

7.6 DRAFT ACCESS AND INCLUSION PLAN 2022-2027 - APPROVAL FOR PUBLIC CONSULTATION

Attachments: 1. **Draft City of Vincent Access and Inclusion Plan 2022-2027**

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council:

1. **RECEIVES** the Draft Access and Inclusion Plan 2022-2027, at Attachment 1
2. **AUTHORISES** the Chief Executive Officer to provide local public notice of the Draft Access and Inclusion Plan 2022-2027 for public comment for a period of 21 days, inviting written submissions in accordance with the City's Community and Stakeholder Engagement Policy

PURPOSE OF REPORT:

To receive the Draft Access and Inclusion Plan 2022-2027 (Attachment 1) and authorises advertising for public comment, prior to Council's consideration and adoption.

BACKGROUND:

The Disability Services Act 1993 (the Act) requires all local government authorities to develop a Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (the Plan) in order to plan and implement accessibility improvements, and to promote access and inclusion both for people with disability and for the wider community. Administration provides a yearly report to the Department of Communities on the progress of actions within the Plan across the seven mandated outcome areas which are:

- Services and Events
- Buildings and Facilities
- Information and Communication
- Quality Service
- Complaint Mechanisms
- Consultation Processes and
- Employment

The City's current Plan also includes an additional, voluntary outcome area, 'Policy and Procedures'.

The most recent report on the progress of our current Plan was submitted to the Department of Communities in July 2021. Some highlights from the most recent progress report include:

- The City hosted a 'Lunch n Learn' with a staff member who shared his experience of living with disability
- The City completed the renewal project of Loftus Recreation Centre Change Rooms with a fully accessible change room
- The upgrade to the eastern side toilets at Hyde Park was completed and there are now three unisex accessible toilets
- The Beatty Park team developed an information resource for children with Autism, 'social stories'
- The Vincent Community Centre Accessible toilet was refurbished to meet current Australian Standards.

The current Plan expires this year and a revised Plan is required to be developed and endorsed by Council before it is submitted to the Department of Communities.

DETAILS:Community Engagement Campaign

In November 2021, Administration commenced the process for developing a new Plan with a community engagement campaign. In order to ensure that the process was collaborative, Administration engaged local organisation Youth Disability Advocacy Network to design a community engagement survey to track sentiment and responses relating to our DAIP. Administration also met with other disability organisations

and local residents in order to develop a network for the engagement campaign and to understand how best to engage with stakeholders. In addition to this, Administration completed the following engagement activities:

- Community workshop with people with disability, carers and industry representatives
- Online (Engagement HQ) and in person surveys
- Stall at Kyilla Farmers Markets
- Engagement with groups at Vincent Community Centre
- Engagement with Mt Hawthorn Education Support Centre
- Meetings with Managers and Coordinators across City business units

The engagement campaign was also promoted across the City's social media platform, with flyers and posters in key locations, and via email to relevant stakeholders, community groups and individuals (for example, the Beatty Park Angelfish program families.)

Stakeholder Participation and Feedback

The outcomes of the community engagement campaign resulted in:

- Participation of 14 people in the community workshop
- 11 online survey responses
- 2 social media responses
- 6 face to face meetings with community members with verbal comments provided
- 1 email submission

Feedback was sought on the current Plan as well as ideas and actions for the new Plan.

Community workshop participants provided feedback that the current Plan was too long and wordy, making it difficult for some people to read and comprehend. It was recommended that the new Plan be simplified and include less background information, with the focus being on the actions to be taken across the outcome areas.

Many respondents expressed frustration with ongoing issues of physical access across the community (not just within the City) including inability to access public transport, unsuitable footpaths, lack of ramps into buildings, lack of accessible toilets, accessible and ACROD parking, and lack of accessibility options and information for events and services. It was noted that people reporting accessibility issues felt that these were often not acted on, or that actions were taken without appropriate consultation that then resulted in further issues.

