

# ST. JOHN'S

## Inclusion Advisory Committee

July 17, 2019

12:00 p.m.

Paul Reynolds Community Center

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# City of St. John's Accessibility Review Report

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#barrierfreeNL

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# City of St. John's

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May 2019

## Introduction

InclusionNL and the City of St. John's have developed a solid partnership for the past number years. During this time we have worked together to increase accessible practices in the HR Dept commencing with recreational summer staff. We have participated in critiquing and providing reports on many of the available services to determine if barriers current exist for residents with disabilities, have provided supports to their special events, and sit on the inclusive working group keeping an eye on accessibility throughout city services.

This report details updates on services previously critiqued for accessibility, articulation of city representatives participating in Dolphin Disabilities Mentoring Day in October 2018, and a review of new services (Southlands Community Centre, Tourism Centre, Blue Zone Parking in Bowring Park) recently completed.

For the purpose of this review, staff with various types of accessibility needs, reviewed services available to residents to determine if barriers exist or if they were able to gain access to the information they were seeking. Coinciding with these reviews a secondary assessment was completed of [stjohns.ca](http://stjohns.ca) to determine the accessibility level from its original review.



## **Update to Initial Reviews**

Since the initial review of services in 2017, a number of improvements in services reducing barriers for residents with disabilities exist based on recommendations received.

### Access Centre – City Hall

Great improvements exist with the Access Centre at City Hall. There is a new reception desk available which creates more efficient access to the receptionist and their intake process. The computer stations available to access online services are now easily accessible in the front reception office as well.

### Humane Services

Improvements have been made to the main entrance of Humane Services, with the walkway getting the much needed upgrades. Human Services have also updated their practices so that anybody wanting to see adoptable animals must make an appointment so that doors are kept locked for animal safe-keeping.



### Mundy Pond Park – Dog Run

Upgrades are expected with the various dog runs throughout the city during 2019. Photos below were taken on May 17 of a resident using a power chair gaining access to the dog run at Mundy Pond Park with help from another.



### Information, Resources, and Websites

City of St. John's Inclusion Services has a wide collection of information and resources available to citizens that highlight various accessibility and inclusive features of many of their facilities. These resources are available in print, on their website and available in alternate formats upon request.

The City of St. John's website has a number of accessibility features currently available for the site. Users can increase font sizes available on each page, have access to a site map if they experience glitches in their navigation, and provide contact information and encourage users to contact if problems are experienced.

In their Accessibility statement published on their website, they have a commitment to ensure their website meets WCAG 2.0 Level A compliance. InclusionNL recommends that city staff continue in their commitment to website accessibility and consider raising their accessibility level in alignment with Canadian standards of WCAG 2.0 Level AA.

The InclusionNL Manager would welcome an opportunity to meet with city web/app designers to review accessibility issues present in the City mobile apps, the City Engage portal and the website which compromises their current commitment articulated in their Accessibility statement. Website accessibility features such as skipping navigational menus and photos including descriptive text alternatives are recommended to help support increased accessibility for citizens with different type of disabilities.

Since my initial review of the website in 2017, the site has grown to more than double in size with accessibility issues still existing.

January 16, 2017		
Issue Report		
Site quality report for http://www.stjohns.ca/ produced on January 16, 2017.		
Category	Results	
Overall Quality	<div><div></div></div>	1946 pages with quality issues
Errors	<div><div></div></div>	460 pages with broken links or other errors
Accessibility	<div><div></div></div>	1929 pages with accessibility problems
Compatibility	<div><div></div></div>	31 pages with browser specific issues
Privacy	<div><div></div></div>	12 pages with compliance or legal issues
Search	<div><div></div></div>	932 pages with search engine issues
Standards	<div><div></div></div>	1385 pages have W3C standards issues
Usability	<div><div></div></div>	1402 pages with usability issues
Totals	5715 pages and images checked	

May 20, 2019		
Issue Report		
Site quality report for http://www.stjohns.ca/ produced on May 20, 2019.		
Category	Results	
Overall Quality	<div><div></div></div>	5435 pages with quality issues
Errors	<div><div></div></div>	1038 pages with broken links or other errors
Accessibility	<div><div></div></div>	5358 pages with accessibility problems
Compatibility	<div><div></div></div>	44 pages with browser specific issues
Search	<div><div></div></div>	1640 pages with search engine issues
Standards	<div><div></div></div>	3427 pages have W3C standards issues
Usability	<div><div></div></div>	3489 pages with usability issues
Totals	13772 pages and images checked	

## Dolphin Disabilities Mentoring Day

Dolphin Disabilities Mentoring Day took place in October 2018 with a great response and large representation of mentors from the staff and council of the City of St. John's. Mentors included:

- Maggie Burton – Counsellor at Large
- Sarah Hardiman – Fieldworker 1 Officer
- Katie Cromwell – Outdoor Fieldworker
- Patrick Pendergast – Parking Enforce
- Christine Whelan – HRIS Coordinator



## New Blue Zone Parking – Bowring Park – West Entrance

Signs are required in the west parking lot informing patrons of the location of the blue zone parking spaces on Waterford Heights North.

