

**SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS OF THE
ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COUNCIL
FRIDAY, JULY 19, 2019, 9:30 AM – 12:30 PM
SIXTH FLOOR BOARDROOM, 613
NORQUAY BUILDING, 401 YORK AVENUE**

Present: Jim Baker (Chairperson), Jim Derksen, John Graham, Martin Harder, Scott Jocelyn, Dianna Scarth, Jesse Turner, Yutta Fricke (DIO), Emily Walker (DIO).

Absent: Judy Redmond, John Wyndels (DIO).

The DIO agreed to remove confidential information from Council minutes.

Council reviewed a summary document of consultation feedback for the information and communications standard, including written submissions. Direct quotations were included to reflect stakeholder views. The following sections of the consultation document were discussed:

Accessible Procurement

The federal government has procurement as its own standard in the new Accessible Canada Act. Manitoba may want to consider including procurement, which may motivate small and medium-sized businesses to include accessibility. In the report to Government, “Procurement” will be referred to as “Accessible Procurement”.

Procurement may create challenges in the business world that are not up to the point of undue hardship. If the standard does not flag accessibility in the procurement process, small business may not know this is important. This shift to accessibility will happen with education and awareness. Monitoring compliance will be important. If Council makes a generic recommendation for accessible procurement, two overriding factors would be undue hardship and that most organizations will have 4 years to implement the recommendations.

Costs of Implementation, Resources and Support

The areas of costs, resources and supports are important for rollout and for Council to bring back to government. There is also a strong call for increased resources to improve accessibility. Federal funds are available to applying organizations for technological infrastructure projects.

Training

Training and education are important to ensure change and buy-in. Council discussed avoiding written documented training for small business. Requiring training makes sense, but perhaps it does not need to be formalized or unnecessarily cumbersome. The DIO will add a section on training from the IC report.

Implementation of Timelines

For safety reasons, emergency procedures have to be completed first. Emergency requirements are already in place for organizations, and an implementation time line shorter than two years would be unreasonable. Council agreed to leave the section on emergency time lines as written.

Accessible Formats

The IC standard contains a statement that alternate format documents should cost the same as print documents when there is a charge. Council discussed whether medical information should be requested from those asking for accessible formats. As with previous standards, the organization should consult with the person making the request to determine the appropriate accommodation

Pre-existing Information and Making Communications Accessible

Council discussed changing the term and definition of pre-existing information and if this information should be made accessible upon request. DIO will make the requested changes.

Legacy/Archived information

Council discussed the inclusion of Legacy, Unused and/or Archived Information and Communications in section 3 Application and Phase-In of Obligations. This obligation is by request only. DIO will make the required changes to this section.

Harmonization with Ontario

Ontario will be updating their standard soon, and one can assume it would be updated to the most recent WCAG 2.1 level AA. There is a cost for organizations to adhere to the IC standard, as outside expertise is required. This may be difficult for small businesses and municipalities to address. In Ontario, organizations with under 50 employees do not have to update their websites. Awards may be a good motivator to encourage people to comply and celebrate overachievers.

Libraries, Educational and Training Institutions

Council discussed omitting these sections, and DIO will make the necessary changes.

Other Topics Discussed

The ICSD committee report was offered to everyone at the IC consultation after the request was made. Council agreed to publically release standard development committee reports.

The Transportation committee chair reported that work on the standard is progressing well but that the committee will be requesting a further extension.

The DoPS SDC has been reduced in size due to committee resignations, making committee work challenging. The Committee will likely request another extension.

The Council requested an update on the July 4 public event, Disability Matters Vote. Representatives from the DIO attended the event with 1,500 to ,2000 people. Political representatives from all parties spoke, and Minister Stefanson mentioned that the five standards would be introduced by December 2020.

The next Council meeting will take place on August 16, 2019.