

2015 ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON ACCESSIBILITY ANNUAL UPDATE

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Advisory Committee on Accessibility's (ACA) mission is to advise City Council and The Corporation of the rights and service needs of Calgarians with disabilities. The ACA focuses on broad policy issues regarding access and disability matters that impact City projects as they relate to people with disabilities.

This report provides a summary of the accomplishments and activities of the ACA and its two sub-committees, Access Design and Transportation Services for People with Disabilities (Attachment 1). An updated version of the 2016-2017 ACA Strategic Plan is provided (Attachment 2). Amended Terms of Reference for the ACA and its Access Design Sub-committee are presented for Council approval (Attachment 3 and 4).

The 2015 ACA accomplishments are noted in Attachment 1 and several are highlighted in this report, including increased accessibility and universal design of physical infrastructure in public spaces; increased accessibility of Calgary's transportation services for people with disabilities; and increased education in business units and City Council on the importance of alternative formats for City communications.

Over the next year the ACA will work across business units to update the Calgary Corporate Accessibility Policy to enable people with disabilities in Calgary to have equal opportunity for full participation in all aspects of municipal activity. Two new positions, an Access Planner embedded in Calgary Building Services and an Advisor in Human Resources, have begun to implement the ACA Strategic Plan. The collaboration with the Calgary Building Services and Human Resources leadership has led to an increased commitment to build a more inclusive Corporation.

The original Terms of Reference for the ACA and the Access Design Sub-committee were created in 1999. The amended Terms of Reference (Attachments 3 and 4) reflect new business unit names and outlines the work of ACA and its sub-committee. The ACA requests that Council dissolve the Transportation Services for People with Disabilities Sub-committee, as its work has become part of Calgary Transit's Access Advisory Committee. Members of the dissolving sub-committee will be offered the opportunity to join the ACA Access Design Sub-committee and/or Calgary Transit's Access Advisory Committee.

ADMINISTRATION RECOMMENDATIONS:

The SPC on Community and Protective Services recommends that Council:

1. Approve the updated Terms of Reference for ACA and its Access Design Sub-committee that reflects new business unit names, as per Attachment 3 and 4 respectively;
2. Dissolve the ACA Sub-committee on Transportation Services for People with Disabilities; and
3. Direct Administration to bring forward, no later than 2017 May, an updated Calgary Corporate Accessibility Policy.

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**RECOMMENDATION OF THE SPC ON COMMUNITY AND PROTECTIVE SERVICES,
DATED 2016 MAY 04:**

That Council:

1. Approve the updated Terms of Reference for **Advisory Committee on Accessibility (ACA)** and its Access Design Subcommittee that reflects new business unit names, as per Attachment 3 and 4 respectfully;
2. Dissolve the **Advisory Committee on Accessibility (ACA)** Sub-committee on Transportation Services for People with Disabilities; and
3. Direct Administration to bring forward, no later than 2017 May, an updated Calgary Corporate Accessibility Policy.
4. **Direct Administration to follow up with the hearing impaired representatives to explore options to improve services at The City of Calgary events and Activities.**

PREVIOUS COUNCIL DIRECTION/POLICY

On 2015 May 06, Council approved CPS2015-0420, the ACA Annual Report that represented the most recent accomplishments in a series of annual reports presented since 2003. Council also approved Councillor Woolley's recommendation to "Direct Administration to conduct a review of the resource requirements associated with achieving the Advisory Committee on Accessibility goals as outlined in their Strategic Plan and to prepare a business case and recommendations to be considered as part of the 2016 Action Plan Adjustment process".

On 2010 February 08, Council approved LPT2010-01, 'Access Design Standards 2010'. These standards represent The City's approach to universal design. The standards align with the minimum standards on barrier-free design, set in the Alberta Building Code, Section 3.8. As The City of Calgary, the ADS allows for The City to go above minimum standards and enhance accessibility across disabilities.

On 2005 December 12, Council approved CPS2005-82, 'Accessibility Policy'. The Calgary Corporate Accessibility Policy provides direction on how The City will provide services to meet the needs of people with disabilities.