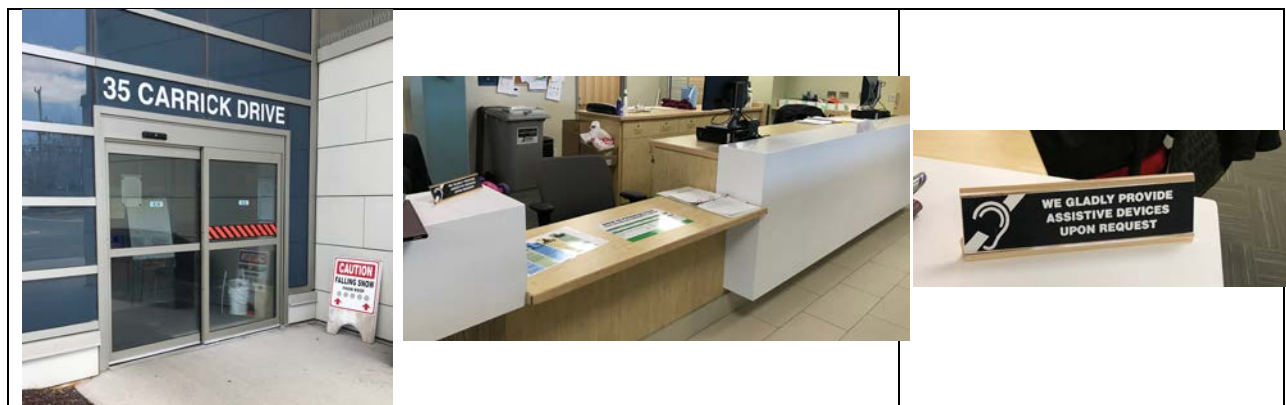




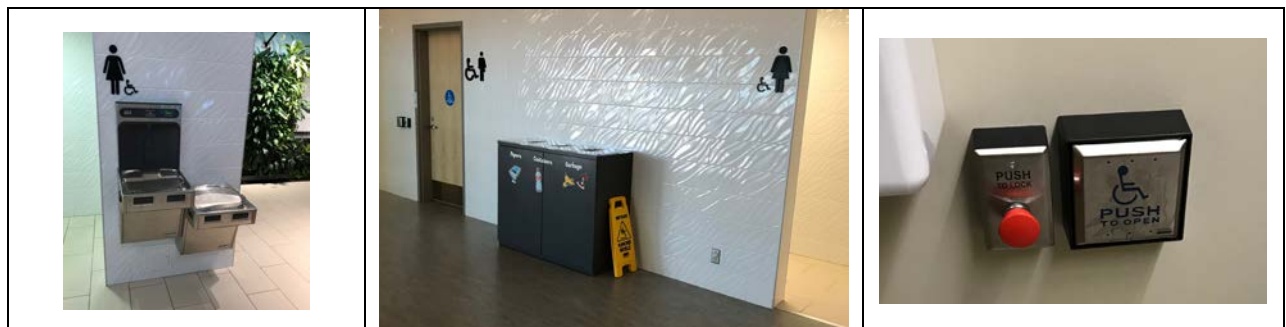
## Recreational Facilities

### Paul Reynolds Community Centre

An accessibility review was completed by two of our InclusionNL staff. Both staff members using different types of mobility supports, one a power chair, the other a walker. Both felt their experiences were barrier free. When asked about the assistive listening devices to determine if they were similar to a headset amplifier or for those using hearing aids, the staff person were unable to locate them for us to look at the devices.



Many inside doors were equipped with automated buttons and the Centre has a fully automated large elevator that takes participants to the second floor area. The centre has a variety of washrooms, some equipped with accessible showers and automated buttons & locks on washroom doors.



The pool was closed for upgrades but noticed many varieties of wheelchairs (regular size and larger sizes) in the pool area, the diverse ways to enter the pool and the chairlift that will submerge in the pool for ease of entrance as well.



### Southlands Community Centre

Located on 40 Teakwood Drive in Southlands, this community centre boasts many accessibility features. Their main entrance has automated buttons for easy access, the reception counter has a section that is lowered for those using mobility supports, there are accessible units in each of the gendered washrooms, and a separate gender neutral washroom as well.

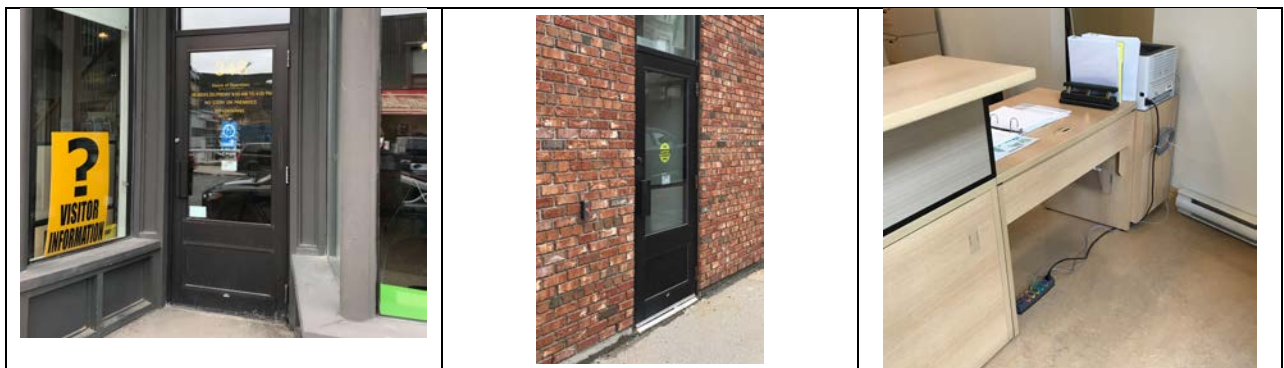


## **Tourism St. John's – Water Street Location**

A staff of InclusionNL visited the Tourism Centre on Water St. to get information about accessibility features available in the downtown area of St. John's. This staff member uses mobility supports and was seeking basic information to help with her downtown experience.

The person left with a few guides of restaurants and maps of the area but none of them articulated accessibility information or locations of blue zone parking spots.

The person requested information about retail/restaurants with accessible entrances (Rocket Bakery & Fresh Foods, The Salt House, Starbucks, and Atlantic Place etc.) but was unable to get this information from the service agent.



## Recommendations

As The City of St. John's municipality moves forward to build their disability confidence and increase inclusion and accessibility in their daily practices, listed below are a series of recommendations to help support this work. InclusionNL looks forward to our continued partnership on this initiative to advance inclusion within the city infrastructure for St. John's citizens with disabilities.

- It is recommended that the City continue to partner with InclusionNL to complete tasks outlined in the accessibility reports completed, and through continued partnerships with InclusionNL. This includes:
  - Provide expertise to increase accessibility in communications, publications, and printed resources provided to the public.
  - Provide expertise to increase accessibility with the stjohs.ca website
  - Provide professional development Inclusion Awareness training to managers, departmental staff, and volunteers
  - Provide expertise, knowledge and resources to increase accessibility in the built environment.
  - Provide recognition for the work completed in increase accessibility and inclusion; and building disability confidence through continued partnerships with key stakeholders and InclusionNL.
  - Develop an Accessibility Guide for YYT downtown and make available at the Downtown Tourist Centre.



