



City of Mississauga

Accessibility Plan

**Submitted by
The Accessibility Plan Staff Working Group
In collaboration with
The City of Mississauga Accessibility Advisory Committee**

This publication is available in alternative formats.

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City of Mississauga Accessibility Plan

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1. Introduction

With the passage of the Ontarians with Disabilities Act (ODA) in 2002, all municipalities were required to establish an Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC) by September 2002 and to file annually an Accessibility Plan. Accessibility Plans must identify barriers to persons with disabilities and the municipality's plan for the removal of those barriers. The first Plan is to be submitted and is to be made public by September 2003.

The ODA represents a significant departure from previous initiatives to address the challenges facing persons with disabilities in two main areas. First, disabilities are now defined very broadly to include not only physical disabilities affecting access to buildings or buses, for example, but also visual, hearing and intellectual impairments that affect a person's ability to participate fully in the community. Second, the ODA requires municipalities to consider barriers created not only by physical limitations to facilities or other assets, but also those which may be created by policies, practices, by-laws, programs, and services administered by the municipality.

The implications of the ODA span across all the Divisions of the City requiring a coordinated approach and concerted effort to meet the expectations of the Act. Each Departments' planning process and annual budgets will have to reflect the intent of the ODA to remove barriers in existence and to prevent new barriers from being formed in the future.

1.1. Acknowledgements

The first City of Mississauga Accessibility Plan was accomplished as a joint project with the Accessibility Advisory Committee and the Staff Working Group – Appendix B, (including Karen Morden, Community Child/Youth Consultant and Nicola Reynolds, Volunteer Planner) along with the thoughtful guidance and insight of Ken Owen, Director of Facilities and Property Management. Paul Mitcham, Commissioner of Community Services and other members of the Senior Management Team are in support of this plan.

1.2. AAC and Staff Working Group

In September of 2002, an inaugural AAC was formed by appointments made by Council. A full recruitment process following the typical City procedures will be undertaken to appoint a new AAC with a term coincident with the term of the new Council formed in November of 2003.

One of the requirements, as mandated by the ODA, was to establish an AAC with at least 50% of its membership being persons with disabilities.

The current AAC and Staff Working Group developed the Terms of Reference for the AAC (see Appendix A).

Based on research into the requirements of an Accessibility Plan and other municipalities' approaches to the development of such a Plan, it was decided that a team of staff representing various Divisions within the City was required to assist in the process. An ad hoc Working Committee, which had been in place during the implementation of the ODA, was augmented due to the corporate-wide implications of the Plan. The staff assigned to the Staff Working Group appears as Appendix B.

1.3. Accessibility Plan Development Process

A strategic planning process was utilized to develop Mississauga's Accessibility Plan. All AAC members and the Staff Working Group were invited to participate in a series of sessions. In addition to the Staff Working Group, the City's Community Youth Worker and a volunteer planner were invited to participate. These sessions included:

Education/Training:

- a) "Creating an Accessible Community" presented by Kevin Duguay, Planner from the City of Peterborough.
- b) CNIB video presentation.
- c) Sensitivity/Disability Awareness Workshop, presented by the Coalition for Persons with Disabilities

Vision Workshop and Discussion about our Successes:

- a) Vision Workshop: A vision was developed in response to the question: “What are some of the ways that Mississauga will be different with respect to accessibility in 5 years?”
- b) Discussion about our Past Initiatives: A comprehensive list of past initiatives with respect to accessibility in the past 3-5 years was developed. There were also some significant initiatives that occurred more than 5 years ago which needed to be included. For example, the Special Needs Policy for programs offered by Recreation and Parks was implemented in 1991. See Appendix E for the complete list of past initiatives.

Obstacles and Strategic Directions Workshops:

- a) The Obstacles Workshop helped to “open the doorways to the future”. The issues which are preventing us from making the City accessible were examined in detail.
- b) The Strategic Directions Workshop provided an opportunity to look at the underlying obstacles that were preventing us from realizing our goal of an accessible City, and to develop approaches for overcoming these obstacles.

Action Planning:

This session identified what could realistically be accomplished within 1 year, 2 years and beyond. The actions that would focus our efforts and result in real change were clearly identified.

