

**SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS OF THE  
DESIGN OF PUBLIC SPACES  
STANDARD DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE  
1:00 P.M. – 3:00 P.M., FRIDAY, MAY 17, 2019  
SECOND FLOOR EXECUTIVE BOARDROOM  
NORQUAY BUILDING, 401 YORK AVENUE**

Two committee members were in Ottawa as Manitoba representatives to discussions regarding the National Building Code. It was reported that there is a tentative agreement between provinces to amalgamate provincial building codes into a national code that would apply to all jurisdictions in Canada. This would come into force with the 2025 NBC. The reconciliation will not be in place for the 2020 edition, but amendments will improve accessibility features that recognize 95 per cent of mobility users.

The Secretary reported that the CSA wrote him with a further series of questions for clarification. The Copyright division is meeting today (May 17) to further discuss the committee's request for use of select text and images.

There were two consultations on May 14. The morning discussed a proposed accessibility standard for information and communication. The afternoon session was far more general, focusing on the scope and intent of the Design of Public Spaces standard.

It was a robust conversation with approximately 100 attendees, including representatives the disability community, municipalities, and people from the design and suppliers sector. The disability community were the most vocal and had a number of frustrations:

- The standard would not be addressing the Manitoba Building Code
- The Building Code is of premium importance to the disability community and won't be covered by the standard
- Accessibility in residences is currently not covered by the Building Code or by our proposed standard.
- How will this standard be monitored and enforced?
- Maintenance was a recurring concern. Many of the situations presented were snow-related, and may be covered by the Customer Service standard.

The DOPS representatives at the front stage recognized the accessibility shortcomings of the MBC, but maintained that the Design of Public Spaces standard development is a crucial step forward and that we are focused on completing our task. Members of Barrier-Free Manitoba stated their frustrations with the scope of this standard and the standard development process in general and walked out. They were joined by a few

others, including members of VIRN, which advocates for people with visual impairment. In general the participants were respectful and raised reasonable questions and concerns.

It was suggested by committee members that the OFC get in front of this problem through a consultation process because this mounting frustration is going to continue. It was also suggested that the government set up a committee regarding the accessibility features of MBC. The committee not be a standard development committee per se, but an advisory committee to the government.

The concerns raised by the disability community during the consultation must be contained in the committee report to the council. At the same time, we should prepare a summary of the consultation on the Disabilities Issues Office website with further information regarding the status of the process.

Discussion on maintenance of building, ramps, and design elements of the public spaces continued. The Building Code is really only enforceable during construction. For example, exit signs. The requirements for where they are installed and what they look like are in the Building Code (the application and the design). The 'ongoing enforcement' aspects or operational aspects of a building are found in the Fire Code, as those requirements are enforced by the fire inspectors.

It is important to communicate what this means to the community and how things are best accomplished. There are cross-overs between the various standards, such as the customer service standard that requires organizations that have barrier-free physical elements, such as ramps, to ensure they continue to be available for use in its intended purpose.

The Secretary prepared a letter for the committee anticipating that additional time will be required for the committee to complete its work. He presented it to the committee for feedback and instructions on how to proceed. The committee agreed additional time would be required. The Transportation Standard Development Committee required additional time and it was the Chairperson of the Council who forwarded the letter requesting an extension. The Secretary contacted the Chairperson of the Council prior to the meeting to ensure his availability to forward a prepared letter from the committee to DM seeking the extension.

**Action:** The Co-chair agreed to do final edit and forward to Jim Baker the letter addressed to DM seeking an extension until July 31 and an additional four paid meetings to complete the work of the committee.

Committee members were forwarded Word documents for the separate sections for each of the Design standard sections they have been assigned. The assignment is to

edit the recommended value column to be the text we might move forward with and providing comments for the group to consider.

Rather than write it out in detail, cross-reference the Washrooms section to MBC online. We still have to decide on the Application statement, which would identify where and in what circumstances, a washroom of these design specifications must be located in the proposed standard. "All washrooms must adhere to an accessible path of travel", but how would that apply to backcountry trails, for example? We would have to state the locations where it is required. If it is not listed, it is not applicable.

The requirements of the Docks section come from US source materials. Docks must have accessible paths of travel and in most locations accommodate fluctuating water levels. They must have accessible boats slips with a ratio of 1 in 25. The question was raised of how this would apply to vision loss. Could this accommodation be made using tactile indicators? Gangway must be maintained as an accessible path of travel. There would also need to be signage. This section is an example of where references back to a general requirements section would be helpful.

The source material for this design element started with some general requirements. There must be an accessible path of travel between sections of the sports facilities. Sport facilities are for viewers and for participants of sports. How would this section apply to sledge hockey that has very specialized accessibility requirements? The committee determined that the governing body and prevailing practices best determine what works in situations such as this. This may serve as a good test case where there is no existing standard.

The Transportation Association of Canada (TAC) provided the recommendations. There is a lot of general talk about the role that they serve, but lacking the specifics of where they should be and space between them, and common questions like the safety of mid-block curb ramps. Pedestrian crossings and bike lanes are another area of difficulty with little guidance in the literature. Without a traffic engineer, no one on the committee feels prepared to handle how this is best achieved.

**Action:** We should coordinate with the transportation standard and share the committee's work on this section.

There is a lot of discrepancy on how much is enough lighting. Generally accessible guides call for lighting several times brighter than the governing body IES (Illuminating Engineer Society) standards. Recommendations are urban based and do not necessarily reflect rural situations.

The next meeting of the DOPS Standard Development Committee is Friday, May 31 at 1:00 p.m. in the Second Floor Executive Boardroom of the Norquay Building, 401 York Avenue.