- InclusionNL recommends that the City consider increasing the accessibility levels of their website to meet standards outlined in WCAG 2.0 Level AA.
- InclusionNL recommends the City continue in their strong commitments to inclusion, diversity, and accessibility through the exemplary leadership of the Inclusion Services team. The City of St John's Inclusion Services has the most comprehensive inclusive services available within the province and are viewed as leaders with other municipalities.
- InclusionNL recommends that a plan of action is developed to undertake a comprehensive review of available accessibility within City Community Services. This is to begin preparation for new accessibility legislation which has been mandated by the provincial and federal governments and is scheduled to commence in 2019.
- InclusionNL recommends the City continue in their commitments to ensure inclusion and accessibility through the work of the multi stakeholder Inclusion Advisory Committee, the Inclusive Organization Working Group, and the Special Events Working Group
- InclusionNL recommends the City share information with citizens through the City Guide about their work in increasing their disability confidence and provide updates about how accessibility and inclusion increases in policy development and daily best practices.

*THawk*

**IAAP**

International Association  
of Accessibility Professionals

MEMBER

## Appendix

## 1. Tourism Centre Experience – Water St.

I was responsible to gaining information about accessibility in downtown St. John's for tourists with disabilities visiting from cruise ships etc. I headed to the Tourism Centre on Water Street to find out more.

When I approached the building, it was clearly marked on the front entrance that their accessible entrance was to the side of the building which also included an automated button. When I went inside, I noticed that a part of the counter was lowered for easier access and the service agent came out from behind the counter to greet and talk with me. Our exchange included me asking a number of accessibility related questions in an attempt to gain more information. My questions included:

**Question:** Do you have any information and resources related to accessibility?

**Response:** First, the employee said to ask Wendy, but Wendy was not in and I was going to take Wendy's card so I could contact her, but then the employee stated that I would be better to contact the Downtown Development Commission. The employee also provided me with a restaurant guide to contact the creator about accessible restaurants.

**Question:** Do you know of any places or services in the downtown area are accessible, such as stores and restaurants?

**Response:** The employee never listed any options, but they handed me the restaurant guide.

**Question:** Do you have any resources or maps that highlight blue zone parking in the downtown area?

**Response:** The employee said that the city of St. John's does not handle parking. The employee looked at a map of downtown St. John's with me to see if blue zone spots were indicated on it. There were not blue zone parking spots on the map. Again, the employee told me that I should contact the Downtown Development Commission.

I left with a few resources for further research on my own, but with no immediate information about accessibility features available. This left me frustrated and no further ahead.



***"Safely Build Your Disability Confidence  
with InclusionNL"***

**Empower, The Disability Resource Centre  
InclusionNL: Employer Support Services  
4 Escasoni Place  
St. John's, NL, A1A 3R6**



**Contact InclusionNL Today!**

**Website: [www.inclusionNL.ca](http://www.inclusionNL.ca)  
Email: [manager@inclusionNL.ca](mailto:manager@inclusionNL.ca)  
Phone: 1-844-517-1376**

## **MINUTES**

### **ACCESSIBILITY AND INCLUSION ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**April 15, 2019 - 12:30pm- Glenyre Room 1,  
Paul Reynolds Community Centre**

**Present:** Taylor Stocks, Chair  
Natalie Godden, Manager of Family & Leisure Services  
Sherry Mercer, Program Coordinator, Inclusive Services  
Margaret Tibbo, Citizen Rep  
Dave Saunders, Citizen Rep  
Debbie Ryan, CNIB  
Trevor Freeborn, CODNL  
Sarah White, Autism Society  
Kim Pratt-Baker, Hard of Hearing Association  
Donna Power – Metrobus, Accessible Transit  
Megan McGie – Association for the Deaf  
Annette Powell – CHANNAL  
Joby Flemming - Empower  
Maureen Harvey – Legislative Assistant

Also present for a portion of the meeting was Garrett Donaher, Manager of Transportation.

#### **CALL TO ORDER AND ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

##### **Motion**

**Moved- Debbie Ryan, Seconded- Donna Power**

**The agenda be adopted as presented.**

**CARRIED UNANANIMOUSLY**

#### **ADOPTION OF MINUTES**

##### **Motion**

**Moved – Margaret Tibbo; Seconded -Debbie Ryan**

**That the minutes of the IAC meeting held on February 15, 2019  
be adopted as tabled.**

**CARRIED UNANANIMOUSLY****DELEGATION**

Ms. Sarah White of the Autism Society was welcomed to the meeting and proceeded to deliver information with respect to autism programs that are available.

ASNL offers a variety of programs and services for individuals with ASD and their families.

Some of the programs include:

- Social Learning Opportunities
  - Social Group
  - Sibling Workshop
- Pre-Employment and Career Services
  - Transitions – aimed to identify strengths and interest of participants to better prepare them for employment and community involvement beyond high school
  - Employment Works Canada (EWC) – offers 12 weeks of employment readiness
  - STEP (Students Transitioning into Employment Program) – targeted career development activities and exploration.
  - Ready, Willing and Able – designed to increase the labour force participation of people with an intellectual disability or Autism Spectrum Disorder.
- Life Skills Development
  - Adult Leisure – safe and supportive environments to discover new interests and socialize with peers
- Community Inclusion
  - Swimming Lessons
  - Rock Climbing
  - Music Therapy
  - Individual Art Therapy
  - Video Game Creation Classes
  - Family Events – are being added

- Adult Meetups – will benefit those who require support when accessing community activities.

Ms. White concluded by reporting that the Provincial Government is currently developing an Autism Action Plan. She invited those with questions or comments to connect with her.

The Committee thanked her for the information.

## **BUSINESS ARISING**

### **Pay by Phone Parking System – Frequently Asked Questions**

The Committee reviewed a document containing frequently asked questions in relation to the City's Paid Parking Management Strategy.

In June 2018 the City introduced a pay-by-phone only service to control 136 on street parking spaces on Harbour Drive. PayByPhone will continue to be introduced in new areas in the future. On Harbour Drive no other payment method is currently accepted. This is a one year pilot project that will be assessed to see if PayByPhone in isolation is a viable option for parking areas. This project is part of a long-term Paid Parking Management Strategy. The strategy outlines a comprehensive overview of the City's existing paid parking system and makes 57 recommendations. The full strategy is available online.

