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**Policy Title: Calgary Corporate Accessibility Policy**  
**Policy Number: CSPA003**  
**Approved by: City Council**  
**Effective Date: 2005 December 12<sup>th</sup>**  
**Business Unit: Community & Neighbourhood Services**

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**PREAMBLE**

*Whereas the United Nations' Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities was ratified by the Government of Canada and is an international human rights instrument intended to protect the rights and dignity of persons with disabilities. Parties to the Convention are required to promote, protect and ensure the full enjoyment of human rights by persons with disabilities, and to ensure that they enjoy full equality under the law [Government of Canada, 2010];*

*Whereas the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of the United Nations states that "...recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world,..." [U.N. Doc. A/810 (1948)];*

*Whereas the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms states that "Every individual is equal before and under the law and has the right to the equal protection and equal benefit of the law without discrimination and, in particular, without discrimination based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age or mental or physical disability" [Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, Schedule B, Constitution Act, 1982, s. 15(1)];*

*Whereas the Canadian Human Rights Act provides that discriminatory practices include the denial of goods, services, facilities, accommodation and employment where such denial is based on eleven prohibited grounds of discrimination, being race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, family status, disability and conviction for which a pardon has been granted [Canadian Human Rights Act, R.S.C. 1985, c. H-6, ss. 3(1), 5 and 7];*

*Whereas the Alberta Human Rights, Citizenship and Multiculturalism Act states that "No person shall (a) deny to any person or class of persons any goods, services, accommodation or facilities that are customarily available to the public, or (b) discriminate against any person or class of persons with respect to any goods, services, accommodation or facilities that are customarily available to the public, because of the race, religious beliefs, colour, gender, physical disability,*



mental disability, ancestry, place of origin, marital status, source of income or family status of that person or class of persons or of any other person or class of persons”; [Alberta Human Rights, Citizenship and Multiculturalism Act, R.S.A. 2000, c. H-14, s. 4];

*Whereas* the corporation of The City of Calgary is a person under the law and therefore must implement policies and actions in accordance with human rights legislation [Interpretation Act, R.S.A. 2000, c. I-8, s. 28(1)(nn)];

*Whereas* The City of Calgary recognizes and upholds the principles of the above-noted international, federal and provincial human rights legislation;

*Whereas* The City of Calgary further recognizes that as a fundamental principle and as a matter of public policy all persons, whether able-bodied or physically or mentally disabled, efforts must be made to afford equal access to City-provided services, facilities and employment opportunities;

*And Whereas* the City of Calgary affirms that it has the responsibility within its administration to eliminate discrimination against individuals with disabilities and to accommodate disabled persons in accordance with legislation and with the concept of human dignity and empowerment for all;

*Therefore* the City of Calgary adopts the following Corporate Accessibility Policy in order to enrich and enhance our society, and in order to promote an environment in which all persons can participate in and contribute to the cultural, social, economic and political life of Calgary.

## **BACKGROUND**

In May 1999, City Council approved the establishment of the Advisory Committee on Accessibility (ACA) as part of the “Transportation Services for People with Disabilities Review.” The ACA’s Terms of Reference are to review and make recommendations to City Council through the Standing Policy Committee on Community and Protective Services on policy issues, the accessibility of municipal properties, information and services for people with disabilities, and to be a resource to City Council and City Administration in addressing accessibility issues. Individuals and organizations are encouraged to bring access issues forward to City Council through the Advisory Committee on Accessibility. ACA’s mandate is to provide access recommendations and to advise Council of the rights and service needs of Calgarians with disabilities.



The State of the City Recommendations and Strategy on Services for People with Disabilities (CPS2002-41) directed the Administration, in consultation with the ACA to develop a policy framework on the City's Roles and Responsibilities regarding People with Disabilities, incorporating the updated Calgary Corporate Accessibility Policy (the "Policy" ) and best practices model, and provide a report to Council through the Standing Policy Committee on Community and Protective Services, including a public consultation process. The original Policy was approved by City Council April 12, 1995.

The Calgary Corporate Accessibility Policy is a component of Fair Calgary-A Commitment to Well-Being. Fair Calgary will look at the broad context of fairness and sustainability with all marginalized groups, while the Corporate Accessibility Policy focuses on access and people with disabilities. The Triple Bottom Line approach will guide the implementation of this policy.

## **DEFINITIONS**

**2010 Access Design Standards** - This document was created by the Access Design Sub-committee of the Advisory Committee on Accessibility (ACA) to provide standards for accessibility which go beyond the building code. It is designed as a working tool and includes the Alberta Building Code, Barrier Free Design regulations. All City projects should follow these guidelines.

**Alternative Communication** - Communication strategies that assist people with disabilities to participate more fully in their community including, interpersonal interaction, learning, education, community activities, employment, volunteerism and care management.