On 1999 September 13, N99-22 'Membership for ACA' directed "That the committee, previously referred to as the Advisory Committee on Services for People with Disabilities, be officially named the Advisory Committee on Accessibility".

On 1999 May 03, Council approved the terms of reference for a proposed advisory committee on accessibility (TTP00-19) and dissolved the Handicapped and Elderly Transportation Committee (HETCO). The terms of reference established the Advisory Committee on

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Accessibility on Services for People with Disabilities and two Sub-committees, Access Design and Transportation Services for People with Disabilities.

BACKGROUND

Accessibility affects the quality of life for people with disabilities. Statistics Canada's 2012 Canadian Survey on Disability found that over 12 per cent of Calgary's population has a disability of some kind. While a large proportion of disability is a product of the aging process, it also includes chronic illness, workplace injury and various genetic cognitive, physical or sensory issues. As incidence of disability rises, there is a growing demand to accommodate the needs of people with disabilities.

Barriers to full participation for people with disabilities occur when inaccessible communications, physical infrastructure, transportation, democratic engagement opportunities or lack of affordable, universally-designed housing exist. Attitudinal and systemic barriers in organizational practices can block equitable opportunities for employment or limit an individual's full participation in society. In addressing equity for people with disabilities The City's commitment to implement the principles of universal design for its service provision allows The Corporation to play a significant role in building an accessible city through its policies and built environment.

The ACA works in partnership with City departments to enhance the accessibility and universal design of services to create an inclusive city for people with disabilities. For instance, the ACA provides advice on how to use the ADS to exceed the Alberta Building Code-Section 3.8 Barrier Free Design, which are minimum code standards used to address levels of accessibility for people with physical, sensory and cognitive disabilities.

INVESTIGATION: ALTERNATIVES AND ANALYSIS

Accomplishments

The ACA collaborated with Administration to achieve a number of accomplishments in 2015, as outlined in Attachment 1. Highlights include:

THE ACA GOAL:	ACCOMPLISHMENT:
1. To have the physical infrastructure of public spaces be accessible and universally-designed.	17 th Avenue Corridor Project (SW/SE) curb cuts, barrier-free path of travel and audible signals.
2. To have accessible transportation services for people with disabilities.	The ACA advised on barrier-free designs and made recommendations on the South East portion of the 45 stations of the Green Line.
3. To educate business units and Council on the importance of alternative communication formats.	The ACA worked with Calgary Emergency Management Agency (CEMA) on an award-winning emergency preparedness guide for persons with disabilities.
4. To provide leadership and organizational excellence for persons with disabilities.	Completed the Vulnerable Persons Registry

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One-time additional resources

The 2016 Resilience Budget included one-time funding (through the Fiscal Stability Reserve) for two additional staff and related program costs to assist the ACA in delivering on the 2016-2017 goals from the Strategic Plan presented in Attachment 2. The one-time funded positions in Calgary Building Services and Human Resources are working to advance a culture of accessibility and universal design in The City of Calgary. This funding represents an intentional focus for The Corporation on implementing ADS on all City projects, and on change management to increase corporate staff knowledge and capacity. This work is developmental and will inform a more sustainable plan for the next Action Plan cycle.

The Access Planner position (in Calgary Building Services) is, this year:

- updating the 2016 ADS which will guide the process of access reviews of buildings and public realm (will be received by Standing Policy Committee on Planning & Urban Development 2016 July 22);
- developing a process to review plans on POSSE for barrier-free design;
- creating an implementation and communications plan to implement ADS; and
- working across The Corporation to create a unified process to review projects from a universal design perspective.

The Human Resource Advisor position is focused on change management processes this year which include:

- reviewing current Human Resources practices, policies, training programs and incorporating disability information;
- developing strong alignment with Human Resource initiatives under the Leadership Strategic Plan and the Diversity & Inclusion Framework; and
- creating Corporate-wide awareness to guide a cultural change on how Administration responds people with disabilities.

In the current economic climate Administration is contemplating how to resource the work of these two key positions beyond 2016. This is significant to The City's ability to advance to address accessibility and work towards solutions and opportunities for those with disabilities.