Mr. Garrett Donaher was in attendance and responded to questions and concerns. The following summarizes comments made by the committee:

- People are avoiding downtown because of parking issues and the anxiety it creates for some.
- The Battery area is also an area of concern for parking.
- A lot of people with English as second language also have concerns.
- People who do not own credit cards feel they will not be able to access parking.
- Some of the signs are high and, combined with text size, can be difficult for people with vision impairment.
- Seniors, particularly those without smartphones, will have challenges.

Mr. Donaher responded with the following comments:



- Other options are being considered over the long term. As an example, an RFP is being issued today for new parking meter equipment which will include standard meters and kiosks (pay stations).
- While the new meters will not be cash based, they will accommodate the City's park card. Efforts are being made to make the Metrobus Cards compatible with the new equipment.
- Consideration is being given to being able to purchase and/or top up park cards online.
- It is hoped that some new equipment will be in place this fall.
- The City has incurred nearly \$3 million in vandalism and lost revenue over the last few years. Additionally the current model of meters is no longer available compounding the need for new equipment.
- The City is exploring the use of debit cards.
- The City is trying to identify mechanisms that mitigate barriers.
- In terms of lowering signage, consideration must be given to the risk of personal injury.
- Increasing the size of text on signs is a challenge from a legal and practical point of view.
- Consideration is being given to supplementary signage to support people once parking spaces have been secured.
- The City is attempting to rectify problems with number of accessible spaces in the downtown as well as the condition of curb ramps at these spaces.

Mr. Donaher was thanked for providing information. He encouraged the continued use of emails to submit feedback as the strategy unfolds.

### **Information Note dated April 1, 2019 re: Bowring Park Accessible Parking**

Throughout 2017/2018 the City of St. John's has been receiving requests to incorporate accessible parking spaces at Bowring Park. Initially, Service NL requested the placement of accessible parking signage in the large gravel parking lot. As these lots are not accessible the City designated accessible parking on Squires Avenue. Some of these spaces are not accessible to all users due to curb cuts or inability to open the back door for a ramp. To ensure full accessibility the parking lot near the maintenance building will have a portion paved to create accessible parking spaces. These new spaces will be linked to the main park road by a hard surface

pathway to ensure a complete travel path from parking to park amenities. This new parking area will allow for 10 accessible parking spaces as we increase accessibility for individuals with vision loss, or those who have difficulty walking/rolling long distances. This will also provide choice to residents and increase overall accessible entry to the park.

It was reported that construction was approved by Council during the past week. It was noted it will be one of the first projects to commence once the asphalt plants open.

The Committee was also referred to the recent press release from Government which identified amendments to the Accessible Parking Regulations, previously known as the Designated Mobility Impaired Parking Regulations. These changes will support enforcement and compliance regarding issues such as signage and the size of accessible parking spaces. It has also increased the cost of fines from a \$100-\$400 range to a range of \$400 to \$700.

Mr. Donaher also informed the Committee of plans to improve parking at Churchill Square and to improve the painting of accessible parking spaces throughout the City.

#### **Information Note dated March 6, 2019 re: Inclusive Organization Working Group**

The Committee considered the above-noted information note which stated that this working group met in February 2019 and focused mainly on a review of the partnership between the City of St. John's and Inclusion NL. Once the Businesses OPEN Partnership Report being updated by Inclusion NL is available it will be circulated to the Committee.

#### **Information Note dated March 22, 2019 re: Planning and Conducting Inclusive and Accessible Meetings**

In a previous decision note resources and collaboratives that the City has in place to support inclusion and diversity were outlined. To that end a resource document has been prepared for use by City employees. This type of document would be helpful for various organizations.

The Committee reviewed the draft document and brought forward the following recommendation.

It was agreed that Inclusion Advisory Committee formulate a small working group to review the City of St. John's Planning and Conducting Inclusive and Accessible Meetings resource and make necessary changes to create a resource - a resource that will promote the planning and execution of accessible meetings. This document will then be shared with the community by Inclusion Advisory Committee members.

Debbie Ryan indicated her interest in serving on this working group. Other members who are interested were requested to submit their name to Sherry Mercer.

#### **Information Note dated March 22, 2019 re: Creating Accessible Documents**

As noted in a previous decision note, the city outlined the resources and collaboratives in place to support inclusion and diversity, which includes the accessibility of documents. To help ensure documents such as forms and emails are accessible, a resource document entitled "How to Create Accessible Documents" has been developed to supplement the Clear Print Guidelines. Staff of the City of St. John's will be informed about the process of creating accessible documents and encouraged to follow it.

The Committee was advised that efforts are being made to identify improvements through software enhancements where it is not currently available. Debbie Ryan indicated she has a number of documents on Microsoft and ADOBE about accessibility enhancements. These programs have an accessibility component. She is willing to share with the Committee.

#### **Information Note dated March 25, 2019 re: Committee Engagement for Public Projects**

In keeping with existing resources and collaboratives, the Committee reviewed a flow chart which maps out various forms by which the Committee can engage on large and pilot projects.

The Committee also indicated it would like to get updates on projects such as the paratransit processes and/or changes that will impact community groups.

Mr. Donaher agreed to provide the committee with details on the proposed roundabout for Allandale Road

Arising from discussion was the Committee's desire to be consulted on all City projects that impact the inclusive community. Particular mention was made with respect to Rawlins Cross Pilot Project for which feedback is currently being sought.

### **Recommendation**

**Moved – Debbie Ryan; Seconded – Joby Flemming**

**Given the potential impact of the Rawlins Cross Pilot Project, particularly as it relates to pedestrian traffic flow and safety, the Committee requests consultation prior to final design and implementation.**

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

### **New Business**

#### **Resignation of Annette Powell**

Ms. Powell indicated that given the expansion of her organization and the resulting demands she is no longer to be able to serve on the Committee. She will be recommending a replacement in due course. Annette was thanked for her past contribution and encouraged to continue her involvement in an indirect way.

#### **Metrobus Study**

Donna Power indicated her surprise that there was limited uptake on feedback for the Metrobus Study. Members were encouraged to submit their comments. The following was highlighted:

- There will likely be more feedback when individuals are required to go for an assessment.



- Consideration ought to be given to the assessment location so as to mitigate barriers for people who have to attend.
- Consideration ought to be given for an appeal process.

Donna thanked the group and advised these suggestions will be put forward.

