



## Advisory Committee on Accessibility Report

### 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: built environment, accessible transportation and transportation infrastructure, technology, information and communication, goods and services, affordable/accessible housing, and social and economic accessibility issues in order to provide high level accessible City services for people with disabilities.

### COMPOSITION

14 Members:

- 11 Public Members
- 3 Administration

### ANNUAL UPDATE & KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

In the past year, the Advisory Committee on Accessibility and the Access Design Subcommittee have had impact in the following ways:

Activity completed	Description
Snow and Ice Control Policy Update	Significant input regarding the experience of people with disabilities was provided in advance of updates to the Snow and Ice Control Policy. Particular attention was paid to the social and economic impact snow and ice has on disabled Calgarians. This initiative is still ongoing.
Seasonal Patio Program	Provided advice and input into the revision of Seasonal Patio Guidelines to improve accessibility to the public sidewalks and the patios themselves. Attended site visits of seasonal patios to provide direct input to City staff on accessibility. The Guidelines for seasonal patios are still in development and have yet to be approved by the Advisory Committee on Accessibility. This initiative is ongoing.
BMO Centre	Provided advice on the accessibility features of the new facility.
Drought Resilience Plan	Provided advice to this project regarding the specific impacts of drought on disabled Calgarians and best methods of communication for Calgarians with disabilities.
CEMA Community Preparedness Survey	Provided advice on survey format, distribution of the survey, and how to best support and help people with disabilities in several types of emergencies or disasters.
Calgary Transit Fare Gate Assessment Study	Provided advice regarding the accessibility impacts of the installation of fare gates on the CTrain system.



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Audio Enhancement Devices at Elections Calgary	Provided advice to Elections Calgary on the features that are most needed for people with hearing loss to inform the procurement of replacement of audio enhancement devices. Existing devices are at the end of their life cycle.
Calgary Fire Department Virtual Reality Project	Participated in this interactive experience and provided advice to improve to fire safety education for people with disabilities.
Connect: Calgary's Parks Plan	Provided input into the revision of Calgary's Parks Plan to incorporate accessibility in Calgary's natural, recreational, and cultural parks.
16 Ave at 29 St NW Pedestrian Bridge	Provided technical advice on the design of the bridge to improve accessibility.
Bridgeland TOD Project	Provided advice on design concepts regarding accessibility.
Hangar Flight Museum Accessibility	Provided advice on initial design concepts regarding accessibility.
Northland Drive Floating Bus Island	Provided advice on a Floating Bus Island design regarding accessibility.
Plus 15 Life Cycle Project	Provided further advice on the accessibility considerations. The project team has included this advice in their revised design.
Silver Springs Neighbourhood Streets Improvements	Provided advice on the design of this pathway regarding accessibility.
Eau Claire Plaza Redevelopment	Provided advice on Eau Claire Plaza redevelopment including options for tactile warning indicators for the Eau Claire Plaza podium.
Special Olympics Canada Winter Games	Provided advice on accessibility considerations to the organizing staff of the Special Olympics Canada Winter Games being held in Calgary.
Glenbow Redevelopment	Provided advice on accessibility considerations related to redevelopment at the Glenbow museum.

The Advisory Committee on Accessibility and the Access Design Subcommittee have several additional projects underway:

Activity underway/ongoing	Description
Green Line	Providing ongoing input to the Green Line team to incorporate universal design when invited to comment.
CTrain Station Tactile Walking Surface Indicators	Calgary Transit is designing, implementing, and evaluating a one-year trial of tactile walking surface indicators on two CTrain platforms with a goal of creating a standard.
The Future of Stephen Avenue	Providing input to the project design when invited to do so.



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Alpine Park Multi-Use Pathway Design	Providing advice on design of bus stops adjacent to multi-use pathways to improve accessibility.
Snow and Ice Control	Continue to provide input regarding the experience of people with disabilities related to the Snow and Ice Control Policy.
Outdoor Patios	Continue to work with Administration on Seasonal Patio Guidelines to improve accessibility to the public sidewalks and the patios themselves.
Redevelopment of Accessibility Awards	Existing award structure is being reviewed for alignment with other City awards and expansion to include more community-based recognition.
Provision of Access Tours for Council and Senior Administration	The planning and provision of tours in fall and winter 2023-2024.

