

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS
ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COUNCIL
1:00 P.M. – 3:00 P.M., FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 7, 2018
SECOND FLOOR EXECUTIVE BOARDROOM
NORQUAY BUILDING, 401 YORK AVENUE

Present: Jim Baler (Chairperson), Jim Derksen, Dianna Scarth, Martin Harder, Jesse Turner, Judy Redmond, Scot Jocelyn, John Graham, Doris Koop, John Wyndels (DIO)

Absent: None

This was the first meeting of the council since June 2018. The Chair asked for some changes to the agenda. Updates on the Customer Service Standard (CSS) and the status of the Employment Standard were added to the agenda.

Private and not-for-profit organizations are expected to be in compliance with the CSS by November 1, 2018. That is three years after the regulation came into force.

Two Policy Analysts from Families have been seconded to assist the Disabilities Issues Office (DIO) until the end of the calendar year. There is a push from the Deputy Minister (DM) to create greater awareness of the CSS to private organizations within Manitoba. In addition to mailing to private sector industries, there is the development of new tools and resources to assist these organizations to meet their requirements. A new public awareness campaign and a video produced by the DIO is being developed and will be posted to help organizations understand their obligations under the standard.

Policy and Planning, as well as the secretary to the council are working with the legislative drafter on the final wording of the standard. The DM will be sharing a Memo of the process used in developing the standard and the proposed standard to his DM colleagues to offer comment. Draft regulations with cross-departmental implications are shared for their information and comment prior to proceeding for Cabinet approval.

It is expected the Employment standard will be established as a regulation in October 2018. The role of the council in the development of standards ends after their input following the two phases of public consultation. The wording and/or any final amendments to the standard are at the discretion of the Minister.

The Information and Communications (IC) Standard Development Committee submitted their report to council on September 6. It is very detailed and provides recommendations for a proposed IC standard and the committee's rationale for making the recommendations they did. The report will be reviewed. Members of the IC committee will be available to speak to the council once it has thoroughly reviewed and discussed the document.

The Terms of Reference for the Built Environment and Transportation Standards are with the Minister. Heather Stefanson is the new Families Minister following a Cabinet shuffle. She replaces Scott Fielding, who became the Minister of Finance. The Chairperson of the council has forwarded a letter to the new minister requesting a meeting with the council.

The Chairperson and several members of council spoke to the Built Environment Standard. Built Environment speaks to doors and structures, and the standard will not be addressing any of those areas. It has been suggested that the standard be called the Design of Public Spaces, given those are the areas the standard will govern. The Design of Public Spaces Standard will focus exclusively on areas outside the Manitoba Building Code. Building Codes do not typically regulate the space outside, such as sidewalks, curbs, roadways, parks and many other aspects that we design and construct.

The Secretary shared a list of potential candidates to serve on the Transportation and Built Environment standard development committees. It was felt that a number of the individuals listed as potential candidates on the built environment committee have a background in building and/or building codes, areas that will not be addressed in the standard. The committee wanted more people with a knowledge of public parks, the design of cities and public health. Lists of two committees will be updated to reflect the suggestions from council members.

Council has called for meeting dates to be set several months in advance. They were established and an email will be forwarded to members once the location of the meetings are finalized. The next meeting of the council will be Friday, September 21, 2018.