### **Next Meeting**

The next meeting date, time and location to be determined.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 2:08 p.m.

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Taylor Stocks  
Chairperson

# INFORMATION NOTE

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**Title:** Key2Access Accessible Pedestrian Signal Location

**Date Prepared:** May 27, 2019

**Report To:** Inclusion Advisory Committee

**Councillor and Role:** Councillor Hope Jamieson, Council Champion

**Ward:** N/A

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**Issue:** In follow up to the Decision Note – Key2Access Accessible Pedestrian Signals, the City has met with CNIB and selected locations for the implementation of a proof of concept project.

**Discussion – Background and Current Status:** Key2Access is wireless technology that allows people to cross roads without having to reach a button on a pole. Receivers and virtual beacons are easily installed within current infrastructure, adding a form of accessible pedestrian signal (APS) possibilities without significant additional wiring or pole realignment.

In consultation with CNIB, the following intersections are recommended for installation of this infrastructure. These locations were selected based on amenities in the area such as MUN and the Health Science Centre, current high pedestrian traffic, as well as locations identified by people with lived experiences.

- CNIB Entrance and the Boulevard
- Kenna's Hill and the Boulevard
- Westerland Road and Prince Philip Drive
- Kenna's Hill and Winter Avenue
- Elizabeth Avenue and Newtown Road
- Elizabeth Avenue and Freshwater Road

Appendix A depicts the proposed proof of concept project and relevant expenses. Currently, the federal government is funding 50% for projects such as this as indicated in the quote, resulting in a cost to the City of \$11,545.30.

In addition to the quote, the City would be responsible for installation. The conditions present at each intersection would dictate the cost of this but a basic installation would likely be on the order of \$2,500 to install at each of the intersections.

## **Key Considerations/Implications:**

1. Budget/Financial Implications:
  - a. Currently, \$50,000 per year is allocated to APS installation

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- b. Equipment cost of \$11,545.30 and installation at 6 intersections running 6\*\$2,500. If council were to endorse this proof of concept project, then funds from the existing APS budget could be allocated if needed, however this would reduce the capacity of the current APS program.
  - c. Monthly \$5 subscription per each of six (6) sites to IoT network as indicated in the quote (included in quote above for first 12months only).
- 2. Partners or Other Stakeholders:
  - a. Key2Access
  - b. CNIB
  - c. Inclusion Advisory Committee
- 3. Alignment with Strategic Directions/Adopted Plans:
  - 1. A Sustainable City: Sustainable economically now and for future generations
  - 2. A City that Moves: Promoting healthy transportation and ensuring accessibility to places people want and need to go
  - 3. A Connected City: A City where people feel connected, have a sense of belonging, and are actively engaged in community life
  - 4. An Effective City: A city that performs effectively
- 4. Legal or Policy Implications:  
None at this time.
- 5. Privacy Implications:  
None at this time.
- 6. Engagement and Communications Considerations:
  - a. A communications plan should be established to update residents on the proof of concept project, notifying them of the App and where to get a phone or fob
  - b. Targeted promotion through CNIB locally would also be done to help reach those in our community impacted by blindness.
- 7. Human Resource Implications:
  - a. Field implementation to be assigned to Transportation Engineering
  - b. Ongoing maintenance of user messages and information.
- 8. Procurement Implications:  
Sole source
- 9. Information Technology Implications:  
None at this time.
- 10. Other Implications:

N/A

**Conclusion/Next Steps:**

It is recommended that the City of St. John's partake in this proof of concept project, installing Key2Access technology at locations identified above, totaling the City expenditures of no more than \$25,000. Should the proof of concept project prove sustainable, additional intersections should be considered. Those intersections with current APS equipment should remain, thus increasing accessible intersections in the City and ensuring fiscal responsibility.

**Prepared by/Date:** Sherry Mercer, Inclusive Services Coordinator, May 27, 2019

**Reviewed by/Date:**

**Approved by/Date:** Garrett Donaher, Manager – Transportation Engineering, July 9, 2019  
Natalie Godden, Manager – Family and Leisure Services, July 9, 2019

**Attachments:**

Key2Access Quote

# KEY2ACCESS

Quote Name St. John's K2A Pilot Project - Final

Prepared By Sophie Aladas

Phone (514) 998-7315

Email [sophie.aladas@key2access.com](mailto:sophie.aladas@key2access.com)

Product	Sales Price	Quantity	Total Price
AoT Services	\$60.00	8.00	\$240.00
Configuration	\$50.00	16.00	\$400.00
Custom App Skin	\$250.00	1.00	\$125.00
K2A Fob	\$102.00	20.00	\$1,020.00
K2A Receiver	\$887.00	16.00	\$7,096.00
K2A Speaker	\$0.00	24.00	\$0.00

Subtotal \$17,762.00

Discount 50.00%

Total Price \$8,881.00

Tax \$2,664.30

Grand Total \$11,545.30

Receivers and Virtual Beacons are priced per unit. The ability to communicate information via the receivers and virtual beacons require a IoT Network service charge which covers server hosting and data collection.

It is highly recommended to purchase a batch of initial remotes for the purpose of this pilot project in order to gather complete user feedback. These remotes are traditionally distributed by the CNIB to a target test audience during the pilot project period.

This quote also includes the option of a customized app skin that will change the visual display of the Key2Access mobile app to include the City's logo and brand colours for visibility purposes.

This pilot project has been quotes for a 1-year period.

# INFORMATION NOTE

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**Title:** Northern Youth Abroad

**Date Prepared:** July 10, 2019

**Report To:** Inclusion Advisory Committee

**Councillor and Role:** Councillor Hope Jamieson, Council Champion

**Ward:** N/A

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**Issue:** Provide information about the Northern Youth Abroad program

**Discussion – Background and Current Status:** The Northern Youth Abroad program is 10-months long and provides participants with a 5-week placement to complete volunteer work that aligns with their career interests. Youth stay with a host family in one of 10 southern provinces to complete this placement. This program “provides a foundation for career planning, skills development, hand-on work experience, and training to Northern youth”. With the goal of youth returning home with enhanced skills. The City of St. John’s currently has a youth completing a placement with our Children and Youth Program team.

