

ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON ACCESSIBILITY ANNUAL REPORT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report outlines the 2013 initiatives, and updated 2014-2015 strategic plan of the Advisory Committee on Accessibility (ACA), and its two sub-committees, Access Design and Accessible Transportation.

The ACA focuses on broad policy issues and advises The Corporation and City Council on access and disability matters that impact people with physical, sensory and cognitive disabilities. The ACA works towards ensuring all Calgarians have the greatest level of accessibility possible in all City services and projects. In response to citizen concerns, The City has demonstrated leadership with initiatives designed to enhance accessibility to core City services, including Text to 9-1-1 services, an increase in the number of accessible taxi licences and the incorporation of audible pedestrian signals in the Centre City.

Significant demographic trends are impacting the need for The City to consider and adapt how it makes its services accessible to Calgarians. Between 2012 and 2042, the population aged 65 or older is expected to triple, rising from approximately 100,000 to over 300,000 Calgarians. Older people have specific needs for service delivery that must be considered. As Calgary's population ages, there will be a greater need for City departments to focus on access to their services.

The ACA continues to work with all City business units to further the implementation of the Calgary Corporate Accessibility Policy, in order to promote an environment in which all persons can participate and contribute in the cultural, social, economic and political life in Calgary.

ADMINISTRATION RECOMMENDATION(S)

That the SPC on Community and Protective Services recommends that Council receive this report for information.

RECOMMENDATION OF THE SPC ON COMMUNITY AND PROTECTIVE SERVICES, DATED 2014 APRIL 30:

That the Administration Recommendation contained in Report CPS2014-0138 be approved

Excerpt from the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the SPC on Community and Protective Services Dated 2014 April 30:

"And further, that the Legislative Assistant attach the distributions to the Report, prior to being forwarded to Council.

CARRIED"

PREVIOUS COUNCIL DIRECTION / POLICY

On 1999 May 03, TTP00-19 Council approved "The terms of reference and composition for the proposed advisory committees as outlined in Appendix 2, and the Handicapped and Elderly Transportation Committee (HETCO) be dissolved...". The terms of reference established the

Approval(s): Dalgleish, Stuart concurs with this report. Author: Squair, Leanne
City Clerk's: J. Dubetz

ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON ACCESSIBILITY ANNUAL REPORT

Advisory Committee on Accessibility on Services for People with Disabilities and this committee reports to the SPC on Community and Protective Services.

On 1999 September 13, N99-22 Membership for Advisory Committee on Accessibility, 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 2005 December 12, Council approved CPS2005-82, ‘Accessibility Policy’. The Calgary Corporate Accessibility Policy CSP003 provides direction on how The City will provide services that meet the needs of people with disabilities.

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 Alberta Building Code, Section 3.8 Barrier-Free Design, which are minimum standards.

On 2013 May 08, Council approved CPS2013-0291, Advisory Committee on Accessibility (ACA) Annual Report; this is the most recent in a series of annual reports presented since 2003.

BACKGROUND

Perceptions of disability are undergoing a fundamental change. At one time, developmental or congenital conditions at the beginning of life, or traumatic injuries during one’s prime years, were commonly understood to be the only causes of disability. Now, however, it is the implications of an aging population that have an increasingly significant impact. Examples of the link between aging and disability include survivors of heart attacks and strokes who may face limits on their functioning, and seniors who have trouble with hearing and vision.

According to *Trends 2014 - Community Wellbeing*, in the 30 years between 2012 and 2042, the population aged 65 or older is expected to triple, rising from approximately 100,000 to over 300,000 Calgarians — shifting from 10 per cent to 20 per cent of the total population. Similarly, the number of people aged 75 years or older is expected to increase from 50,000 to 150,000 over this same time frame. By the early 2030s — for the first time in history — Calgary will be home to more seniors than youth.

