrows and snow from wheelchair ramps for people with disabilities. • Provided review and update comments to the Cross-Corporate Public Accessibility Advisory Team, to align with the 2019 National Building Code-Alberta Edition for the 2021 Access Design Standards. • Outlining universal design and accessibility components for the Green Line. • Liaising with the Cross-Corporate Public Accessibility Advisory Team to review and provide recommendations to Roads projects like Temporary Sidewalk Patios, Floating Bus Islands and Cycle Track/Pedestrian Buffer Zones. • Through disability lived experience, provided recommendations on the Eau Claire Redevelopment and Jaiper Bridge design.



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provided feedback on Single-Use Plastics for the Corporate response stating that “While the City supports the Government of Canada’s initiative to reduce waste from single-use plastic straws, there are no viable alternatives for people with disabilities”. For equity in the daily lives of people with disabilities an exemption needs to be recognized. • Plus 15 Wayfinding and Accessibility Study disability lens involvement. • Provided recommendations on the new Heritage Park Dock to enhance accessibility. • Added the importance of directional linear/straight line domes and yellow truncated domes to warn of caution going into a street for people with vision loss on the 19th Avenue SE Complete Streets Corridor Project. • Added a disability lens to the Greater Downtown Plan. • Supporting the ongoing Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles (WAV) to continue with the pilot of the Centralized Dispatch and driver incentives. Report to go forward September 2021. • To provide ongoing cross-disability recommendations to projects that Calgary Municipal Land Corporation is leading, including the Events Centre, BMOX, 17th Platform and Roadway Extension, and Arts Commons Transformation. • Annual support of the Calgary Awards-Award for Accessibility and the ACA Awards for community recognition being presented by The Mayor on May 10th.
<p>Outline of 2021-2022 work plan.</p>	<p>Implementation of the City of Calgary’s Accessibility Strategy (See Attached)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical Infrastructure Goal-Public Projects are reviewed for accessibility, so that everyone can access all public spaces. • Communication Goal-People with disabilities have equitable access to City communications. • Transportation Goal- People with disabilities can move around the city easily. • Housing Goal- People with Disabilities have the security of an appropriate home. • 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.



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<p>Challenges to fulfilling mandate.</p> <p><i>(COVID impacts will be documented in the next section)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would like more engagement on the Green Line from a community cross-disability perspective. • Ongoing delays with the Calgary Corporate Accessibility Policy, so we continue to operate under a 2005 Policy. Part of City Clerk's Policy Review. • More funding needs to go to Snow & Ice Control (SNIC) for laneway aprons and engineered walkways to provide a barrier-free, safe path of travel. • All City Project Managers need to bring their projects to the Access Design Sub-committee of ACA for review from a disability lens perspective.
<p>Additional information you would like to share with Council.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COVID-19 for people with disabilities has exacerbated the level of isolation they have worked so hard in the last twenty years to combat through inclusive communities and workplaces. Some people with disabilities have been terrified to leave their homes. The rest of society realized how so many people with disabilities live everyday. • The pandemic has revealed significant gaps in services and support networks. • There has been an increased level of unemployment with a group of people that already had a low employment rate. • Designing for accessibility has now become the norm. For example, the need for no touch surfaces, the necessity for automatic push button doors, access to hand washing stations at the level for someone using a mobility device, having a barrier-free path of travel for 2M distance provisions, improved color contrast and font size for signage for safety notices. • Virtual meetings have allowed those that are immunocompromised to stay in their homes to meet safely. • Some accommodations like American Sign Language at press conferences and having a Federal COVID-19 Task Force for People with Disabilities, have long been advocated by people with disabilities, and it shouldn't have taken a pandemic to get here. Now that we are here with no end in sight, it would be good if we could see these accommodations continue post-pandemic and even be expanded upon-with people with disabilities leading the way on design and implementation "Nothing About Us Without Us'.



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Thinking about the needs of people with disabilities means no one is left behind in COVID-19 in the process of planning, communication and implementation. Virtual meetings have allowed us to stay connected and do great work together. This is an amazing group of volunteers.
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Impact of COVID-19

How many meetings were held since March 2020?	12 Meetings
How has public participation in meetings been impacted? Please identify any barriers to accessibility, participation, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We have coordinated a number of presentations with external stakeholders that have presented virtually. Communication has been key., Narrative description of what has been on the screen for people with vision loss needs to be outlined well. For individuals who are Deaf, coordinating platforms for the Sign Language Interpreters was initially a barrier with virtual meetings, but we have sorted it out with IT and Deaf & Hear Alberta. Virtual meetings that include the public need to put captioning on the Microsoft Teams meeting screen, so that people who are hard of hearing may participate. If a sign language interpreter is required please have one for City meetings, so people that are Deaf may participate. The positives that have come out of COVID-19 is that City press conferences and National/Provincial broadcasts have incorporated sign language interpretation for Deaf Calgarians to know all updates. The ability to work from home or access virtual medical appointments have been ideal for people with disabilities. The usual barriers that are physical or the use of accessible transportation have not been an issue being at home and having Calgary Transit Access or Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles when required.
How do you manage to continue the work of the	ACA members communicate well and are well supported by the Administrative staff.



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committee in the current situation?

Both City Council and Administration are committed to the importance of accessibility in all the City does. Inclusion for people with disabilities should continue to be top of mind and the ACA will support this work.

Attachment:

- A. The City of Calgary's Accessibility Strategy 2021