1.4. Objectives for the Development of the Plan

- To review the City’s past initiatives in identifying, removing and preventing barriers.
- To establish a common understanding of the underlying obstacles that impact making the City of Mississauga accessible.
- To establish a practical picture of the desired future - our vision.

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- To achieve consensus on key strategic directions and priorities to prevent and remove barriers to persons with disabilities.
- To determine action steps required to achieve specific elements of the identified strategies.

2. Link with City's Mission and Vision Statements

According to Statistics Canada, approximately 1.9 million Ontarians have disabilities – about 16% of the population. Disability tends to increase with age and as such, it is estimated that 20% of the population will have disabilities within the next two decades. To be consistent with the City's desire to be "Leading Today for Tomorrow", preparations for a new future must commence today.

The current City Strategic Plan for the new millennium is comprised of 10 Vision Statements. These are "guiding principles for the City's corporate decision making process" (See Appendix C for a complete copy of the Strategic Plan). It is recognized that clear language related to improved accessibility needs to be included in the next review/update of the City's Strategic Plan.

There are connections with accessibility planning in all of the Vision Statements. For example:

- City Centre is to be downtown Mississauga, we must ensure that it is fully accessible so that all citizens have the opportunity to participate.
- The disabled community represents up to 20% of the population. Most persons with disabilities live successfully on their own, use products and services of all kinds and have an influence on a huge secondary market of friends and family in every walk of life.¹ They are clearly a part of a dynamic and diverse economy.
- Being environmentally responsible includes being aware of the challenges faced by people with respiratory illnesses. Poor air quality can be a debilitating influence on those affected.
- In order to "be governed in an open and responsive manner," we need to "regularly review public participation processes to ensure that maximum opportunities for public input are being provided".² This includes ensuring that our public participation processes are accessible.

¹ The Business Case for Accessibility, 2001

² Mississauga's Strategic Plan for the New Millennium, 2000

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Providing accessible voting stations and accessible methods for voting are excellent examples.

- To achieve “excellence in public administration,” accessible City Web sites, including accessible online e-City services, are imperative if the needs of the disabled community are to be known and addressed.
- To attract employees and volunteers with the skills to meet current and future challenges, the need to make accommodations for persons with disabilities must be considered.

3. Our Vision

In response to the question:

“What are some of the ways that Mississauga will be different with respect to accessibility in the next 5 years?”

the AAC and Staff Working Group developed five key vision principles:

- Fully Accessible Public Services
- Accessible Transportation and Parking
- Universal Design
- Full Integration
- New Improved Attitudes

The following Vision Statement reflects these principles:

“To create a fully accessible community utilizing universal design principles resulting in improved attitudes and full integration.”

For a full view of specific items that the AAC and Staff Working Group believed would make Mississauga different with respect to accessibility, see Appendix D.

4. Past Initiatives with Accessibility in the City of Mississauga

A corporate review of past initiatives with respect to accessibility was undertaken. Each Department was asked to reveal past initiatives with the removal or prevention of barriers to persons with disabilities with our by-laws, policies, practices, programs, services, and facilities in the last several years. The intent of this list is not to provide detailed descriptions, but rather a listing for quick reference. Evaluation of these items will be ongoing. See Appendix E for the list generated.

All Departments have been systematically making accessibility improvements. There have been changes to by-laws, upgrades to facilities, policies implemented, and programs and services have been expanded. The following is a summary of some of the more significant improvements:

- Community Services assessed all City owned facilities for accessibility resulting in the Corporate Accessibility Audit (2001). The audit identified projects required to facilitate access to the entire site. For example, the approach from the street, from parking, access to and from the building, use of facilities by staff and customers. Physical accessibility improvements are requested annually as part of budget planning.
- Five recreation facilities (4 of our older community centres and Meadowvale 4 Rinks) are undergoing comprehensive renovations with accessibility being a primary design objective.
- An increase in participation in both segregated and integrated recreation programs has occurred.
- By-law changes included a change to the Disabled Persons Parking By-law which increased the set fine from \$100 to \$350 for those illegally parking their vehicle in a designated disabled person parking space.
- Planning and Building developed a Design Reference Note for barrier-free parking standards and building access. Through the site plan process, Planning and Building will review the location of disabled parking spaces and signage and the access to the building for institutional, commercial, industrial, and multi-family residential development applicants.