## **Key Considerations/Implications:**

1. Budget/Financial Implications:
  - a. N/A
2. Partners or Other Stakeholders:
  - a. Northern Youth Abroad
3. Alignment with Strategic Directions/Adopted Plans:
  1. A Sustainable City: Sustainable now and for future generations
  2. A Connected City: A City where people feel connected, have a sense of belonging, and are actively engaged in community life
4. Legal or Policy Implications:

None at this time.
5. Privacy Implications:

None at this time.
6. Engagement and Communications Considerations:

None at this time.
7. Human Resource Implications:

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None at this time.

8. Procurement Implications:  
None at this time.

9. Information Technology Implications:  
None at this time.

10. Other Implications:  
N/A

**Conclusion/Next Steps:**

The City of St. John's is happy to be a part of the Northern Youth Abroad program and would like to continue sharing information about the program with community partners.

**Prepared by/Date:** Sherry Mercer, Inclusive Services Coordinator, July 10, 2019

**Reviewed by/Date:**

**Approved by/Date:**

**Attachments:**

Northern Youth Abroad Handbook

# Education Through Work and Travel

MEET  
NEW  
FRIENDS



Northern  
Youth  
Abroad

NUNAVUT • NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

SHARE  
YOUR  
CULTURE



TRAVEL



LEARN  
NEW  
SKILLS




EARN  
SCHOOL  
CREDITS

Workplace Handbook 2019



# VISION

HEALTHY, CONFIDENT  
YOUTH LEADERS  
CONTRIBUTING TO  
VIBRANT  
COMMUNITIES  
AND A BRIGHT  
FUTURE



I CAN  
\$  
I Will

# THANK YOU

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Dear Workplace Supervisors,

Thank you very much for volunteering to supervise a Northern Youth Abroad (NYA) Participant! You are a very important part of our program as you provide our Participants with valuable work experience, helping them to gain skills and to consider future work and career options. Our entire organization is committed to providing supported experiences through travel, hands-on learning, and volunteerism to youth who otherwise may not have access to such opportunities. Keeping this in mind, we take our dedication to our Participants and our volunteer workplace Supervisors very seriously.

A tremendous amount of energy and time from our volunteers and staff is put into each of our programs. Everyone involved in NYA shares a commitment to shaping a unique and extraordinary experience for our Participants. We hope that these efforts result in a rewarding and exciting experience for you and our Participants, and we strive to make the process of accepting NYA volunteers as smooth as possible. That said, no experience is without challenges. As you prepare for the arrival of our Participant, we hope that the information in this manual will outline expectations of the NYA program and give you a better understanding of where these Participants are coming from, and what they might be going through during their first real experience away from home.

Our team is available to you as needed along the way. During the busy summer months, our tiny team of six will grow to twelve this year and will work together to support almost 60 Participants, their Host Families, and our volunteers. With Participants spread across Canada and around the globe it can be quite the task, and we very much appreciate your patience when things are especially hectic! Luckily, we have the support of an amazing organization, under the leadership of a terrifically committed Board of Directors.

In the coming days, we hope that you have a chance to read over the enclosed material. If you have any questions about any of the information, or find that anything is missing, we strongly encourage you to contact us. Clarifying our mutual understanding before our Participants arrive is a key element of ensuring success in the coming weeks.

I am very excited to welcome this year's Participants and hope that you share my anticipation and enthusiasm; I look forward to connecting with you soon!

Qujannamiik! Mahsi Cho! Thank You!



**Rebecca Bisson**  
Executive Director



# IN THIS HANDBOOK

This document is here to help prepare you for welcoming a Participant into your workplace, and we recommend reading it as thoroughly as you can to ensure you and your Participant have the best summer ahead! If anything is missing or you have any additional questions, please don't hesitate to reach out. The NYA Staff are here to help, and we want to address any challenges that arise as soon as possible. We recommend that you forward this to anybody who will be a Supervisor to the Participant over the summer.

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# CANADIAN PROGRAM

The Canadian Program is NYA's first and largest offering. The program is 10-months in length and is highlighted by a five week placement in one of the 10 southern provinces. Participants are paired, and stay with a host family while completing a volunteer work placement that aligns with their career interests. Participants earn up to 9 high school credits for their efforts while building a variety of skills in a supported environment. Returning youth have a clearer sense of their identity and of their own interests, skills, and career objectives.



## TIMELINE

### October - December

Youth between the ages of 15-20 living in Nunavut and the Northwest Territories are invited to apply. Each applicant is then interviewed, and selections are made,

### January - June

Selected Participants work on a series of assignments with the help of a Mentor in their home communities.

### July

Participants fly to Ottawa for a week long **Orientation** Camp before travelling to their host communities

### July - August

Participants travel to their host communities where they will stay the next 5 weeks with their host family while completing their volunteer work placement.

### August

Participants travel back to Ottawa for a 4 day Re-Ori-entation debriefing camp before travelling home

### August - December

Participants work on a series of debriefing assignments back in their home communities

## AREAS OF FOCUS

- Earning High School Credits
- Cross Cultural Learning
- Volunteerism
- Job Training
- Career Exploration
- Leadership Development
- Increased Self-Confidence
- Increased Self-Esteem
- Community Development
- Support of Healthy Lifestyles
- Path to High School Graduation

## PARTICIPANT BENEFITS

- 9 High School Credits
- Minimum 150 hours of hands on work experience
- A unique opportunity to experience a new culture
- Sessions on Career Planning and Goal Setting
- Workplace Safety, First Aid, and Swim2Survive Training
- Increased communication, independence, and confidence
- The ability to share culture and traditions



# WORK PLACEMENT OVERVIEW



NYA provides a foundation for career planning, skills development, hands-on work experience, and training to Northern youth. Volunteer work placements are a crucial component of NYA's programming because they allow participants to explore career interests and prepare for their futures. Through volunteering in an area of professional interest, Participants develop professional skills and gain valuable workplace experience that is often not available in their remote home communities.

It is through volunteer work placements that youth learn to work in a professional environment, test out a potential career path, and gain important skills and knowledge. Ultimately, our goal is that each Participant will return to their home community with an enhanced skill set, higher confidence, and greater motivation that will benefit them in their professional careers and personal lives.

# WORK PLACEMENT OVERVIEW

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“I can’t wait to tell my friends and family about this experience! I am extremely honoured and thankful!”