The needs of Calgarians with disabilities, including the aging population, will have significant impact on City services. For example, 20 per cent of Calgarians have varying levels of hearing loss and people with vision loss number approximately three per cent (CNIB). Meeting the accessibility needs of these citizens has implications for public meetings and City-hosted events. In order to ensure equitable engagement, alternative forms of communication will be increasingly necessary. These include the use of print materials in Braille, large print or synthesized speech, captioning for videotapes and meetings, providing assistive listening devices, sign language and oral communicators.

In response to citizen concerns, The City has demonstrated leadership with initiatives designed to enhance accessibility to core City services: closed captioning of Council meetings started in 2011, which encourages citizen engagement in municipal government. More recently, Calgarians who are deaf, hard of hearing or speech impaired became able converse with a 9-1-

ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON ACCESSIBILITY ANNUAL REPORT

1 Emergency Communications Officer through text messaging. The ACA has been instrumental in both of these developments.

Another trend in our city is an increasing number of Calgarians with disabilities having chronic conditions such as pain in the lower back, which is the greatest cause of years lived with a disability. Medical advances now result in increased longevity. It can be reasonably anticipated that older Calgarians will require additional Transit options and will use Recreation facilities and programs more frequently, to name just two implications for City services.

INVESTIGATION: ALTERNATIVES AND ANALYSIS

The ACA collaborates across City business units on the ongoing implementation of the Corporate Accessibility Policy direction for accessibility and disability matters. The two sub-committees, Access Design and Accessible Transportation, provide universal design recommendations to City departments in the project areas outlined in Attachment 1. Recommendations are grounded in the Corporate Access Design Standards and in engagement with Calgarians with lived disability experience.

The ACA and the sub-committees contributed to a range of City accomplishments in 2013, as itemized in Attachment 1. Of particular note are the following:

- Accessible municipal election – mail-in and online ballots and an educational video for staff about people with disabilities. This will assist the goal of imagineCALGARY, that “By 2036, there is a 75 per cent turnout in municipal elections”;
- Recommendations to Roads and the Calgary Construction Association on the design, safety and signage required for people with disabilities, so that sidewalk hoarding areas are safe;
- Snow and Ice Control (SNIC) access recommendations to Roads and Calgary Transit for the clearing of snow at bus stops, sidewalks to bus stops and windrows at crosswalks and intersections;
- Text to 9-1-1 service for the deaf, hard of hearing, and speech impaired community;
- Universal design recommendations in the East Bowmont, East Victoria Park, Clearwater Regional Park, Stanley Park, Century Gardens and Southland Park, along with the ImagineParks document;
- Input into Calgary Transit RouteAhead 30 year strategic plan;
- Review of 17 audible pedestrian signal 311 service requests sent to Calgary Roads to action, which will assist those with vision loss to cross the streets of Calgary more safely;
- Confirmation of the Audible Pedestrian Strategy, commencing with installation of audible pedestrian signals at all traffic signals in the Centre City where pedestrian volumes are moderate-high; and
- 13 new accessible taxi licenses, increasing the fleet to 168 accessible taxis.

The Advisory Committee on Accessibility 2014-2015 Strategic Plan (Attachment 2) provides strategic direction in accommodating accessibility for City services including physical infrastructure, accessible transportation and communication access. Areas of focus for the coming year include:

ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON ACCESSIBILITY ANNUAL REPORT

- Updating the 2010 Access Design Standards;
- Working with Access Calgary on the upcoming Performance Audit recommendations;
- Advising on affordable, accessible housing;
- Liaising with the Calgary Emergency Management Agency (CEMA) on the needs of people with disabilities;
- Working with Roads on access considerations for snow and ice control; and
- Defining the scope and need for a dedicated position to provide leadership for The City's universal design work. This position would support corporate projects from conceptual design to completion and would enhance the ACA's engagement with City business units by advising on the use of the City of Calgary Access Design Standards. Projects supported by this position might include LRT stations, Municipal Sustainability Initiative/Community Investment Fund-funded projects, Affordable/Accessible Housing projects, Wheelchair Curb Cut Designs, Audible Pedestrian Signals and Pedestrian Push Button Designs.