**Barrier-Free Design** - The incorporation and utilization of design principles to construct an environment that is functional, safe, and convenient for all users, including those with any type of disability.

**Disability** - Any definable restriction or lack of ability to perform an activity in the manner or within the range considered usual for a human being.

**Telecommunication Teletype for the Deaf and hard-of-hearing (TTY)** - This system provides persons who are deaf or hard-of-hearing access to a phone system, by enabling them to type and read their messages over phone lines.

**Universal Design** - An approach that incorporates products as well as building features which, to the greatest extent possible can be used by everyone. It is the



integration of both usability and accessibility methods that enable customer interaction with resources and services.



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### **PURPOSE of the Calgary Corporate Accessibility Policy**

This policy is also consistent with the following Council priority as identified in Council's Priorities 2009-2011:

Council Priority theme – A Great City for Everyone.

This Policy provides direction on how The City of Calgary can reduce barriers to City provided services for people with disabilities in the following areas: physical access to City services, access to transportation services and communication access. By reducing barriers that exclude individuals with disabilities from participating in the community, all citizens will be able to move freely and engage in economic, social and cultural life. The Policy contributes to the CSPA Vision “Calgary is a vibrant, healthy, safe and caring community for Calgarians to live, work and play”.

The development of the Policy reflects The City of Calgary's Corporate Values which are: to be honest and tell the truth; pursue excellence; be accountable, be responsive, compassionate and fair; and treat others with respect. This Policy on the City's roles and responsibilities regarding people with disabilities is integral for The City to act on these values. Calgarians with disabilities want the opportunity to participate as full citizens of the City, with access to the life of the community and City services, programs and facilities as part of daily life, without a loss of dignity. City services and facilities that accommodate the diverse interests of people with disabilities, their needs and circumstances demonstrate not only compassion, responsiveness, and fairness, but also demonstrate accountability to, and respect for these citizens (Attachment 4 - Toward A Policy Framework on City Roles and Responsibilities Regarding People with Disabilities Report on Public Consultation, 2003).

### **PURPOSE**

It is the purpose of this Policy to ensure the greatest level of access, which is the right or opportunity to reach, use or participate for people with physical, sensory and cognitive disabilities.

To reduce barriers to City provided services to ensure people with disabilities have the option of participating fully as citizens of the City. Access to these services will provide users the opportunity to access and partake of the following services, City services, transportation, and communications.



To ensure people with disabilities are treated with respect and to provide City services to these individuals without a loss of dignity.

To accomplish this:

1. Over the next few years the City will work towards the reduction and elimination of barriers to the physical access of City-owned and operated buildings, walkways, pathways and parks; transportation access to all its services; and communication access in the form of interpretive services (e.g. sign language interpretation, captioning, CART-Communication Access Realtime plain language, TTY and Instant Messaging (IM)) and alternative formats such as Braille print websites, cassette tapes and CD ROM.
2. Business Units will establish performance measures to evaluate progress on elimination of barriers to physical access, transportation access and communication access for people with disabilities, with the assistance of the Issue Strategist-Access & Disability Issues.
3. It would be a requirement that General Managers and Directors incorporate measurable objectives related to the achievement of the Policy into their individual performance development plans.
4. Human Resources are made available upon request to the Advisory Committee on Accessibility to work in cooperation with Business Units, Departmental & Project initiatives.
5. To the fullest extent possible, that people with disabilities have the same opportunity to participate in the economic, cultural and social life of the City as people without disabilities through strategies such as Disability Awareness Training customized and offered to meet each department's needs. Training will be coordinated by the Issue Strategist – Access and Disability Issues.

## **PROCEDURE**

### **CITY COUNCIL:**

1. To continue to support the Advisory Committee on Accessibility (ACA) and the Access Design Sub-committee and Accessible Transportation Sub-committee. The primary purpose of the committee is to focus on broad policy issues and advice City Council on access issues related to municipal properties, information and services.



2. To formally review the policy, implementation and achievements, once every 5 years to determine the effectiveness of the policy and the progress that has been made.

**ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON ACCESSIBILITY (ACA) and ISSUE STRATEGIST-ACCESS & DISABILITY ISSUES:**

1. To develop sensitivity and awareness training programs to educate staff to the individual needs of persons with disabilities. The Issue Strategist and the Advisory Committee on Accessibility (ACA), along with the Canadian Coalition of Municipalities against Racism and Discrimination CCMARD will work with all Business Units to create a training program that meets their specific needs.
2. To work in partnership with the Business Units to share resources where practical, in support of systemic values of equity and diversity. Our workplace will have a knowledge and understanding of disabilities, so that we can deliver quality public service to all Calgarians.
3. To identify barriers and gaps in existing services and programs, then develop an access component within existing division action plans and objectives.
4. To recognize individuals and Business Units for working towards the Corporation becoming more accessible.