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- Mississauga Transit developed an Accessibility Plan in 2001. They started out with 89 low-floor, wheelchair accessible buses at the beginning of 2001 and increased this to 113 by the end of that year. With the total fleet being 303 buses, approximately one-third are currently wheelchair accessible. By the end of 2003, forty-four (44) accessible buses (raising the total to 157) will be added. Eventually, all buses in the fleet will be accessible.
- A partnership with Peel Transhelp was formed. This resulted in two benefits: assistance with Sensitivity/Disability Awareness training, and the ability to allow customers to transfer between Mississauga Transit and Peel Transhelp at no charge.

While it is understood that continued corporate-wide improvements with respect to accessibility are required, clearly, the City has made some positive inroads into the removal of barriers, particularly in the physical sense.

Under the ODA, not only are municipalities required to develop Accessibility Plans, but school boards, hospitals, colleges, universities and public transportation providers are also obligated to develop their own plans. Staff from Trillium Health Centre participated in the education/training sessions we offered to prepare for our plan. Other municipalities have found that working together with key agencies and organizations in the community makes for a streamlined, consistent approach to accessibility planning. We hope to continue to strengthen our relationships with these agencies in subsequent Accessibility Plans.

5. Strategic Directions

To achieve consensus on strategic directions and priorities that would prevent and remove barriers to persons with disabilities within the programs, policies and practices of the City of Mississauga, the obstacles to full accessibility had to be determined. The underlying obstacles to an accessible City include:

➤ *Poor Awareness, Education & Understanding blocks Acceptance and Action*

Limited knowledge or experience with the unique needs of persons with different types of disabilities prevents barriers from being removed. When making accommodations for persons with disabilities, those accommodations can vary from person to person and most certainly between different types of disabilities. For example, someone who is visually impaired would have different needs from someone who is intellectually impaired.

➤ *Existing Physical Design blocks Full Accessibility*

Many of the facilities of the City were built prior to the application of accessibility criteria in the Ontario Building Code (OBC). In addition, the current OBC is considered to be a minimum standard, at best. While the design of new buildings can make provision for accessibility at little additional cost, retrofitting existing buildings is often costly and may be of limited effectiveness due to site or structural limitations (i.e. heritage facilities).

➤ *Budget Constraints block Progress*

Limited resources and competition for resources (both human and financial) prevents full removal of barriers in the short term. No new funding for the implementation of the ODA has been provided by the province to municipalities, schools, hospitals, colleges, universities or public transportation providers.

➤ *Competing/Multiple Priorities blocks Focus on Accessibility Issue*

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Many initiatives and projects of the City, as well as directives from senior levels of government compete with accessibility for attention and resources. The expectation of all of these constituencies is very high making it difficult to focus on any one of the Corporation's priorities.

➤ *Lack of Legislation blocks Universal Design*

Weak legislation, absence of concrete incentives and complying with legislation in a minimal manner impedes making our community accessible to all people. Regulations under the ODA to create enforcement mechanisms and to set mandatory standards for removing and preventing barriers has not occurred. Compliance with the intent of the ODA at a municipal level will be insufficient to result in full accessibility for the disabled community.

➤ *Limited Expertise blocks Solutions*

Limited expertise is linked with poor awareness, education and understanding of disability issues. Solutions to physical barriers have been elusive to date and the broadening of the scope of disabilities to include visual, hearing and intellectual limitations will add complexity, making advances even more difficult. Paternalistic remedies, however well intentioned, will have to be abandoned in favour of solutions developed in consultation with and taking advantage of the daily life experiences of the disabled community. Understanding and knowledge about integration/inclusion is also beneficial to ensure persons with disabilities are blended into the fabric of our community.

➤ *Operational Issues block Full Integration*

Operational efficiency is an imperative driving all businesses, both public and private. Efficiency is most often achieved by a strict adherence to operating standards developed to address the main needs of the majority. For example, a transit system schedule allowing for a bus to stop every six minutes will have significant challenges when it can take twice that amount of time to deploy an accessible bus for a rider in a wheelchair.