Council has directed Administration to develop a Seniors Age-Friendly Strategy and the ACA will contribute to the development of the strategy regarding implications and opportunities for older adults with disabilities. A progress report on stakeholder engagement and alignment with the World Health Organization Global Age-friendly Cities framework, will return to the Standing Policy Committee on Community & Protective Services on 2014 June 4.

Stakeholder Engagement, Research and Communication

Through the implementation of the Corporate Accessibility Policy, and specifically the requirement to incorporate universal design standards, the ACA's role across The Corporation continues to develop. Key partners include Calgary Transit, Inspections & Permit Services, City-Wide Policy & Integration, Roads, Recreation, Corporate Properties & Buildings, City Clerks, Customer Service & Communications, Community & Neighbourhood Services, Parks and Public Safety Communications. ACA's third annual celebration of December 3, International Day of Persons with Disabilities breakfast with City Council and Senior Management Team (SMT) was an opportunity to share ACA successes and to thank the Corporation for continuing to support inclusive initiatives for people with disabilities.

Strategic Alignment

This report aligns with The City's 2020 Sustainability Direction:

- Community Well-Being: "City facilities and spaces incorporate the Access Design Standards and City programs and services will demonstrate inclusiveness."
- Engagement and Empowerment: "The City communication and engagement opportunities are available in multiple formats, channels and languages and The City demonstrates that a broad representation of our citizens' voices has been considered in setting priorities and delivering services."

The report also aligns with the work being conducted to develop the Seniors Age Friendly Strategy as directed by Council.

Social, Environmental, Economic (External)

Approval(s): Dalglish, Stuart concurs with this report. Author: Squair, Leanne
City Clerk's: J. Dubetz

ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON ACCESSIBILITY ANNUAL REPORT

Social

Calgary has become more accessible and inclusive because the voices of people with disabilities have been supported and heard. Citizens with disabilities represent 17 per cent of all Calgarians and this percentage is rising as baby boomers reach 65 years of age (2012 Canadian Survey on Disability-Calgary). All Calgarians require safe and convenient access to transportation, affordable/accessible housing, an accommodating work environment, alternate communication formats, an accessible website, accessible roadways and walkways, along with community recreation opportunities. An accessible community is one where citizens of all abilities can participate fully in everyday life.

Environmental

Improvements in areas of infrastructure development such as universal design, LED lighting and recycling container signage, will help support and promote sustainability. Calgarians with vision loss are impacted by LED lighting and require tactile/raised lettering to identify garbage and recycling receptacles.

Economic

Participation of Calgarians with disabilities is vital to our economic success. Universal design of City projects from the outset is more cost effective than retrofitting at a later date.

Financial Capacity

Current and Future Operating Budget:

ACA operates within existing operating budgets and the 2011-2014 business plans. Future operating implications for the City to successfully implement The City of Calgary's Access Design Standards will be brought forward as part of Action Plan 2015-2018.

Current and Future Capital Budget:

Current corporate-wide business plans and capital budget allocations incorporate barrier-free design infrastructure.

Risk Assessment

The Advisory Committee on Accessibility is committed to moving universal design initiatives forward, but the pace of this work may not meet public expectations. ACA will continue to be proactive in engaging proponents of projects as soon as the committee becomes aware of them, to advocate and review project plans for universal design, in a timely manner.

REASON(S) FOR RECOMMENDATION(S):

This annual update provides Council with an overview of the impact of changing demographics and the related importance of the ACA's contribution to Council, The Corporation and ultimately citizens. With these factors, the importance of universal design standards and other accessibility principles will become increasingly significant for a growing number of Calgarians.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Advisory Committee on Accessibility (ACA) 2013 Completed Initiatives
2. Advisory Committee on Accessibility (ACA) Strategic Plan May 2014-May 2015
3. **Public Submissions**