



Council Strategy

Access & Inclusion Strategy

For People with Disabilities

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Executive Summary

It is estimated that over 400,000 Western Australians have a disability (over 20% of the total population). An estimated 250,000 Western Australians are carers for people with disabilities. Between 2006 and 2026 the number of people with disabilities in Western Australia is expected to increase by more than 210,000 due mainly to our ageing population. While the degree and type of disability varies with individual circumstances, people with disabilities frequently face barriers with everyday activities such as climbing stairs, hearing or understanding what is said, reading small print, or understanding signs.

Access and inclusion is about ensuring that all public services, facilities and information are available to all community members, including those who have a disability, so that they have the opportunity and choice to participate in all aspects of community life.

This document provides the framework to ensure access and inclusion from a City of Albany perspective.

Methodology

Consultation

In 2007, the City undertook to review its Disability Service Plan, consult with key stakeholders and draft a new Disability Access and Inclusion Plan Strategy to guide improvements to access and inclusion in the future.

The process included:

- Preparation of a draft strategy based on six underlying principles;
- Review by the City's Executive Management Team, Disability Services Commission and the Community Access and Information Branch;
- Community advised through the local newspapers and the City's website to provide comment on the proposed strategy; and
- Direct contact with the members of the Technical Working Group – Disabilities.

Promotion

The City of Albany Access and Inclusion Strategy for People with Disabilities will be promoted:

Through the local media;

Through the City's Internal newsletter;

By inclusion on the City's website; and

Agents and contractors who provide a service to the public on behalf of the City will be advised of the requirements of the Disability Access and Inclusion Plan.

The plan is available in alternative formats such as large print or electronic format (disk or emailed) and audio format on request.

Review and evaluation mechanisms

The Disability Service Act sets out the minimum review requirements for public authorities in relation to DAIPs. The City's DAIP will be reviewed at least every five years, in accordance with the Act. The DAIP Implementation Plan may be amended on a more regular basis to reflect progress and any access and inclusion issues, which may arise. Whenever the DAIP is amended, a copy of the amended plan will be lodged with the Disability Services Commission.

Reporting on the DAIP

The Disability Services Act set out the minimum reporting requirements for public authorities in relation to DAIPs.

The City will report on the implementation of its DAIP through its Annual Report and the prescribed progress report template to the Disability Services Commission by 31 July each year, outlining:

- Progress towards the desired outcomes of its DAIP;
- Progress of its agents and contractors towards meeting the six desired outcomes; and
- The strategies used to inform its agents and contractors of its DAIP.

Reporting on Past Achievements

The City of Albany Disability Services and Community Access Advisory Committee continued to meet throughout the year to provide advice to Council in relation to disability and access issues, to highlight areas of concern within the City and to raise awareness of disability issues throughout the community.

Albany Leisure and Aquatic Centre programs significantly increased the participation of people with disabilities in sport and recreation activities in 2005-2006. Recreation programs for people with disabilities run on Wednesday mornings at the centre. Participants can play maxi tenpin, bocce, oversize soccer and oversize hockey, using special equipment suitable for various types of disabilities. People in wheelchairs can operate spring-loaded launchers to take part in ball games.

As part of Disability Awareness Day in 2004-2005 the City of Albany conducted a 'Disable Your Boss Day', which saw a number of businesses around Albany put their boss into a wheelchair for the day, to give them a first-hand experience of life in a wheelchair and a graphic demonstration of wheelchair access into and around their premises. Local member of State Parliament Peter Watson, Liberal electoral candidate Andrew Partington and City of Albany Mayor Alison Goode also contributed to the event by spending a couple of hours each confined to a wheelchair on York Street and talking to passers-by about disability awareness.

Strategic Context

People with disabilities and their families and carers have the same rights as other people to access services within the community. These rights are built into State and Commonwealth legislation, which makes it unlawful to discriminate against a person with a disability.

Public authorities in Western Australia have been required to have Disability Service Plans (DSPs) as part of the Disability Services Act (1993). DSPs have been in place for over 10 years, and a great deal of progress has been made by State and Local Government towards ensuring that their services, buildings, and information are accessible to people with disabilities.

