# 2016 Annual Report

# Access Advisory Committee

Winnipeg

# WHAT DO WE DO...

...we advise City of Winnipeg leaders on accessibility for civic properties, information and services and recommend best practices in Universal Design while building relationships with the community.

A Message from Councillor Eadie

## Thank you to our Access Advisory Committee Volunteers



Reflecting on the work of the City of Winnipeg's Access Advisory Committee (AAC) in 2016, and thinking of the work to accomplish in 2017, one can only appreciate the people of the AAC. Volunteers and support staff spend many hours assisting the city to develop more accessible facilities and services. While not on the AAC, other volunteers with knowledgeable advice participate on our subcommittees: Accessibility Awards, Education & Communications and Policy.

Winnipeg accessibility efforts stay connected to the Province of Manitoba through our Disability Issues Office representative. In 2016, a large, successful consultation with Winnipeggers set out the outstanding issues of accessibility for the City of Winnipeg to be incorporated into the city's "accessibility plan" required by the Province of Manitoba. Volunteers attended the sessions revolving around the standards to be created under the Accessibility For Manitobans Act (AMA), providing advice from a universal design perspective. The AAC continues to provide advice for each standard being set under the AMA. Most recently the AAC provided its perspective on the "employment standard". The AAC will be dealing with the "communications and information technology standard" in 2017. The City of Winnipeg has a large amount of accessible information, but there are some significant challenges around billing and accessibility for Winnipeggers.

There were many infrastructure project consultations attended by AAC volunteers to ensure accessibility was not forgotten from the ground up. We are working with HandiTransit in its establishment of a better trip booking software application. These efforts are but a few in 2016. 2017 will be just as busy for our volunteers as City Council continues to expand its infrastructure projects and reviews its services.

Concluding my reflection, none of 2016's work and 2017's goals for the AAC volunteers can be completed without the huge effort of the AAC's coordinator, Chris Sobkowicz and the city's universal design corrdinator, Judy Redmond. It is the efforts of the people associated with the AAC that 2017 will bring exciting news for all in Winnipeg.

**Ross Eadie**
Chairperson,
Access Advisory Committee
City Councillor, Mynarski Ward ■





# City of Winnipeg Accessibility Plan: a collaborative and inclusive process...

## It speaks to accessibility as being at "the heart of everything we do"

The City of Winnipeg recognizes that barriers to accessibility may create difficulties for people to fully participate in activities of daily living in Winnipeg. The purpose of the Accessibility Plan is to identify, prevent and remove barriers to participation and increase inclusion for all citizens and visitors to Winnipeg. According to the Accessibility for Manitobans Act (AMA), an accessibility barrier is anything that limits or prevents a person from participating in the social or economic life of our communities, including being able to receive information, services and goods, or access to space and activities. There are a variety of different types of barriers to consider, both visible and invisible. Examples include:

**Attitudinal Barriers:**
result when people think and act based on prejudgments or false assumptions that indirectly or directly discriminate

**Information and Communication Barriers:**
are created when information is offered in a form that suits some, but not all, of the population

**Systemic Barriers:** can occur through policies, practices or procedures that result in some people receiving unequal access or being excluded

**Technological Barriers:**
occur when technology, or the way it is used, cannot be accessed or modified to support various assistive devices and/or software by people with disabilities

**Physical and Architectural Barriers:** can occur when the environment, including elements of buildings or spaces, presents challenges that restrict or hinder some people physical access to a place

The purpose of the *City of Winnipeg Accessibility Plan* is to ensure an accessibility lens is applied to public sector policies, practices and procedures, therefore promoting independence, dignity and equitable opportunity for persons with disabilities. *The City of Winnipeg's Accessibility Plan* will not only bring our community into compliance with the *AMA*, but will exemplify the commitment to creating accessible customer service, environments, information, communications, transportation, and opportunities for employment for everyone. This document is used to communicate the City of Winnipeg's core accomplishments with respect to established accessibility practices, and define the City's plan of action. The initiatives in this plan will continue to drive significant progress to make certain our community is inclusive and accessible to all.