However, respondents also expressed a desire to see more work done to address non-physical barriers such as providing suitable environments for people with developmental disability (e.g. 'quiet spaces') and education, awareness and training, particularly for City staff, in providing services for people with non-visible disability. There was also a focus on improving inclusion more broadly for people from a variety of backgrounds and cohorts, recognising the broader access and inclusion needs of seniors, youth, people from culturally diverse backgrounds, and other minority groups. Access and inclusion also needs to consider the needs of those who support people with disability, such as parents and carers.

City of Vincent Employee Feedback

Meetings with staff across business units of Administration identified opportunities for improving accessibility. Administration has identified a need for dedicated budget to be allocated to areas such as Building and Asset Management and Engineering, in order to address physical accessibility issues across our buildings and in public spaces, in order of priority.

Creation and Review of the Draft Plan

Following the engagement period, Administration has developed a new draft Disability, Access and Inclusion Plan 2022-2027 (**Attachment 1**).

The ideas and feedback received during the engagement process were used to develop this draft Plan and a robust internal engagement process has ensured that all business units within Administration will be able to implement the actions relevant to their areas.

The draft Plan has been reviewed by internal and external stakeholders, including a review by the Youth Disability Advocacy Network.

The draft Plan has also been reviewed by the Department of Communities who have advised that it is compliant with the City's requirements under the Act.

Next Steps

The draft Plan will be advertised for community comment in the month of June 2022.

A further report will be presented to the Ordinary Council Meeting in July 2022 detailing any submissions received during the public comment period.

The Access and Inclusion Plan 2022-2027 will be modified to include the Mayor's forward and finalise wording of the Acknowledgement of Country. The CEO will also update the final document to improve formatting, styling and graphic design, prior to adoption and publication.

CONSULTATION/ADVERTISING:

All stakeholders who provided a submission during the Community Engagement phase for developing this draft Plan have been contacted and invited to provide feedback on the draft plan, which was used to refine the draft.

LEGAL/POLICY:

It is a requirement under the Western Australian Disability Services Act 1993 that all Local Government Authorities develop a Disability Access and Inclusion Plan and review and/or amend or replace the Plan every 5 years.

RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

Low: It is low risk for Council to advertise the draft Plan for public comment. The Plan has been developed with relevant community stakeholders and Administration staff.

STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS:

This is in keeping with the City's *Strategic Community Plan 2018-2028*:

Enhanced Environment

Our parks and reserves are maintained, enhanced and well utilised.

Accessible City

Our pedestrian and cyclist networks are well designed, connected, accessible and encourage increased use.

Connected Community

Our many cultures are celebrated.

We have enhanced opportunities for our community to build relationships and connections with each other and the City.

Our many cultures are celebrated.

We recognise, engage and partner with the Whadjuk Noongar people and culture.

Our community facilities and spaces are well known and well used.

We are an inclusive, accessible and equitable City for all.

Thriving Places

Our town centres and gathering spaces are safe, easy to use and attractive places where pedestrians have priority.

Innovative and Accountable

*Our resources and assets are planned and managed in an efficient and sustainable manner.
Our community is aware of what we are doing and how we are meeting our goals.
We are open and accountable to an engaged community.*

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS:

This plan will influence the implementation of the *Sustainable Environment Strategy 2019-2024*, particularly by ensuring modes of transport are accessible and inclusive.

PUBLIC HEALTH IMPLICATIONS:

This is in keeping with the following priority health outcomes of the City's *Public Health Plan 2020-2025*:

Increased mental health and wellbeing

Reduced injuries and a safer community

This plan supports the creation of a social and built environment that is accessible and inclusive for everyone, and particularly for people with disabilities. It recognises that this will create increased social connectedness for our community and will encourage physical access to, and utilisation of, community spaces.

FINANCIAL/BUDGET IMPLICATIONS:

Funding for implementation of the plan will be considered during the 2022-2023 budget process.

COMMENTS:

The proposed Plan has been developed in collaboration with the community and will provide clear strategic direction for the City's Access and Inclusion initiatives over the next 5 years. The Plan will be supported by the City's Diversity Access and Equity Policy, which will be reviewed following the adoption of the Plan, and an Implementation Plan to ensure all actions are addressed and achieved by Administration during the life of the Plan.