**Laila Onalik**

Alumna from Kimmirut, NU

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## PROGRAM DATES

Orientation in Ottawa: June 30th - July 3rd

Travel to Host Community: July 4th

Meet and Greet with Workplace: **July 5th**

First Work Day: **July 8th**

Last Work Day: **August 7th**

Re-Orientation in Ottawa: August 8th - 14th

## THE WORKING DAY

The ideal work schedule for Participants is a 7-hour work day, Monday to Friday (**for a total of 35 hours per week**). Participants should not work on evenings or weekends as this time is used to get involved in their host community's summer activities and share experiences with their host family. If the operating hours of the workplace conflict with the suggested work schedule, there are arrangements that can be made to coordinate a schedule that appeals to all parties.

## EXPECTATIONS

Participants are expected to work a minimum of 125 hours over the course of their 5 week volunteer work placement.

## STAFF VISIT

During the summer, a pair of NYA Staff will be visiting the community to check in with Participants, Host Families, and Work Placements. This is a great opportunity to bring up any challenges or to share feedback about NYA! We will be in contact in July to arrange these visits.

## PARTICIPANT PREPARATION

Each Participant arrives to their host community having just completed NYA's Orientation where they have participated in a number of sessions and workshops to prepare them for their summer experience. At Orientation Participants learn about group dynamics, independence, leadership techniques, communication, and coping with any cultural differences.

Beyond these workshops, the youth also receive training in many areas that are directly applicable to the workplace, such as:

- Criminal Record Check
- Mantoux Test Results
- Basic First Aid Training
- WHMIS Training

## ROLE OF THE WORKPLACE SUPERVISOR

The Workplace Supervisor is to foster a safe, healthy, educational, and productive work environment for an NYA Participant.

# EXPECTATIONS OF THE WORKPLACE

## SUPERVISOR CHECKLIST

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### Day One of Placement:

- ☐ Provide workplace orientation for Participant (i.e. introduction to co-workers, overview of expectations, responsibilities, work schedule & daily routine, etc.)
- ☐ Inform Participant of Workplace Safety (i.e. off-limit areas, chemicals, dangerous products, etc.)
- ☐ Review Work Placement Profile and Work Placement Contract with Participant and help Participant send it to NYA by July 12th.

### Throughout Placement:

- ☐ Sign off on Work Placement Time and Activity Sheets for Participant at the end of every week. Participants should fill out these forms ahead of time.
- ☐ Support behavior guidelines that Participants are required to follow by NYA (like not drinking or partaking in risky behaviour)
- ☐ Assist Participant in completing all program requirements (such as presenting about their culture/home to the workplace).
- ☐ Create a work environment for Participants that provides them with the opportunity to gain hands-on skills and work experience.
- ☐ Offer training and guidance to Participant in your area of expertise and encourage skills development to foster professional development.

### At the End of Placement:

- ☐ Discuss the Participant's performance with him/her at the end of the placement period.
- ☐ **Complete Workplace Supervisor Evaluation Form online during the last week of the placement.**

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“I learned that I’m a hard worker, creative, and mentally strong. I got to meet people that helped me grow, break out of my shell, and gain confidence around people”



# UNDERSTANDING PARTICIPANTS

Participants are expected to be helpful, reliable, and hard-working volunteers that enhance the workplace through their culture, unique experiences, skill sets, and commitment. Every participant has different abilities, experiences, and circumstances that make each work placement unique, and not always without challenges. That is why the Workplace Supervisors are so integral to the success of our program; they provide a forum for a young person to improve their abilities, gain experience, and grow as an individual.

Though NYA's work placements are often the first work experience for many Participants, the value they add to their work places is often lauded by supervisors and staff. Our goal is for supervisors and staff to finish the summer feeling excited and grateful for the positive experience.

Understandably, some Workplace Supervisors have some reservations about hosting a teenager they have never met and know little about. It is important to know that Participants are made aware that they will be treated as employees while at work. They understand they are volunteers who have been welcomed into work places by their supervisors and colleagues to learn, but also to perform the duties asked of them and contribute to the workplace. Participants know that they must follow the rules set out by their supervisor. Participants receive training at Orientation about general workplace expectations and the importance of professionalism.

“I enjoyed teaching my host family and co-workers about my Inuit culture”



**Mahasi Nateela**

Alumnus from Arviat, NU

# UNDERSTANDING PARTICIPANTS

## CULTURE SHOCK AND HOMESICKNESS

For many Participants, NYA is their first time travelling outside of the North. Naturally, this can be a huge adjustment for some youth and Culture Shock and Homesickness are very common challenges that can manifest throughout the summer. These issues stem from being cut off from familiar cultural cues and patterns that our Participants usually depend on, having their values brought into question, not knowing how to fit into new surroundings, and the feeling of being unable to live up to new high expectations without adequate support. It is important to recognize the signs of Culture Shock and Homesickness and offer an understanding, sympathetic environment to help Participants overcome these difficulties.

Participants take part in workshops on coping mechanisms and strategies for dealing with these issues at Orientation, however, they will still need support overcoming these challenges.

**The most important thing is to recognize when a Participant is exhibiting signs of Culture Shock and Homesickness and differentiating that from plain rude or disengaged behaviour.**

Strong methods for addressing Homesickness include: allowing the Participant to talk about home and express their feelings; staying busy to prevent time for idle/negative thinking; taking it day by day rather than how much longer the summer is; and finding things to look forward to on placement. In terms of dealing with Culture Shock, the most important thing is to avoid judgment of cultural differences. Expressing an interest in the Participant's home and culture, encouraging the Participant to be positive and avoid negative outlooks on their new surroundings, and highlighting the benefits of such a unique opportunity to learn and grow are all good tactics to curb Culture Shock.

### Symptoms of Homesickness:

- Sadness, depression
- Preoccupation with thoughts of home
- Frustration
- Anger
- Recurring headaches
- Upset stomach
- Crying
- Oversleeping or sleeplessness
- Social withdrawal
- Homesickness

### Signs of Culture Shock:

- Homesickness and physical illness
- Boredom
- Withdrawal from others
- Need for excessive amounts of sleep
- Compulsive eating/drinking
- Irritability, hostility, tension
- Exaggerated cleanliness
- Overly-critical, negative attitude
- Loss of ability to work effectively
- Inexplicable crying

### Of Note:

Inuit use a lot of non-verbal communication. For example, to say yes, Inuit often raise their eyebrows, and to say no, they scrunch their noses. If you have Participants from Nunavut, they may answer you with their facial expressions rather than saying yes or no. In previous years, some Host Families and Supervisors have remarked that they feel the youth are shy, reserved, and not very talkative. **If your Participant is quiet, this does not necessarily mean that they are being rude or that they don't like you. It is simply a cultural difference that Northerners tend to not be very chatty.** Additionally, as with any individual, it can take some time for the youth to feel comfortable in a new environment and share with others.