The most recent *Accessibility Plan* for the City of Winnipeg was finalized in December 2016 and has been made public on the City of Winnipeg and Access Advisory Committee (AAC) websites and can be found at the following link :

**http://winnipeg.ca/ppd/Universal_Design.stm**

In developing the *Accessibility Plan* there has been direct and integral input from the general public as well as the disabled community and members of the City of Winnipeg Accessibility Steering Committee of departmental staff. It shows a strong commitment in the past practices Winnipeg had put in place years ago; but also acknowledges the journey we continue to travel. It speaks to accessibility as being at **"the heart of everything we do"**.

We all recognize that, although considerable progress has been made over the past several years on improving accessibility, there is still a vast amount of work to be done in order to create a universally accessible community. The consensus is to continue to work toward ensuring equal access and participation for all people living, working or visiting here; by strategically removing accessibility barriers. As local demographics and innovations in technology regarding accessibility continue to improve, it appears the City is committed to maintaining a current understanding of local accessibility needs and developing their stated approach in preventing and removing barriers as they become apparent.





The City acknowledges our continued responsibility to meet the requirements of the Accessibility for Manitobans Act and our own Universal Design Policy. **"Establishing a universally accessible city is a necessary step to encourage and respect the dignity and independence of our citizens, visitors and employees"**. Through the Accessibility Plan the City agrees to maintain strong partnerships with persons




disabled by barriers and representatives from organizations of persons disabled by barriers in our community. It is understood that continued collaboration will lead to success in ensuring Winnipeg is truly a welcoming and inclusive community where all people can fully participate. This accountability is paramount and requires the efforts of the whole community to be robust in our feedback and identification of barriers today and with future barriers being developed in subsequent years of planning. ■







# ACCESSIBILITY by design

**Meeting the Building Code is one thing, but we have come to believe Winnipeg can do better in going beyond the Codes.**

It was a historic moment and a great day in this city when the City of Winnipeg introduced the *Accessibility Design Standards* in 2006. There were new parameters developed to offer concrete suggestions and best practices for the designing and building of civic projects that allowed for barrier free access for a variety of users no matter of their abilities.

The Access Advisory Committee contributed to the review of this initial document, which has since been updated. New categories and redefined measurements contributes to creating a more functional, user friendly document for all. The newest edition of the Winnipeg Accessibility Standards was adopted with the 2015 edition.

From a design perspective, having a clear understanding of what best practices are is helpful, says Greg Hasiuk, a partner at Number TEN Architectural Group. “We use those design standards a lot and rely on the Access Advisory Committee for clarification and intent. To understand the big picture, you need to know the details first – what you can and can’t do. The standards help us understand the details, because when it comes to the review of building for accessibility, the smallest details can have a big impact for the user.”

Details like proper height and position for accessibility – and getting those right – can mean the difference between a pleasant experience or a frustrating one. “On paper you might meet the building code but the smallest detail can make it frustrating for a person with a disability to actually use,” he explains.



Building projects start with a blank page and incorporating best practices for universal design means everyone can have the same experience of entering and using a building. Entering on the same path, instead of going to a different location to access a ramp, for example, means even with a cane or wheelchair, a person can have a less stressful experience in that environment.

“A well designed universal building should allow everyone to experience that environment as much as possible without endangering themselves, or feeling anxiety or frustration,” says Hasiuk.

Advocacy and the ever changing National and Provincial building codes have helped accessibility be at the forefront of design discussions—so have the Accessibility Awards, which help raise the profile and celebrates what works in universal design.

Winnipeg has been integral in the development and implementation of both National and Manitoba Building Code Amendments in the area of barrier free design. The City of Winnipeg being the largest municipality in Manitoba is mandated to be the authority having jurisdiction on all new builds and major renovations within the city limits.

The Winnipeg Accessibility Design Standards (WADS) are posted publicly and are encouraged to be used as a best practice accessibility reference for the private and corporate industry. To get your own copy of the most current Winnipeg Accessibility Design Standards (WADS) click on the following link:

http://www.aacwinnipeg.mb.ca/pdf/Access_Design_Standards_2015.pdf ■




















# 2016 City of Winnipeg Accessibility Awards

## Celebrating the best in universal design and accessibility for 2016

On September 29, 2016 Councilor Ross Eadie and Councilor Devi Sharma Chairs for the City of Winnipeg Access Advisory Committee announced at City Hall the six deserving Businesses, Architects and Organizations recognized to receive the City of Winnipeg's 2016 ACCESS Awards for Excellence in Accessible Architectural Design.