CITY OF VINCENT

ACCESS & INCLUSION PLAN

2022 – 2027

CITY OF VINCENT ACCESS AND INCLUSION PLAN (DRAFT)

Acknowledgement of Country (wording to be confirmed)

The City of Vincent acknowledges the traditional lands of the Whadjuk Noongar people. We pay our respect to their Elders, past and present and we recognise their strength and resilience.

Mayors Forward (to be drafted)

Introduction

We want to provide services and spaces that meet the needs of all our residents and visitors.

We know barriers exist that prevent equity from being achieved, particularly for people with disability

The aim of this Plan is to make our buildings, services, events and culture more accessible and to make sure everyone in our community feels included.

We will give everyone in our community:

- the opportunity to be heard,
- the ability to enjoy our public spaces,
- fair treatment and respect.

So everyone can participate and enjoy Vincent life.

Legislation and Guiding Documents

Our Strategic Community Plan 2018-2028 guides our service delivery, planning and development. A key outcome of this plan is that *"We are an inclusive, accessible and equitable City for all."*

This Plan has also been informed by the [State Disability Strategy 2020-2030](#) and the [State Disability Action Plan 2020-2030](#).

Having an Access and Inclusion Plan (also known as a Disability Access and Inclusion Plan) is a requirement for all Local Governments under the Western Australian Disability Services Act 1993.

What is Access and Inclusion?

Nearly everyone faces hardships and difficulties at one time or another. But for people with disabilities, barriers to access and inclusion can be more frequent and have greater impact.

A disability is a condition that restricts everyday activities. The Disability Services Act (1993) defines 'disability' as a condition which:

- is attributable to an intellectual, psychiatric, cognitive, neurological, sensory or physical impairment or a combination of those impairments
- is permanent or likely to be permanent
- may or may not be of a chronic or episodic nature

- results in substantially reduced capacity of the person for communication, social interaction, learning or mobility and a need for continuing support services. (disability.wa.gov.au)

The World Health Organisation (WHO) describes barriers as being more than just physical obstacles, but considers “factors in a person’s environment that, through their absence or presence, limit functioning and create disability.

These include:

- A physical environment that is not accessible
- Lack of relevant assistive technology (assistive, adaptive and rehabilitative)
- Negative attitudes of people towards disability
- Services, systems and policies that are either non-existent or that hinder the involvement of all people with a disability in all areas of life”

Intersectionality

We know that access and inclusion will also impact people without disability.

Other personal characteristics that may contribute to whether a person has equitable access and inclusion are:

- Gender
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation
- Race and Ethnicity
- Colour
- Nationality
- Refugee or migrant background
- Language and Literacy
- Religion
- Age
- Socio-economic status

For some people, access and inclusion will be impacted by more than one of these characteristics. For example, a person with disability may also experience a lack of inclusion due to race, gender or sexual orientation.

These people may experience more barriers because of the combination of these characteristics. This is called intersectionality.

Diversity Profile

In City of Vincent:

33,693 people in the City of Vincent (2016 census)

One in three residents born overseas

One in five speak a language other than English at home (ABS)

3,642 people aged 65+ (2016 census)

1,304 people need assistance due to disability (2016 census)

One in four households with dependent children

2,451 unpaid aged and disability carers (2016 census)

409 NDIS participants residing in Vincent (NDIS)

Across Australia

One in five Australians have a disability (ABS)

One in five speak a language other than English at home (ABS)

One in two people were born overseas or have a parent who was born overseas (ABS)

Up to 11% of Australians may have a diverse sexual orientation, sex or gender identity (Human Rights Australia)

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples make up 3.3% of the population

One in ten people with disability experienced discrimination in the past year (ABS)

One in three people with disability have had difficulty accessing facilities (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare)

One in two people with disability are in the workforce (Australian Human Rights Commission)

One in two people were born overseas or have a parent who was born overseas (ABS)

1.7% of Australians are estimated to be intersex (Human Rights Australia)

44% of Australian Adults with low levels of English Literacy (known as functional illiteracy) (ABS)

Who helped us make this Plan

To help us write this plan, we spoke to people in our community and asked what they wanted us to do to make the City more accessible. Some of the ways we spoke to people are listed below.