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In order to deal with these concrete realities facing us, the following broad Strategic Directions were articulated:

Leading by Example

Accessibility must become ingrained as an integral consideration in the way the City thinks about all its activities. Going beyond minimum legislated standards in facility design, public programs and corporate policies will demonstrate a position of leadership to the broader community and assist in the removal of barriers in a shorter period of time.

Allocation of Resources

As in any initiative undertaken by the City, the availability of time and money will be a major determining influence on the speed with which the objectives of this Plan are achieved. If viewed as a separate, stand alone initiative that is layered on top of existing programs and initiatives, the removal of barriers will become onerous, expensive and inefficient. When accessibility issues become integral to budgeting and program development, barriers will fall in a coordinated, systematic and rational manner.

Developing a Communication Strategy

Communication of the Accessibility Plan will provide opportunities to begin the process of education and awareness that are key elements of successfully changing attitudes. Beyond that, however, ongoing campaigns to raise and maintain the level of understanding of accessibility issues in the broader community will be instrumental in effecting long lasting progress towards the achievement of the Plan's vision.

Providing Training

Following the leading by example theme, the role of City staff as ambassadors to carry the accessibility message into the community will be very important. To assist them in this role, sensitivity training to establish a high level of awareness is required so that in their interactions with customers and fellow staff they can model the types of behaviour that will accelerate the removal of barriers.

Hiring Disability Resource Experts

The diversity and complexity of disability issues necessitates the use of experts in the field. Staff, consultants, volunteers and other sources of first hand advice and knowledge about accessible facility design, program and service implications and enabling technologies will promote the removal and prevention of barriers.

Making Use of Skills in the Disabled Community

Persons with disabilities not only have personal experience with the challenges they face on a daily basis but when properly accommodated, offer a wealth of skills and abilities unrelated to their disability. Tapping into this pool of resources will complement education, awareness and training efforts, demonstrate the City's position of leadership and, most importantly, help the City achieve its objectives well beyond those that have been set for the removal of barriers to persons with disabilities.

Appendix G contains a long list of specific actions related to these strategic directions that were developed by the AAC and Staff Working Group. From that list, decisions were required as to an achievable program of initiatives to include in the Plan. The priority was to focus on initiatives that would effect positive and long lasting change and which would make accessibility considerations a "way of thinking" within the Corporation. It was agreed that the need to influence attitudes (as captured in the vision) was a priority before substantial and sustainable progress towards the removal of barriers can occur and, as such, Leading by Example, Developing a Communication Strategy and Providing Training were viewed as the strategic directions with the most potential impact in the short term. The other strategic directions and the initiatives associated with them remain important and have been captured in this document for future reference and consideration at each of the annual reviews that the Plan will undergo.

6. The Plan: Initiatives

In order “to create a fully accessible community resulting in improved attitudes and full integration”, the following initiatives are imperative. These initiatives are to be accomplished within 2003/2004:

Development of a Communications Strategy

Communications Division to design and implement a broad-based communication campaign to promote the Accessibility Plan and to increase the community’s awareness of accessibility issues.

Outcomes:

- *Better understanding of the challenges facing disabled residents*

People who are not directly affected by barriers (they may not have a disability or they may not know of anyone with a disability), are not exposed to challenges faced by persons with disabilities on a regular basis. They do not consider the prevention and removal of barriers. We need to enhance their understanding so that this thinking becomes a “way of life”.
- *Appreciation of the impact of attitudinal barriers*

The Coalition for Persons with Disabilities handed out buttons which stated: “Attitudes are the *REAL* Disability”. At times, prevention and/or removal of barriers does not occur because people do not realize that there is a large number of people who are truly limited by barriers. People do not understand what the barriers are.
- *Greater sensitivity to the need for public funding for removal of barriers*

Removing and preventing barriers is the responsibility of many sectors. School boards, hospitals, colleges, universities, public transportation, and other agencies in addition to municipalities are required to develop accessibility plans as a result of the ODA.

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- *Appreciation of the “ability” side of the “disabled” community*

People with disabilities have many unique skills and talents just like the rest of society. Highlighting this positive side aids in improving attitudes and full integration; thus meeting “our vision”.