This year's Awards Jury had 20 nominees in various categories celebrating universal design and accessibility. The jury of local accessibility experts visited each site during the summer and are excited to recognize the winners for 2016.

The ACCESS awards have been an annual event since 2002, recognizing architects, interior designers, landscape architects, and the owners of their projects. These award winners have highlighted universal and accessible design to an exemplary level in their particular projects allowing Winnipeg to be a leader in North America as an inclusive community.

The ACCESS Awards are presented and administered by the City of Winnipeg Access Advisory Committee, which has over 20 year of raising awareness regarding the importance of accessibility and universal design for all the City of Winnipeg departments. Universal Design makes life more equitable, safe, comfortable and affordable for everyone, including people with disabilities.



ACCESS AWARDS
Excellence in Universal Design and Accessibility

And the winners are:

## Award of Excellence in Accessible Architectural Design

### University of Manitoba Active Living Centre

Design Lead: George Cibinel
Cibinel Architects Ltd. and Batteriid Architects
Project Owner: University of Manitoba

### ACCESS St. Boniface

Design Lead: Christopher P. Daly – MMP Architects
Project Owner: Winnipeg Regional Health Authority

### The Original Pancake House Restaurant - McGillivray Blvd

Design Lead: Ray Wan – Raymond SC Wan Architecture
Project Owner: Alan Guberman
Joanne Lecker
Hazel Kushner

### Specialized Services for Children & Youth 1155 Notre Dame - SSCY

Design Lead: David Essex – Stantec Architecture
Project Owner: Winnipeg Regional Health Authority

### Manitoba Provincial Law Courts 4th Floor Accessibility Project

Design Lead: Nadi Design
Project Owner: Province of Manitoba





# Community Recognition Award

## Mr. Richard Jones

Owner: MOVE Mobility
FRS Group Winnipeg

The annual Access Awards program adds to a genuine excitement to build exceptional and accessible facilities which meet and exceed the existing building codes. **Just building to code is a thing of the past. The whole community is beginning to expect accessible and inclusive design as part of the norm.**

The Winnipeg model of Universal Design and the establishment of an Accessibility Award for exceptional accessible architecture is meritorious. The Access Awards recognizes good work that exhibits innovation and reflects best practices. Over the years, the Access Awards have identified a large number of exemplar projects. These examples are both newly built and retrofitted projects that were nominated for consideration over the years by the annual Access Awards, and can be considered our own ALL STAR lineup of exemplar projects in the city:

Canadian Museum for Human Rights
Specialized Services for Children and Youth (Old Christies Bldg.)
U of W James Richardson Science and Environment Complex
Parks Canada – Variety Heritage Adventure Accessible Playground
Victoria General Hospital – Memory Garden
Home Street Church Renovations
Winnipeg Harvest
True North Ice Plex
West Kildonan Collegiate
Steinkopf Gardens at the Manitoba Centennial Centre
University of Winnipeg Health RecPlex








Japanese Gardens at the Convention Centre
Red River College Princess Campus Facade Renovations
Youth for Christ Gymnasium and Activity Centre
Manitoba Indigenous Cultural and Education Centre
ACCESS Winnipeg Health Care facilities
Manitoba Birthing Centre
The Met Entertainment Centre
Winnipeg Protected Skywalk Network
Canadian Mennonite University Library and Bridge to Residences
Regent Casino Event Centre
North Winnipeg Centennial Pool
North Winnipeg Soccer Complex
Kildonan Park Accessible Playground
Journey to Churchill
St. Vital Park Duck Pond Pavilion
Manitoba Provincial Courts – Accessibility Retrofit
James Richardson International Airport
Esplanade Riel Dock and Landscape
U of W McFeetors Hall Residence
Place La Charette – Ten Ten Housing Corp.
Protected Bike Ramps at Pembina Highway Bus Stops
Pancake House – McGillivray Restaurant

All of these projects made a concerted effort in meeting the expressed needs of the community they serve. The projects included accessibility consultation processes, some had to maintain the historical significance of the facility and others encountered financial challenges as part of the whole process; but all resulted in the removal or prevention of barriers to people with disabilities living, working and playing in Winnipeg. ■












# Is your dog a service animal or merely a member of the family?

In the comming months we all have the opportunity to share our comments and concerns in developming a National Standard in Canada.