Sub-committee update

In 2015, the ACA and its two sub-committees (Transportation Services for People with Disabilities and Access Design) worked to educate City employees on the needs of people with disabilities and how to incorporate accessibility practices with The City of Calgary.

The ACA recommends that Council dissolve the Transportation Services for People with Disabilities (TSPD) Sub-committee, as it folds into Calgary Transit's Access Advisory Committee to address accessible transportation issues. Two representatives from TSPD sub-committee, one from Livery Transport Services and two from the Access Design Sub-committee will join Calgary Transit's Access Advisory Committee. This will be a more efficient use of volunteers, staff and resources.

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Stakeholder Engagement, Research and Communication

Community and organizational input along with Council requests are received and reviewed by the ACA. Committee members draw upon their experience of either living with a disability or being associated with someone with a disability, to inform City processes. The ACA and Calgary Neighbourhoods' Issue Strategist have provided disability knowledge and expertise to a number of City projects to incorporate barrier-free design through City business units and work sections including: Calgary Community Standards, Calgary Neighbourhoods, Calgary Parks, Calgary Recreation, Calgary Roads, Calgary Transit, Transportation Infrastructure, City Clerk's Office, Corporate Planning Approvals, Facility Management, Customer Service & Communications, Inspections and Permit Services, Local Area Planning and Implementation, and Office of Land Servicing & Housing.

Strategic Alignment

The ACA accessibility planning supports Council priorities including:

- a prosperous city;
- a city of inspiring neighbourhoods;
- a city that moves; and

- a well-run city.

The work is grounded in the Corporate Accessibility Policy, and the inclusion of people with disabilities in all City services is identified in the Diversity & Inclusion Framework.

This annual update aligns with *Action Plan 2015-2018*:

- CSPS P12.1 – Steward relevant policies and strategies that address the needs of vulnerable populations including Aboriginal people, persons with disabilities, and immigrants; and
- CSPS P12.2 – Advise on social policy implications and provide social research support to strengthen The Corporation's responsiveness to the needs of vulnerable populations.

Social, Environmental, Economic (External)

Social

The Corporation is committed to removing barriers that impede people with disabilities, to allow everyone to use City services, programs and buildings in a complete and inclusive manner, regardless of ability.

Environmental

Universal design provides a sustainable building model that allows City buildings to be accessible for longer periods of time without retrofitting. Sustainability is advanced through the use of the ADS by providing universal design concepts that allow long term use without costly retrofits.

Economic

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People with disabilities are an untapped market in our workforce. Recruitment opportunities with accommodations in the workplace provide employment and economic benefits for all.

Financial Capacity

Current and Future Operating Budget

The ACA operates within the Calgary Neighbourhoods' operating budget. The City provides operational and administrative support to the ACA. Although two additional positions and related funding to advance the goals of the ACA Strategic Plan were funded from the Fiscal Stability Reserve in the amount of \$350,000 for 2016 Administration, due to the current economic climate, is contemplating how to resource the work of these two key positions beyond 2016.

Current and Future Capital Budget

There are no capital budget impacts associated with this report.

Risk Assessment

Due to the current economic climate, Administration is contemplating how to resource the work of the two additional one-time funded positions beyond 2016. Without these resources The

Corporation's progress on accessibility work for individuals with disabilities would be slowed down. Public perception among stakeholder groups might be that change is not occurring fast enough and resources are not in place. Administration will mitigate this risk through ongoing communication and work across The Corporation and the community.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Updated Terms of Reference for the ACA and the Access Design Sub-committee align with new business unit names;
2. Dissolution of the ACA Sub-committee on Transportation Services for People with Disabilities will streamline accessible transportation services with Calgary Transit Access and its associated committees. It is a more efficient use of volunteer, staff and resources; and
3. An updated Corporate Accessibility Policy will align with best practices in accessibility and reflect City Clerks revised policy template.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Advisory Committee on Accessibility (ACA) 2015 Accomplishments
2. Advisory Committee on Accessibility (ACA) Strategic Plan Summary 2016-2017
3. Boards, Commissions and Committees of Council Advisory Committee on Accessibility Amended Terms of Reference
4. Boards, Commissions and Committees of Council Access Design Sub-Committee Amended Terms of Reference