Development of Accessibility Design Guidelines

Community Services (Facilities and Property Management; Planning and Admin.), Transportation and Works, and Planning and Building to develop design guidelines for City facilities that will be applied to all future capital projects.

Outcomes:

- *Effective guidelines to address physical barriers in facilities/infrastructure*

Many municipalities have adopted their own Accessibility Guidelines to assist all participants in the planning, design, and development process in realizing a barrier-free community. We need to do the same, building on the experience of others.

- *Budget for projects includes barrier removal*

Accurate budgets which include items for accessibility become part of the planning process from the start of planning versus being built in along the way.

- *Consistent approach – take advantage of lessons learned*

Taking the lead by developing these guidelines will demonstrate to other sectors that we are committed to the removal of barriers. Various departments within the corporation and external stakeholders will benefit from having access to these guidelines. Ultimately, places of worship, restaurants, long-term care facilities, offices, etc.... will follow these same design guidelines. Internal staff, external agencies and our customers will benefit from this consistent approach.

- *Ability to assess and compare appropriate and inappropriate physical examples*

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Constant feedback from the AAC (which includes persons with disabilities), the Staff Working Group (as well as other staff) will allow us to make careful decisions about providing the right design.

- *Lead by example by not simply meeting minimal OBC standards*

Adoption of City of Mississauga design guidelines and the use of these guidelines demonstrates that we are leading by example. The AAC has often commented that the OBC is not adequate for full accessibility – if this is what we are striving for, then we must go “above and beyond” the OBC where necessary.

- *Increased revenue due to increased provision of opportunities for the disabled community (recreation programs, theatres, etc...)*

In our community, people with disabilities will have more barrier-free opportunities. The doors will literally open up for them.

Development of a Disability Awareness/Sensitivity Training Program

Human Resources Division to research and design training programs for City staff that heighten their sensitivity to accessibility issues for customers and co-workers in the disabled community.

Outcomes:

- *Heightened sensitivity to customer needs – meeting all customers’ needs*

Providing the right municipal services in a superior way.

- *Greater acceptance of disabled co-workers*

Acceptance of a diverse workforce and all of our similarities and differences is what will make us a better Corporation. Working alongside persons with disabilities keeps us in tune with their needs. Again, the focus is on the “ability” side of the “disabled” community.

- *Attract skilled workers*

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Hiring persons with disabilities with the appropriate skill sets required for a variety of positions within the Corporation would allow us to utilize the untapped expertise in the disabled community.

- *Focus on abilities of individuals*
- *Greater opportunities for hiring applicants with disabilities who overall are the best qualified candidate*

This fits in with the City being an “Equal Opportunity Employer”.

- *Increase in revenue due to increased provision of opportunities for the disabled community (recreation programs, theatres, etc...)*

Increasing staff’s sensitivity towards people with disabilities opens the doors to improved services for this population. Improved customer service will bring loyalty.

Review of Departmental Plans and Corporate Policies in Relation to Accessibility

Individual Departments to review Departmental (Master) Plans as they are being reviewed/updated. Insert language related to improving accessibility for persons with disabilities in the next City Strategic Plan. City Managers Office to include accessibility issues in annual Corporate Policy review program to ensure removal of barriers to persons with disabilities that may exist.

Outcomes:

- *Removal of unintended systemic barriers*

While many organizations attempt to avoid direct, intentional discrimination, there exists a subtle type of discrimination called systemic discrimination – the exclusion of certain groups of people through the application of policies and practices. Systemic barriers are embedded in an organization’s ways of carrying out its business as stipulated in policies, procedures, standards, rules, regulations, and practices (written and unwritten). The removal of systemic discrimination requires a

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systemic approach. Rather than approaching discrimination from the perspective of a single perpetrator and single victim, the systemic approach acknowledges that by and large the systems and practices that we adopt may have a negative effect on certain groups in society³. An example of a systemic barrier may be not offering different ways to complete a test as part of a recruitment process.⁴

- *Demonstrates corporate leadership*

Keeps us in line with the City's Mission: "Leading Today for Tomorrow" by "leading by example".