For centuries dogs have worked in partnership with humans in many different ways: as companions, hunting, herding and protecting our livestock, and more recently they have assisted us in times of war, as members of the police, and to help people with disabilities improve their quality of life.

In 1929, the first formal program in North America to be introduced was by The Seeing Eye Inc. and the first guide dogs in Canada were placed by the MIRA Foundation in 1981. With advances in accessibility and training, dogs have been recognized as service dogs helping people with a variety of disabilities, such as hearing impairment, mobility assistance, diabetes, autism, and mental health issues, including but not limited to posttraumatic stress. In recent decades, service dogs have been specifically trained to assist veterans with operational stress injuries. Within Canada, there are many organizations and individuals training and matching service

**Dogs have been recognized as service dogs helping people with a variety of disabilities.**

dog teams. Certain dog trainers are affiliated with membership-based organizations that abide by formulated industry standards, while others acquire their training online through numerous sources or simply work independently. Standardization of the service dog team will protect the pubic, the user and service dogs. The need for a Standard arose due to long waiting lists for service dogs and a growing concern that those training the dogs may not have formal education or experience working with persons with disabilities or their families. These gaps and weaknesses prompted many people to train their own dogs either with, or without, the assistance of a dog trainer. Further, some people began using online resources to purchase corresponding ID cards and dog vests, even though there is no way to determine if the team is authentic or safe to work together in public spaces. For these reasons it is extremely difficult for service dog teams to establish their legitimacy within this turbulent and often fraudulent environment. This is the reason that in the next few years the National Standard of Canada for Service Dog Teams will be developed to provide the benchmark for the performance of a service dog team. You will have an opportunity to express your concerns and comments at a number of cross Canada Workshops and input on an initial position paper being circulated in Early 2017. We will keep the community up to date through our website at

www.aacwinnipeg.mb.ca

That bodes the question…..
**Is your dog a service animal, companion dog, therapy animal, emotional support animal, assistance animal, psychiatric service animal, or merely a member of the family as a pet?** ■







# NEW AAC MEMBER PROFILE

## Albert Johnson aka “Tim”

Albert Johnson or as his grandmother’s aptly applied nickname of “Tim” has been a member of the City of Winnipeg Access Advisory Committee for three years.

Before his term with the AAC, Tim built and raced dragsters locally. “Drag racing is about extreme power, extreme speed. Your first time you’ll smell the fuel, feel the rubber and hear the noise, which most people aren’t prepared for. When two cars go side by side fuelled with nitro and looking for a 5.5-second run down that ¼ mile at either Gimli or Bison Dragways, it shakes your rib cage and gives you a rush that nobody can describe.” That is why Tim formed his own racing team, and ran his own 1970 Dodge Dart as well as his modified 98 Neon for years, and which he ultimately gave to his daughter.

Tim lives with a disability, and once his racing days were just a memory he applied to be a representative on the City of Winnipeg Access Advisory Committee to help his community to address accessibility issues. As a doer for most of his life, Tim realized quickly that “change “ takes time and can be frustrating from an advisory-only position on the committee. “Identifying the barriers is one thing, but getting the solution to eliminate them, and making the policy setters more aware through education

is a whole lot more difficult" says Tim. "I have a new challenge in my life".

Tim feels strongly that the City of Winnipeg is a leader in the country with our commitment to accessibility via the Universal Design Policy and Accessibility Design Standards. He is confident that Winnipeg will only get better in the future with the role of the Access Advisory Committee which fosters a cross disability focus. He knows first-hand that persons with invisible disabilities are often forgotten and agrees their needs are important as well to fully participate.

Tim experienced his first ah-ha moment when he witness a fellow drag racer adapting his car to allow him to be a passenger to feel the rush too… This owner was blind and never had the opportunity to feel the rush and exhilaration of the g-forces and burst of nitrous power. "When I saw his face I knew I was hooked on the value of making accommodations so everyone could participate". I recently saw an article on new product being introduced here in Winnipeg which provides the opportunity for seniors and blind individuals to ride in a rickshaw styled bike. "What a tremendous business venture and service at the same time. Everyone Wins" says Tim.