Youth Disability Advocacy Network helped us draft a community survey

We held a workshop that 14 people with disability, carers and disability sector workers attended

11 people completed our online survey

We had six face to face conversations in the community

We did a pop up stall to talk to people at the Kyilla Markets

We talked to people attending programs at our Community Centre

We put out an open invitation to our networks to talk to us

We held meetings with City of Vincent management staff

Outcome Areas

These are the eight areas in which we will take actions to be more accessible and inclusive. For each area, we have listed what we will keep doing, what new actions we will take and some examples of what these actions will look like.

Outcome One - People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to access the services of, and any event by, a public authority.

What we will keep doing:
Provide services and events in venues that are physically accessible.
City staff, agents and contractors are made aware of, and required to follow, access and inclusion requirements for their roles.
Action areas:
We will make our Administration and Civic Centre, Community Centre, Library and Beatty Park more accessible. We will aim to meet best practice standard where possible.
Improve communication about accessibility for events and services.
We will make it easier to locate information about accessible public facilities in Vincent.
Improve service and event accessibility for people with neurological, cognitive, intellectual, psychiatric and sensory disability.
We will share information with event organisers and community groups to increase awareness of non-physical accessibility needs.
Examples of actions:
Ensure all major City events with performers or speakers have an Auslan interpreter and that the option for an Auslan or other language interpreter is available on request for workshops and other events
We will provide low sensory areas or sessions at Beatty Park and at all relevant events.
All our event promotional material will include accessibility information.
We will obtain a sensory kit to assist City staff to support people with neurological, sensory and other conditions at City run events.

Outcome Two - People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to access the buildings and other facilities of a public authority.

What we will keep doing:
Provide free, dedicated ACROD parking bays across the City
When we are making upgrades to buildings or commencing new construction, our staff, contractors and agents are aware of, and comply with, Australian accessibility and mobility standards
Action areas:
We will make our Administration and Civic Centre, Community Centre, Library and Beatty Park more accessible. We will aim to meet best practice standards where possible.
Develop a clear plan for upgrading City facilities, to meet or exceed Australian Standards where possible over the next 10 years
Make hiring our facilities more accessible
Improve ACROD permit holder parking across the City
Review accessibility of playgrounds and other park equipment through the Playspace Strategy and make improvements, in order of priority.
Review the accessibility of our public spaces, including footpaths, and prioritise improvement for areas of concern.
Make sure accessibility is a high priority when we upgrade our parks and open spaces
Encourage businesses and community groups in City of Vincent to become more accessible and inclusive
Ask all tenderers to demonstrate how they consider accessibility and review this as part of our procurement process
Examples:
Accessible toilets will be upgraded to have automatic door entry at the Administration and Civic Centre and Community Centre buildings.
Add more accessible playground equipment and soft fall to playgrounds.
Upgrade the Administration and Civic Centre lift to meet accessibility standards.
Allocate funds in our annual budget to improve building accessibility across the City.
All City managed road resurfacing leave the road level with the footpath ramp at the time of completion.

Outcome Three - People with disability receive information from a public authority in a format that will enable them to access the information as readily as other people are able to access it.

What we will keep doing:
Our website will meet W3C Web Accessibility Guidelines.
We will promote on our website that documents are available in alternative formats on request.
All staff involved in developing website, social media and other public content have received access and inclusion training and cultural awareness training.

Action areas:
Provide more support for those who have difficulty communicating when accessing our services.
Promote availability of Auslan and other language interpreters for City events and services and for communicating with the City.

Examples:
Provide D/deaf awareness, dementia awareness and other suitable training for customer service staff.
Trial Alternative and Augmentative Communication (AAC) boards at locations within the City.
Add image descriptions to all images used on social media and in public documents and ensure all video content has closed captions and accompanying transcript.

Outcome Four - People with disability receive the same level and quality of service from the staff of a public authority as other people receive from the staff of the public authority.

What we will keep doing:
Ensure that all staff and contractors are provided with information about this plan and their responsibilities, in induction or on-boarding process.
Provide disability awareness training to all staff within the first 6 months of employment.