The Disability Services Act (1993) was amended in December 2004, and requires public authorities to develop and implement Disability Access and Inclusion Plans (DAIPs). The requirements of DAIPs build on those of DSPs, so that people with disabilities can access services provided by public authorities in Western Australia in a way that facilitates increased independence, opportunities and inclusion within the community.

The strategic context for the City of Albany is set out in the City of Albany 3D Corporate Plan, which states...

“Community Vision:

Historic Albany – A vibrant, learning and culturally diverse City, nestled around a spectacular natural harbour in a region of unique beauty, enhanced by a spirit of generosity, enterprise and opportunity.

Mission Statement:

The City of Albany is committed to:-

- *Delivering excellent community services; and*
- *Promoting our Community’s vision for the future.*

Priority Projects:

Community Development Strategy – Establish clear direction on Council’s involvement in Community Development activities. Includes action plans for youth, seniors, disabled, Aboriginal Accord and volunteers.

Disability Services is a strategic focus area with the City’s Community Development Strategy (2007).

Strategic Focus Areas

Access to City Services and Events

People with disabilities have the same opportunities as other people to access the services of, and any events organised by the City of Albany.

Access to City Buildings and Facilities

People with disabilities have the same opportunities as other people to access the buildings and other facilities of the City of Albany.

Access to City Information

People with disabilities have the opportunity to receive information from the City of Albany in a format that will enable them to access the information, as readily as other people are able to access it.

Access to Quality Service

People with disabilities have the same opportunities to receive the same level and quality of service from the staff of City of Albany as other people receive from the staff.

Access to City Complaints Procedure

People with disabilities have the same opportunities as other people to make complaints to the City of Albany.

Participation in Public Consultation Process

People with disabilities have the same opportunities as other people to participate in any public consultation by the City of Albany.

Key Action Plan

City Services and Events

1. Ensure that people with disabilities are included, as are other members of the community, to access the services of the City of Albany and any events organised by the City of Albany.	
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Timeframe	Ongoing
Resources	Existing Allocation
Officer	All Managers

2. Participate in the 'Companion Card' initiative where possible to events conducted in Council facilities.	
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Timeframe	Ongoing
Resources	Existing Allocation
Officer/s	Manager, Albany Leisure & Aquatic Centre Manager, Town Hall Theatre Arts Project Officer, Vancouver Arts Centre Manager, Library Services Project Officer, City Events

3. Use and regularly review the City of Albany Event Risk Management manual to ensure that Council staff involved in the organisation of special events are aware that the needs of all sectors of the community are accommodated, eg parking, physical access and information needs.	
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Timeframe	31 October 2007
Resources	Existing Allocation
Officer	Project Officer – City Events

4. Ensure that key personnel develop the skills and confidence to respond effectively to the diverse needs of people with a disability.	
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Timeframe	30 June 2008
Resources	Existing Allocation
Officer	Manager Executive Services

City Buildings and Facilities

5. Ensure that access to City offices and buildings is available to people with disabilities.

Timeframe	Ongoing
Resources	Existing Allocation
Officer	Manager City Services

6. Incorporate provision for disability access into all future asset and facility development for the City.

Timeframe	Ongoing
Resources	Existing Allocation
Officer	Manager City Services

7. In conjunction with Disability Services Commission and Community Living Association, assist in the installation and ongoing operation of a Liberty Swing in Eyre Park.

Timeframe	30 September 2009
Resources	\$10,000
Officer	Manager City Assets / Executive Director of Corporate & Community Services

8. Continue to ensure that the City's library provides products and services such as the housebound reader service, audio books, large print books, books in a wide range of reading levels and computer access including the internet.

Timeframe	Ongoing
Resources	Existing Allocation
Officer	Manager Library Services

9. Continue to provide Aussie Beach Access wheelchairs at both Middleton Beach and Emu Point through the beach kiosks at these locations.

Timeframe	Ongoing
Resources	Existing Allocation
Officer	Manager Community Development

City Information

10. Advise the community that, upon request, information about City services and events can be made in alternative formats, such as large print, or compact disc.