Tim is a strong advocate of the "Big Picture" for Accessibility in Winnipeg, and hopes that the Rick Hansen Foundation recognizes Winnipeg as one of the best accessible cities in Canada. "We have accomplished a lot over the years, but will have to roll up our sleeves soon, as there is still a lot of work to complete in the future." ■





# Budget

## Financial Report 2016

### Revenues

| | |
|---|---|
| Revenue Funding | $ 66,880.00 |

### Expenditures

| | |
|---|---|
| Meeting Costs | $ 9,247.62 |
| Administrative Support | $ 44,947.13 |
| Administrative Supplies | $ 2,601.15 |
| Access Awards | $ 4,265.72 |
| Website | $ 1,252.00 |
| Communication | $ 167.15 |
| Special Projects | $ 1,201.35 |
| **TOTAL** | **$ 63,682.12** |
| 2016 Surplus/Balance | $ 3,197.88 |

# 2016 Access Advisory Committee

Ross Eadie, **Chair**

Devi Sharma, **Councillor**

Albert Johnson

Angela Mayen-Obregon

Doug Gordon

Judy Hersovitch

Elizabeth Mitchell

Gail MacAulay

Kenneth Shachtay

Debbie Van Ettinger

Barbara Mah

Colleen Waters

Chris Sobkowicz
**Committee Coordinator**

Judy Redmond
**Universal Design Coordinator**

Rochelle Viray
**City Clerks Department**

Visit www.aacwinnipeg.mb.ca to contact us for more information.



Missing: Angela Mayen-Obregon, Liz Mitchell, and Devi Sharma.

# UP ahead...

Strategically, the Access Advisory Committee will be providing recommendations around awareness of universal design and accessibility as a key role and initiative.

Building on what works, we'll continue to develop existing resources – provide a current and informative website, established relationships with key stakeholders in the community – share expertise and further understanding of accessibility issues with the ongoing development of the Accessibility for Manitobans Act, and finally working within the City of Winnipeg in providing inclusive and accessible programs, facilities, and services for the whole community. ■



# Strategically We're on Track for the Future...

## Raising Awareness through Education...

Education is an integral part of the work the committee does. The public and private sector have provided greater accessibility through a move toward awareness education and commitment and belief in accessibility and inclusion in Winnipeg. Inclusive education has led to youth, the people of our future, having a better understanding that all people belong in our city. The AAC is committed to continuing to help all the City of Winnipeg departments further understand the importance of accessible information, property and services for a variety of users, that ultimately benefits everyone. The AAC will continue to advocate the mandatory awareness courses for key City of Winnipeg personnel to understand the goals of Universal Design and its Administrative responsibilities. ■

## Building Strong Relationships...

The AAC plays an active and integral role in supporting and providing feedback in helping the Province of Manitoba further develop the details and standards in the five key targeted streams of service for the Accessibility for Manitobans Act. In 2016 we played an active role in developing the "Employment Standard" which will be enacted in 2017. The AAC continues to work in consort with all the stakeholder associations, municipalities, educational institutions, regional health authorities, and the Province of Manitoba in building a made in Manitoba model of accessibility. ■



## Development and Input on Major City of Winnipeg Projects...

The AAC has participated in providing input and recommendations on many City of Winnipeg projects that made headlines, as well as ones that didn't. Some examples include: Southwest Rapid Transit Corridor developments, Pembina Highway Rehabilitation Projects, Active Transportation routes, and many others. We will continue to work with our planners and project design teams in the many departments as a valuable resource in assuring accessible design as a critical part of any of the City of Winnipeg projects in the future. ■






# Coordinator's Comments

From the desk of
Chris Sobkowicz

Again this year I would like to express my gratitude to the Mayor and Council, Departmental staff, and the City Clerk's office for the continuous support that enables the Access Advisory Committee to carry out its responsibilities. Given the ongoing nature of accessibility work within the City of Winnipeg, this collective approach speaks volumes about our civic culture and commitment to inclusive and access for everyone.

