

Accessibility Working Group Sub-Committee

Meeting #1 – June 7, 2016

In Attendance from the City of Brandon:

Mayor Rick Chrest, Scott Hildebrand, Brian Kayes, Phyllis Miller, Kathy Vandale

In attendance from the Community:

Chris Brandon, Theresa Gibbons, Walter Gibbons, Debbie Barrett, Rhett Borton, Bev Leckie, Julie Hockley, Margie Lewis, Russ Criddle, Tracy Mears, Lorie Beaney, Dave Beaney, Penny Criddle, Barb Lelay, Michelle Magnusson, Brenda Trommelen, Connie Ricker, Eleanor Thompson, John Jackson, Matt Kaskiw, Elmer Kaskiw, Kevin Klein, Interpreter

The meeting commenced with welcoming remarks from Mayor Rick Chrest who expressed his appreciation to everyone for agreeing to participate and help the City create a made in Brandon plan.

Everyone then introduced themselves and advised what their interest was in participating.

Brian Kayes facilitated the meeting and utilizing a power point presentation, explained the nuts and bolts of the provincial legislation and how we got to the point of organizing this meeting. (The Power Point presentation can be found on the City's website at www.brandon.ca) The specific legislation is *The Accessibility for Manitobans Act* and *The Human Rights Code*. He noted that 2016 is an important year as it is the starting point and that every 2 years following 2016, the Province will bring out a new *Accessibility Standard* which will require development of a plan followed by implementation. The first standard requiring a plan is the **Customer Service Standard Regulation** and it will result in the City of Brandon Accessibility Plan 2016. We are initially concentrating on customer service, and are legally obligated to meet this Act. Our plan will address customer service and then another standard will come out and we will have 2 years to work on that new plan. The process will take 10 years overall.

The City's goal is to have the City of Brandon services accessible for everyone.

The City's Statement of Commitment is:

The City of Brandon is committed to ensuring equal access and participation for all people, regardless of their abilities. We are committed to treating all people in a way that allows them to maintain their dignity and independence. We believe in inclusion. We are committed to meeting the needs of people who face accessibility barriers by identifying, removing and preventing these barriers and by meeting the requirements of *The Accessibility for Manitobans Act*.

While the Accessibility Working Group will meet monthly to develop and update the City's Accessibility Plan 2016, review accessibility issues, train employees, etc. the Accessibility Working Group Sub-Committee, which is this group comprised of customers and accessibility champions, will review and comment on the plan, identify priorities, current issues and positively represent the committee.

By September 30, 2016 the committee will complete the written City of Brandon Accessibility Policy, and complete a Customer Service audit of City services. Then by November 1st, the committee will have established a record keeping of the plan, and publically share the plan information on the City's website and via other accessible formats.

By November 1, 2017 from the baseline report, the committee will develop, implement and publish action plans. For example, if the elevator is down in City Hall and a resident needs to meet with the Mayor but is unable to get to the 2nd floor, arrangements will be made for the Mayor to come to the main floor for the meeting. It will be published on the City's website that the elevator is not working. It was suggested that there also needs to be verbal mention that the elevator is down as many seniors do not use computers.

Also by November 1, 2017, the Committee will develop an accessibility training program to provide to approximately 640 City of Brandon employees.

Immediate next steps include:

- Next meeting to be held Tuesday, June 21 at 4:30 in the T.E. Snure Room, A.R. McDiarmid Civic Building, 638 Princess Avenue.
- The agenda will consist of input from attendees on customer service barriers that make it difficult to access City services. Attendees will be asked to participate in a survey in advance of the meeting, as well as sharing the survey with others who can't attend the next meeting.
- In addition to posting the survey on the City's website at www.brandon.ca, hard copies will be available at the next meeting. It was pointed out that with the survey being posted on the City's website, java script was not user friendly for people who don't see; therefore, it was agreed that people who wish to complete the survey orally can phone Phyllis at 204-729-2202 or Kathy at 204-729-2204. Responses can be submitted in any fashion that is easiest for the participant.
- People can bring forward group issues, i.e. transit, infrastructure, etc. through the survey. However, if the survey is being shared and 7 people have identified transit as a barrier, there is no need to submit 7 surveys. People are asked to describe the barrier.
- A microphone should be available at the next meeting and Eleanor Thompson agreed to bring a portable system.
- Brian will look into how to copy the survey on the website so that it can be shared with others.