- *Greater corporate awareness*

Reviewing our policies and plans with an accessibility lens will heighten awareness of accessibility issues.

Examination of Accessibility Issues in Future Directions

Recreation and Parks and Mississauga Library System (MLS) to make special provision for the examination of accessibility issues in their upcoming Strategic Planning project (Future Directions).

Outcomes:

- *Proactive, research based response to special needs in programs*

When requests for segregated and/or integrated programs are made, we will have a process to guide us to appropriately meet our customers' needs. Research will help us to make better decisions in the provision of programs and services for persons with disabilities.

- *Integration of needs of the disabled community with the rest of the community*

³ CPRA, Opening Doors

⁴ Accessibility Ontario: Guide to ODA, 2003

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Full integration is our goal. Providing accommodations when necessary will ease integration of persons with disabilities into our programs and services.

- *Strengthen partnerships with agencies serving persons with disabilities*

There are 25 special needs agencies and associations listed in the Inside and Out Guide (A Guide to Recreation and Parks Programs) - for example: Ontario March of Dimes, Erinoak, Mississauga Parkinson Support Group, Multiple Sclerosis (MS) Society. Working collaboratively and cooperatively with these agencies improves services to persons with disabilities – our customers. Identification of gaps and duplication of services among these agencies will result in the provision of streamlined, efficient services. An example of how this can work is with the Next Step to Active Living Program – a daytime program linking adults with physical disabilities to an active lifestyle within the community, operating out of South Common Community Centre. This program has also linked with the MS Society to serve participants with MS in the fitness centre.

- *Set up long-range approach to addressing needs*

With a growing aging population, the demand for services that meet the needs of persons with different types of disabilities (e.g. physical disabilities, hearing and visual impairments) will increase. A specific plan to address these current and future needs is required.

Continue Implementation and Evaluation of Mississauga Transit's Accessibility Plan

Mississauga Transit to continue the implementation of its recently adopted Accessibility Plan. This includes the partnership with Peel TransHelp services and the operation of designated accessible routes/buses.

Outcomes:

- *Increase in the use of accessible routes*

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The long-range plan is that all buses be accessible; it will take many years to implement this. In the meantime, continued evaluation and assessment of the most appropriate routes is recommended.

- *Disabled community more independent – come and go as they please versus advanced booking – normalization versus segregation*

Continually ensuring that bus stops/bus shelters and sidewalks including curb cuts are accessible will improve the independence of individuals using transit services.

- *More streamlined/appropriate use of Peel TransHelp*

With continued improvements in Mississauga Accessible Transit and marketing and education of its use, more people will use it; thereby reducing dependence on TransHelp. Improvements with Mississauga Accessible Transit will allow people who truly require this level of service the opportunity to access it.

7. Administration of the Plan

7.1 Role of the Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC)

The main role of the AAC is to advise Council on issues affecting persons with disabilities within the community. Through its involvement in the development of the Accessibility Plan the AAC has, in fact, provided advice in the form of recommendations on strategic directions and specific initiatives designed to remove barriers to full participation.

The AAC will continue to advise Council about progress being made on plan initiatives and whether the plan is in fact achieving its goals. The AAC will monitor the implementation and effectiveness of the initiatives, and through regular contact with the Accessibility Coordinator and Staff Working Group will obtain status reports that will permit it to properly advise Council.

7.2 Role of the Accessibility Coordinator

The achievement of the Plan's objectives will require the involvement of all Departments of the City. In some instances the Departments will be acting alone within the scope of their own programs, and in other instances a coordinated effort of all Departments towards a common objective will be required.

In either case, the specialized resources, advice and knowledge of an Accessibility Coordinator will be essential in maintaining a focus and consistency in the City's approach to accessibility issues. In addition, the AAC as a volunteer committee of Council will require support and assistance in its dealings with the many parts of the City's organization, which will be involved in Plan implementation. To this end, the Accessibility Coordinator position is to be retained. This position is currently defined as a temporary "Career Development Position" (until the end of November, 2003). The following responsibilities will be part of this position: (See Appendix L for a more detailed job description):