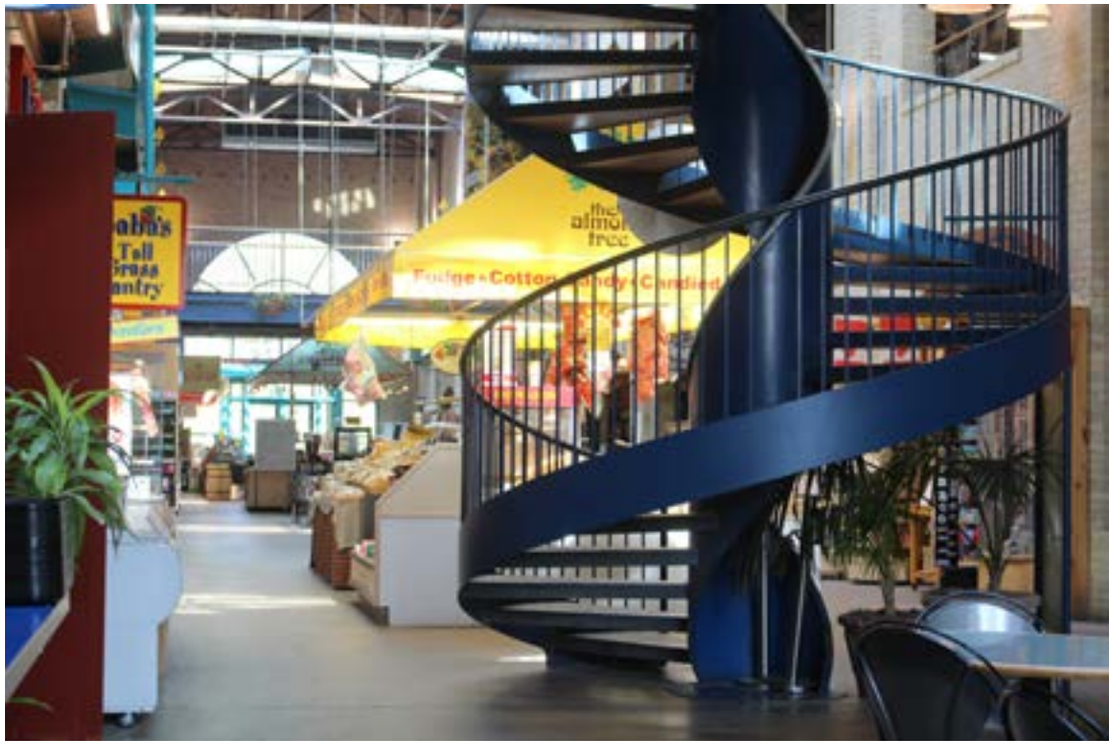
The adoption of Winnipeg's first ever Accessibility Plan in 2016, indicates that we truly have a dedicated staff who have engaged their individual departments in collaborating to set our realistic accessibility standards of service to achieve our inclusive vision for the future.

As a result of acceptance of the Universal Design policy, there is a prevalent trend by the whole professional design community to provide an accessible and inclusive built environment in a non-obvious and seamless manner; resulting in more equitable facilities, and participation by the whole community. Every year, the AAC takes pride in recognizing those architects, landscape architects, designers, planners and owners through the Access Awards.

The public and private sector have provided greater accessibility through a move toward awareness education and commitment and belief in accessibility and inclusion in Winnipeg. Every two years the AAC sponsors a community open house to review the status of accessibility in the city, and successfully in September 2016 listened to the community at the "Lets Talk Accessibility Forum".

Finally, I would like to extend my appreciation to the volunteer members of the City of Winnipeg Access Advisory Committee. These passionate people have dedicated their time to the citizens of Winnipeg in identifying the barriers to active participation. These people have spent countless hours in developing a comprehensive strategy to achieve a fully inclusive and accessible community. ■





# Contact Us

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This annual report is available in French, in Braille, and electronically on our website at www.aacwinnipeg.mb.ca. Please contact us to receive your copy in alternate formatting.

This report is specially designed to be accessed by a wide variety of users.

# ONE DAY...

we're all going to be touched
by the benefits of
ACCESSIBLE DESIGN...