

Summary of Discussion

**MEETING OF THE ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COUNCIL
IN-PERSON, ROOM 230, LEGISLATIVE BUILDING
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 13, 2022
TIME: 11:00 AM to NOON**

Present: John Graham (Chairperson), Kelly Cook, Scott Jocelyn, Dianna Scarth, Kris Cowley, Darren Macdonald, Maria Ferraro and Colleen Watters (Manitoba Accessibility Office)

Regrets: Brad Robertson, Josh Watt, Laurel Repski and Shawna Joynt

MINUTES

1. WELCOME and LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and read the land acknowledgement. Those present introduced themselves.

2. REVIEW OF AGENDA AND PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES

The chair reviewed the October 13, 2022 meeting agenda and the September 14, 2022 Council meeting minutes.

Decision: The minutes of the September 14, 2022 Council meeting were accepted.

3. MINISTER MEETING OUTCOMES AND ACTIONS

- Member Round Table

Council members felt the meeting with the Minister went well, and they appreciated receiving the updates on the status of the recommendations on the five-year review of the customer service standard, standard development related to transportation and the design of public spaces and the Manitoba Accessibility Fund.

In light of concerns raised by Barrier-Free Manitoba about the Accessible Information and Communication Standard, one Council member mentioned the possibility of engaging an individual or organization to conduct functional assessments of the standards, perhaps putting out a call for applicants as part of the second Manitoba Accessibility Fund intake process. The assessment would apply to all accessibility standards and the Manitoba Building Code. Another Council member noted the importance of balancing the needs of stakeholders during the assessment process. It is not Council's role to carry out the functional assessments but they can drive the process. The chair indicated that, when the design of public spaces standard comes back to Council, the AAC could examine the technical aspects and functionality of the

standard. If the MAO consults with stakeholders on behalf of Council before the standard is released for public input, the standard may not come into force prior to the next provincial election in October 2023.

The chair noted that, during the Minister meeting, the Council did not get a clear indication of government developments related to procurement.

Action: The chair will draft a letter to the Minister reinforcing the need for government to show leadership and the benefits of including accessible procurement in Treasury Board submissions, service purchase agreements and contracts. In the letter, the chair will emphasize the importance of developing government policies, as well as the need to strengthen outreach efforts through mechanisms such as the Companies Office and other government databases to stimulate compliance among businesses and other stakeholders.

Council's role is to move this agenda forward and to represent the views of stakeholders and to serve in an advisory capacity to government.

4. CHAIR / SECRETARY UPDATES

- Manitoba Accessibility Fund (MAO Executive Director)

The MAO Executive Director reported that 30 projects were granted funding through the Manitoba Accessibility Fund and that a successful launch took place on August 24, 2022 at the Good Will Social Club with the Minister in attendance. Prior to the second MAF intake, the MAO will be conducting outreach with stakeholders, particularly those where the number of applications was low (school divisions and municipalities). A survey about MAF was also distributed to stakeholders to solicit additional feedback. Council noted it was too bad that a number of applicants had to be turned down due to insufficient funding. Perhaps greater emphasis should be placed on first-time applicants during the second round of applications. Council members wondered about the vetting process.

Action: The MAO will prepare a presentation on the MAF vetting process for the next Council meeting.

- Additional Standard development updates – DoPS, Transportation (Executive Director, MAO)

The Executive Director, MAO reported that the draft Accessible Transportation Standard is now complete and the department is planning a 60-day consultation period beginning in November 2022. In addition to being posted to the Regulatory and Accountability Portal for feedback, the MAO will organize consultations with stakeholders. A first draft of the Design of Public Spaces Standard based on

Council's recommendations was just completed. Department staff are reviewing the draft along with a working group of government subject matter experts. The Assistant Deputy Minister suggested the MAO organize community consultations prior to the release of a draft standard for public input.

- **CORRESPONDENCE FROM BARRIER FREE MANITOBA**

The chair and the MAO provided a brief overview of the correspondence from Barrier-Free Manitoba.

- Response from ACC / MAO

The MAO is in the process of preparing a briefing note for the Minister (with analysis) and will write a letter to BFM, as well as arrange a meeting.

Action: The MAO will prepare a presentation for the next Council meeting providing an overview of the issues raised by Barrier-Free Manitoba and the department's analysis.

5. OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

6. FUTURE 2022 MEETINGS

- Thurs. November 10 from 10 am to noon (virtual – If required but may be cancelled)
- Thurs. December 8 from 10 am to noon (virtual)

7. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at noon.