### CHALLENGES

The following three challenges pose a risk to the ability of the Advisory Committee on Accessibility to fulfill its mandate:

1. More fulsome education on the Access Design Standards within City Administration would allow the Advisory Committee on Accessibility and the Access Design Subcommittee members to focus their advice on instances that are not addressed within the Access Design Standards. It is a more efficient and effective use of the committee's resources to provide advice that falls outside of the scope of the Access Design Standards than to reiterate standards that are already in place.

Several projects have come to the Advisory Committee on Accessibility for approval which will not meet the Access Design Standards. Though the Advisory Committee on Accessibility has advised strict adherence to the Access Design Standards, it is disheartening to have The City proceed with inaccessible projects. In addition, advice has been sought from the Advisory Committee on Accessibility post-construction, which renders feedback ineffective. Incorporating accessibility at the outset of all projects would ensure that the Advisory Committee on Accessibility can focus on the future of access in our city, rather than correcting mistakes which could have been avoided with an accessible mindset at the project planning phase.

2. Knowledge transfer was a challenge with the Advisory Committee on Accessibility and Access Design Subcommittee given considerable turnover in their administration staff in the last year.

The Advisory Committee on Accessibility and the Access Design Subcommittee have experienced significant challenges due to the constant change in committee



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administration. Each change has resulted in a loss of access features in our committee meetings and required an educational intervention, on top of existing committee work, to upskill our administrative support in how to provide an accessible meeting environment. We anticipate that we will be able to impact more change when we have more stable administrative support who have a more fulsome understanding of accessibility and disability inclusion.

3. Furthermore, there is concern regarding the decision to replace a knowledge-specialist with a generalist as the Administration's primary support for the Advisory Committee on Accessibility. It is felt that the City's commitment to Accessibility is not evident in this decision, and that the ability of both the Advisory Committee on Accessibility and the Access Design Subcommittee to complete their mandates will be compromised.

### WORKPLAN FOR THE NEXT YEAR

Please see attached.

### OPERATIONS

In the past year, the Advisory Committee on Accessibility and the Access Design Subcommittee have met 20 times. Members participated virtually in all meetings except four, which were a hybrid format of both virtual and in-person attendance. Members of the public can request access to meetings, agendas, or minutes through contacting the Committee's resource staff. Administration is currently exploring additional methods to further incorporate public participation in meetings.

Each Advisory Committee on Accessibility meeting included American Sign Language interpretation and use of the captioning feature on Zoom and Microsoft Teams. In the future, it will be necessary to continue to host virtual or hybrid meetings to accommodate members who are immunocompromised and/or have accessibility challenges in getting to physical meetings. Large print agendas will be available for any hybrid or in-person meetings.

### ATTACHMENTS

- A. Advisory Committee on Accessibility Workplan 2023



In addition to the Advisory Committee on Accessibility’s ongoing consultation and advice on City initiatives, the following activities are planned for the coming year.

Focus Area	Task	Measure of Success	'Responsibility' in Terms of Reference
Education	Increase awareness with Council on barriers that exist for people with disability in our city.	Council and senior leadership members report increased awareness of disability issues.	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: built environment, accessible transportation and transportation infrastructure, technology, information and communication, goods and services, affordable/accessibly housing, social and economic accessibility issues in order to provide high level accessible City services for people with disabilities.
	Work with Administration on a positive image campaign: disability as an identity.	Campaign framework, including evaluation, is developed.	
	Work with Administration on renewed communications related to role of the Advisory Committee on Accessibility and the Access Design Standards.	City of Calgary staff report increased awareness of roles of the Advisory Committee on Accessibility and the Access Design Standards.	
Community Outreach	Redevelopment of Accessibility Awards.	Increased submissions for Accessibility Awards	
Transportation	Raise awareness of impacts of road detours on persons with disabilities among key City of Calgary contacts.	Establish workgroup with Administration.	
		Develop tools related to detours to establish more inclusive City processes.	
Partnerships	Establish partnership with Cross Corporate Public Accessibility Advisory Team to establish communications and align priorities.	Regular meetings scheduled to facilitate knowledge exchange. Identification of shared priorities	
	Establish relationship with Business Improvement Areas.	Increased awareness among Business Improvement area staff of disability issues.	
	Partner with Festival and Event organizers to advance accessibility at City events.	Increased access for persons with disabilities to City events.	