

**SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS OF THE
ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COUNCIL**

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 25, 2019, 10:30 AM – 12:30 PM

SIXTH FLOOR, DIO BOARDROOM, 630-240 GRAHAM AVENUE

Present: Jim Baker (Chairperson), Jim Derksen, John Graham, Scott Jocelyn, Dianna Scarth, Jesse Turner, John Wyndels (DIO), Emily Walker (DIO)

Absent: Martin Harder

Council continued their review of the Transportation standard from section 35 dealing with Booking to the end of the document. The Standard Development Committee decided to make section 35 on booking consistent with Ontario's standard.

In Winnipeg, under current Transit Plus policy, Transit Plus can offer same day service if there is availability. The disability community provided feedback that, within the last few years, Transit Plus has repeatedly said no to same day booking. The scheduling system requires a three-hour time limit to enter people into the system. If a person books by 11 am the system can call the person back at 2 pm, so that gives a three-hour window.

Paratransit providers are not allowed to prioritize trips under section 36 Trip restrictions. After three months, a trip turns into a subscription if it is the same ride – for example to work, if a person have the same schedule. An individual must cancel at least two hours before the scheduled pick up time, or else he/she is called a “no show” and charged the fare. With repeated “no shows”, Winnipeg Transit Plus can take subscriptions away and increase fines. There is split feedback on the Transit Plus priority system within the disability community. Winnipeg Transit Plus would most likely need more resources to serve everyone. There would be a need to increase the fleet, which is contracted out right now. Winnipeg Transit Plus reported on number of rides denied etc. Council requested the chair to look up statistics on the number of trips denied from the latest Transit Plus report.

The Council discussed that Winnipeg Transit Plus is supposed to be a parallel service to Winnipeg Transit.

The Committee added section 36(2) “Service cannot be denied if requested by an individual within city limits or the geographical boundaries of a town or rural municipality.” There are sections of Winnipeg that are not served by transit. Council discussed whether service should be provided outside of city limits, for example 1 km. It

was decided to keep this section as is, and await the comments from the public consultation.

With respect to the duties of municipalities, the sub-committee working on this section devised a gap assessment goals chart to track how many vehicles for hire should be made accessible by a municipality within a two-year period based on its size. Council decided to eliminate the goals assessment chart and to leave the determination of the number of vehicles for hire that should be accessible up to each municipality to determine.

Council discussed the importance of communications and outreach to change public awareness and the implementation of a communications strategy related to courtesy and priority seating (section 16.6). This included consideration of whether bus drivers should take a more active role in assisting passengers with disabilities to strap themselves in and requesting passengers with strollers to move from priority to courtesy seating.

Council discussed whether the standard should specify what training is required. Unlike the CSS and Employment standard, training isn't mandatory for people that create policies and procedures. Accompanying training on awareness and the application of the AMA to the Human Rights Code is included under the CSS, which is mandatory for everyone. Under the Human Rights Code – Manitoba and the CSS, an operator is obligated to assist passengers with disabilities.

The DIO will review the transportation standard document, incorporating Council's suggested changes. The revised document will then be forwarded to Council by email for final review. The deadline to receive Council input is October 3, 2019. The final version of the discussion document will then be posted online and distributed to the DIO's mailing list to give participants in the consultation sufficient time to review the materials prior to November 7. The consultation on the proposed transportation standard will take place on November 7 in the afternoon.

The DoPS chair will present the committee's report at the October 8 Council meeting

The next Council meeting will take place on October 8, 2019.