# UNDERSTANDING PARTICIPANTS

## THINGS TO CONSIDER

### **Dealing with the heat:**

Dealing with the summer heat is a challenge for Participants as a typical summer day in most Participants' home communities is usually 10 degrees Celsius. Difficulty adjusting to the 30+ degree weather in southern Canada often causes other problems beyond physical wear. Being too hot can lead to higher levels of frustration and homesickness, irritability, missing work, and wanting to spend time exclusively indoors where air conditioning is available. We encourage Participants to drink lots of water, wear comfortable clothing, and take breaks when it gets too hot, but please reinforce these points with them. Also note that Participants may not want to wear shorts or tank tops, since they are not accustomed to doing so back home, they may choose modest dress regardless of the outside heat.

### **Smoking:**

There is little to no social stigma attached to smoking in the North. Youth are accustomed to having access to cigarettes, smoking regularly, and not being judged for their habit. If your Participant is a smoker, it will be necessary to make your expectations about smoking privileges very clear, including identifying areas in which they are permitted to smoke and how to safely dispose of cigarette butts. NYA advocates for Participants to consider using their time away from home as an opportunity to quit smoking however, NYA respects the right of each participant to smoke if they so choose.

### **Trauma Informed Care:**

Due to statistics indicating high rates of trauma in the North and Canada in general, NYA assumes that any Participant could have experienced some form of trauma. Trauma-informed care is defined as practices that promote a culture of safety, empowerment and healing. This involves approaching Participants with compassion and tolerance and considering past trauma and resulting coping mechanisms when trying to understand someone's behaviour.

### **Punctuality:**

Daily living and working patterns for many Northern families are often to be guided by the weather, environmental conditions, hunting season, and amounts of daylight and darkness. Consequently, little emphasis is placed on maintaining a structured work schedule in the north as compared to lifestyles in the south. Participants are often laid back about schedules and being on time. Learning these new expectations and how to adapt to them is an important part of the Participants' education over the summer. Workplace supervisors should expect Participants to be punctual, but should also be understanding of the fact that Participants will have a difficult time adjusting to such routines. Being late is generally not meant by Participants to be disrespectful. As an employer, we understand you have expectations and responsibilities in your workplace that must be adhered to, however we would appreciate if you could take these considerations into account regarding the Participant's time with you.

### **Cell Phones:**

A recurring theme among work placement feedback has been Participant's overuse of cell phones during working hours. We address workplace conduct extensively during our Orientation, and take many steps to ensure that Participants understand the expectations of the workplace. We encourage work placements to set guidelines regarding cell phone use during work on the first day, and to be open with Participants about your expectations.



# NYA LANGUAGE

The volunteer you host may talk about things from the NYA program that might not make sense if you are hosting an NYA Participant for the first time. This might help you understand NYA and the Participant a little better.

## Host Family

Each year, NYA accepts applications from potential Host Families all over Canada. Host Families are rigorously assessed and are chosen based on their ability to provide a safe and welcoming home for youth while they complete NYA. Host Families welcome youth into their homes and treat them as family. Much like how a Work Place Supervisor can expect a youth to volunteer and take responsibility like an employee, Participants are expected to contribute to the family unit.

## Buddy

Participants are paired together with another youth from the North. The Participants usually do not know each other before they start NYA, but they live together in their host community. Although their buddy is a strong part of their support system, we try to not place two buddies in the same work place. This allows each youth to have their own unique experience, which we feel helps them develop their independence. If you are a workplace that is hosting two NYA Participants, try to have them work on different projects or in different areas.

## Presentation

Your Participant may mention their "presentation". This is a short presentation that is part of their assignments for NYA, that they present to their work place or host community during the summer. It is about their home and culture, and helps them practice public speaking in a comfortable setting. If you have the time we encourage prompting your Participant to share their presentation with you!



# CONTACT Us

NYA has six full-time staff members, a northern-based Board of Directors, and many dedicated volunteers throughout the Northwest Territories, Nunavut and southern Canada. **Please do not hesitate to reach out to us throughout the summer.** We want to help you in supporting our Participants, and the best way to do that is through open communication.

Depending on your timezone, you may reach an emergency line or an on-call staff if you call the office. We take a team approach, so you might not always speak to the same staff member but rest assured that you will always have the full NYA team behind you. We are all working together to have the most successful summer yet!



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[www.nya.ca](http://www.nya.ca)

## Paratransit Update (July 17, 2019)

### **TRANSIT REVIEW**

Phase 2 of the Review has focused on Metrobus service. We haven't heard anything further about additional GoBus recommendations. There were public consultations at the end of June to get input on Metrobus recommendations which focus on optimizing existing resources, looking at options to create a "transit culture", possibilities for increased service if more financial resources were available, enhancing customer experience, and alternative service delivery methods.

The final report is expected by the end of August.

### **RFP FOR THIRD PARTY ASSESSMENTS**

The RFP to complete transit assessments to determine GoBus eligibility has been awarded pending contract finalization. Currently the contract is with the City's legal department.

We expect the assessments to begin in August.

### **ELIGIBILITY APPEALS**

We have revised our existing appeal process to ensure appeals are fair and transparent. There are three areas that would qualify as grounds for an appeal – assessment not completed properly, condition of eligibility not appropriate (for conditional approvals only), or new information has arisen within 60 days of assessment. Appeals will be conducted by a panel comprised of a representative of a local disability organization, a healthcare professional - whom will both have expertise in the area of disability most relevant for the applicant - and an employee of Accessible Transit Services.

For anyone whose eligibility is denied we will offer a transition period to allow the person time to arrange alternate transportation (if necessary). Additionally, there will be an opportunity to participate in Travel Training, which will offer them support to learn about riding Metrobus.