Timeframe	Ongoing
Resources	Existing Allocation
Officer	Manager Customer Services

11. Where appropriate, ensure that City publications promote inclusion and participation for people with a disability.

Timeframe	Ongoing
Resources	Existing Allocation
Officer	Public Relations Officer

12. Use clear and concise language in all City information in relation to its services.

Timeframe	Ongoing
Resources	Existing Allocation
Officer	Public Relations Officer

Quality Service

13. Include disability awareness into the City's staff induction program.

Timeframe	31 December 2007
Resources	Existing Allocation
Officer	Manager Executive Services

14. Identify training for key staff to ensure that, in relation to service provision and community consultation, they are aware of the main access needs of people with disabilities, their families and carers who use the City's services.

Timeframe	Ongoing
Resources	Existing Allocations
Officer	All Managers

15. Ensure City premises are welcoming to people with disabilities.

Timeframe	Ongoing
Resources	Existing Allocation
Officer	Manager City Services

16. Be flexible and adaptable in responding to barriers experienced by people due to various disabilities, including physical, sensory, cognitive and psychiatric disabilities.

Timeframe	Ongoing
Resources	Existing Allocation
Officer	All Managers

City's Complaints Procedure

17. Ensure the current complaint procedures are accessible to people with disabilities.

Timeframe	Ongoing
Resources	Existing Allocation
Officer	Manager Customer Services

18. Advertise the City's Complaint Procedure on the City's website.

Timeframe	Ongoing
Resources	Existing Allocation
Officer	Manager Customer Services

19. Provide assistance, where required, in the lodgement of a complaint.

Timeframe	Ongoing
Resources	Existing Allocation
Officer	Manager Customer Services

20. Act on grievances and complaints made by community members related to access and resolve the issue in line with the complaints mechanism.	
Timeframe	Ongoing
Resources	Existing Allocation
Officer	Manager Customer Services

Public Consultation Process

21. Maintain the Technical Working Group – Disabilities to:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set priorities for upgrading City facilities and infrastructure to meet contemporary access standards. • Consult with relevant City of Albany officers on disability needs for planned community and recreation facilities and programs. 	
Timeframe	Ongoing
Resources	Existing Allocation
Officer	Executive Director of Works & Services

22. Advertise the City's Disability Access and Inclusion Plan on the City's website.	
Timeframe	Ongoing
Resources	Existing Allocation
Officer	Executive Director of Works & Services

23. Maintain links to the Disability Services Commission and Services Directory through the City's website.	
Timeframe	Ongoing
Resources	Existing Allocation
Officer	Executive Director of Corporate & Community Services

24. Create opportunities for people with disabilities to be included in invitations to attend public workshops, public forums or community consultation processes of the City, to ensure that people with disabilities are included in invitations.	
Timeframe	Ongoing
Resources	Existing Allocation
Officer	All Managers

25. Support people with disabilities, their families and carers to attend public community consultation processes arranged by the City.	
Timeframe	Ongoing
Resources	Existing Allocation
Officer	All Managers

Performance Measurement

Access to City Services and Events

- Numbers taking part in “Companion Card” initiative and take up by private entrepreneurs through Town Hall and other City facilities;
- Completion of review of City of Albany Event Risk Management Manual;
- Satisfaction Surveys, distributed via DSC.

Access to City Buildings and Facilities

- Organisational training completed in key areas (service provider: Community Living Association);
- Number of City Buildings and Facilities with disabled access;
- Installation of Liberty Swing.

Access to City Information

- Number of publications produced in alternate formats;
- Number of publications promoting inclusion and participation;
- City Website compliant with the W3C Content Accessibility Guidelines to Level 2.

Access to Quality Service

- Organisational training completed in key areas;
- Review of Induction process.

Access to City’s Complaints Procedure

- Number of complaints registered by people with a disability;
- Satisfaction surveys distributed via DSC.

Participation in the Public Consultation Process

- Number of meetings of Technical Working Group – Disabilities;
- Number of priorities identified and remedied;
- Satisfaction Surveys.

Review

Executive Director of Corporate and Community Services to review on or before 30/6/2009

Associated Documents

- Disability Services Act 1993
- WA Equal Opportunity Act 1984
- Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act 1992
- City of Albany Event Risk Management Manual
- “Creating Accessible Events “ Checklist – Disability Services Commission