Action areas:
Improve staff and contractor awareness of this plan and general Access and Inclusion principles, including non-visible disability, in day-to-day tasks and projects across the organisation.
Track all customer requests regarding access and inclusion, to ensure action and accountability
Improve information technology to provide better access for staff when dealing with customers outside of City of Vincent office buildings.

Examples:
Update staff and contractor induction and on-boarding to increase awareness of this plan and how it relates to individual work areas.

Outcome Five - People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to make complaints to a public authority.

What we will keep doing:
Receive and action complaints made through all contact methods including letter, email, in person, phone, social media message and via our webpage.

Action areas:
Improve information about making complaints, for people who require an interpreter or have additional accessibility needs.

Examples:
Make our complaints and customer service charter available in multiple formats on the website, including Easy Read.

Outcome Six - People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to participate in any public consultation by a public authority.

What we will keep doing:
Conduct consultation in venues that are physically accessible, using appropriately trained staff.
Allow for feedback to be taken in a range of ways including; in person, by letter, email, SMS, NRS (National Relay Service), with an Auslan or other language interpreter and via the City's website, social media and in person.
Ensure people with disability continue to be represented on the City's Community Engagement Panel.

Action areas:
Increase promotion of support available for people with disability to participate in public consultations.

Examples:
Include plain English word document formats for major consultations listed on Engagement HQ.
Clearly advertise the accessibility of the venue for any in-person consultation sessions.
Measure participation rates of people with disability

Outcome Seven - People with disability have the same opportunities as other people regarding employment practices (recruitment and retention) by a public authority.

What we will keep doing:
Promote employment opportunities widely, in a range of formats and through Disability Employment Services and disability networks.
Ensure all City position descriptions and employment contracts state that Access and Inclusion is a shared responsibility of all staff.
Ensure all venues used for recruitment and employment are physically accessible.
Continue offering employment opportunities specifically for people with disability via the Disability Employment Services Network.
Action areas:
Improve induction and on boarding process to make it more accessible and inclusive
Upskill managers and supervisors in fostering accessible and inclusive workplaces.
Build stronger relationships with local disability organisations and promote employment opportunities through their networks.
Examples:
Work directly with disability organisations to undertake 'role carving' to provide more employment opportunities for people with disability.
Provide unconscious bias and workplace diversity training for staff involved in recruitment and management.

Outcome Eight - People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to have their needs and entitlements considered when the City of Vincent is developing and implementing policies and procedures.

What we will keep doing:
Continue to implement the City's Access and Equity policy, and this plan, across the organisation.
Action areas:
Improve accessibility of Council meetings, where policies are discussed and adopted.
Review and update our purchasing policy to make it easier to purchase from businesses owned by, or supporting, people with disability.
Ensure all staff undertaking policy reviews consider accessibility when making recommendations to Council.

Examples:
Amend policies and procedures to ensure people with disability can submit statements and questions at Council Meetings in alternative formats.
Update policy review paper template to include a prompt to consider accessibility.

How will this Plan be promoted and implemented?

The City of Vincent will make this Plan available on our website and in hard copy in our Library, Administration and Civic Centre, Community Centre and Beatty Park.

We will promote this Plan via our electronic newsletters, on social media and in local newspapers.

You can also request a copy of our Plan to be provided to you via mail, email, or in another format such as audio recording or braille.

The City will track our progress against each action within this Plan and will complete an annual progress report for the Department of Communities.

Contact us:

To talk to someone about this Plan, you can contact the City of Vincent in the following ways:

- In person at the City of Vincent Community Centre, 99 Loftus Street Leederville.
- Call us on 9273 6000 or via the National Relay Service (NRS) on 133 677 (TTY and voice calls)
- Message us on our website chat at www.vincent.wa.gov.au
- Email mail@vincent.wa.gov.au
- Write to us at PO Box 82 Leederville 6902
- Message us on any of our social media pages.
- Interpreters are available on request for languages other than English, including AUSLAN.

¹ World Health Organization, International classification of functioning, disability and health. Geneva:2001, WHO. p. 214