- Assistance to and monitoring of Departmental initiatives to ensure progress towards commitments within the Accessibility Plan
- Coordination of updates and annual review of Accessibility Plan
- Research and information dissemination to Departments with respect to issues, trends and other technical matters related to the removal of barriers for persons with disabilities
- Support to the AAC with respect to research, report writing, correspondence and other procedural matters

7.3 Role of the Staff Working Group

The Staff Working Group consists of representatives of each Department within the City (See Appendix B for Members and Departmental affiliation). This Group has contributed to the development of the Plan and the establishment of initiatives needed to achieve the Plan objectives. As implementation of the Plan proceeds, the Group will remain in place to act as a point of contact for the Accessibility Coordinator and AAC in their

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dealings with the Departments and to serve as internal sources of information with respect to the Plan and its objectives.

To carry out this function, Group members will attend AAC meetings as required, will respond to requests for information from the AAC or Accessibility Coordinator, and will disseminate relevant information within their respective Departments.

The chart below covers the proposed task groups/leaders to implement the recommended initiatives:

INITIATIVE	PROPOSED TASK GROUP/LEADER	COST
1. Retain Accessibility Coordinator	Ken Owen, Director F and PM.	Salary range is \$55,527 - \$74,037 (Grade F)
2. Development of a Communications Strategy	Sonja Banic, Mgr. Public Affairs	2004/2005 Costs to be absorbed into existing Communications Division Budget - Public Issues Account
3. Development of Accessibility Design Guidelines	Ken Owen, Director F and PM, Charles Yang, Mgr. Facilities Design and Engineering (F and PM), Paul Taylor, Mgr. Development (Planning and Admin) Richard Tupholme, Mgr. Infrastructure and Environmental Planning (T and W), Wayne Nishihama, Mgr. Design Team (P and B) Frank Spagnolo, Mgr. Bldg, Engineering and Inspections (P and B)	Incorporated into existing staff positions with the assistance of the Accessibility Project Coordinator: -Internal staffing costs includes time for research -Printing costs

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INITIATIVE	PROPOSED TASK GROUP/LEADER	COST
4. Development of a Disability Awareness/ Sensitivity Training Program	Corporate Training and Development, Human Resources	Costs to be determined based on utilizing internal trainers (perhaps a Train the Trainer model) or utilizing the services of and outside Trainer
5. Review of Departmental Plans and Corporate Policies in Relation to Accessibility	All Departments responsible for review of plans Rosemary Goslin, Corporate Policy Analyst re: policy review	-Incorporated into regular review process, no additional cost forecasted at this point -Link with City Services Review Project
6. Examination of Accessibility Issues in Future Directions – Master Plan for Recreation & Parks and Library	Work with Project Leaders: Karyn Stock MacDonald, Business Analyst, and Gil Penalosa, Business Analyst who are the primary contacts for the Prime Consultant for Future Directions	Within Consultants' costs - mandatory addendum re: accessibility issues has been provided in Request For Tender
7. Continue Implementation and Evaluation of Mississauga Transit's Accessibility Plan	Mississauga Transit Committee: -Gord Wright, Mgr Service Delivery (Chair) -Ettore Iannacito, Planning/Scheduling Supervisor -Patrick Phaneuf, Training Coordinator -Basil Penny, Route Supervisor -Mike Keating, Maintenance Sup.	Accessibility transit planning has been incorporated into existing transit planning. All buses are being replaced with accessible buses. The implementation of additional routes will be based on demand for service, the availability of accessible buses and appropriate

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INITIATIVE	PROPOSED TASK GROUP/LEADER	COST
	-Steve McLellan, Operations Sup. Glenn Barnes, Transhelp Advisory Committee	funding.

Other staff experts may be brought in to work on certain tasks as projects roll out and specific skills and expertise are required. For example, a staff person from Information Technology, and the Tourism Manager may be invited to provide their expertise.

8. Conclusion

Given the current demographics, an organization that fails to address the needs of people with disabilities runs the risk of abandoning or alienating as much as 20% of its constituency. It may also be perceived as unprogressive and at odds with human rights legislation. Organizations that serve the needs of people with disabilities can be at a competitive advantage. Not only do they maximize their customer base; they demonstrate in a visible way their capacity to serve an increasing diverse society on an equal basis⁵.

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