

Report to the Future Melbourne (City People) Committee

Agenda item 6.8

Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2020-2024, Embracing Equity in Participation

15 September 2020

Presenter: Ali Duncan, Director Community Services**Purpose and background**

1. The purpose of this report is to seek endorsement of the Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2020-2024, Embracing Equity in Participation (Plan) (refer Attachment 2).
2. On 7 July 2020 the Future Melbourne Committee endorsed the draft Plan for public consultation. Consultation occurred through the Participate Melbourne webpage that included the draft Plan, all research reports, and a sketch video of key issues identified by children and young people with disability during engagement. The Plan was provided in alternative formats and a direct email, mobile and text number were provided offering people individual assistance to fill out the three survey questions.
3. Links to the webpage were forwarded to Council's Disability Advisory Committee and circulated widely to community groups, disability service providers, local and state-wide disability networks, universities, business and State government stakeholders. The draft Plan was also promoted on Instagram, Facebook and LinkedIn. It was included in the Ross House, Self Advocacy Resource Unit (SARU) and Disability Advocacy Resource Unit (DARU) and State wide Victorian Local Government Disability Planners Network newsletters.

Key issues

4. Fifty-two responses were received through Participate Melbourne. Fifty respondents completed the survey and two provided written submissions. There were 145 likes on Twitter, 176 likes on Facebook and 58 LinkedIn clicks.
5. Feedback through the consultation affirmed 'disability' as an integral element of the diversity of our community and reinforced the importance of councils' continued systemic work to reduce and eliminate access barriers in the built, informational and social environments.
6. A considerable number of responses recommended inclusion of embedded organisational access initiatives to capture the breadth and organisation wide commitment to enhancing equity of access. These have been incorporated into the Plan.
7. The importance of advancing best practice in universal access through a co-designed engagement process early in the life of projects was supported by the community. This process aligns with current disability sector expectation and a transformational engagement tool is under development.
8. An implementation, monitoring and evaluation framework will oversee and progress actions which will be reported to Council on an annual basis. The Plan will be aligned with Council's Inclusive Melbourne Strategy that is currently being developed.

Recommendation from management

9. That the Future Melbourne Committee:
 - 9.1. Endorses City of Melbourne's Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2020-2024, Embracing Equity in Participation and approves it being lodged with the Human Rights Equal Opportunity Commission as Council's approved Disability Action Plan 2020-2024.
 - 9.2. Authorises the General Manager Community and City Services to make any further minor editorial changes to the Disability Access Plan 2020-2024, Embracing Equity in Participation prior to publication.

Attachments:

1. Supporting Attachment (Page 2 of 56)
2. Disability Access Plan 2020-2024 (Page 3 of 56)
3. Disability Access Plan Community Engagement Analysis – Summary Report (Page 26 of 56)
4. Disability Access Plan Community Engagement Analysis – Full Report (Page 34 of 56)

Supporting Attachment

Legal

1. Section 38(5) of the *Disability Act 2006* provides that, if a Council determines to prepare a disability access plan, the Council must report on its implementation in its annual report.
2. Development of the Plan will also assist Council to meet its obligations in the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (Cth).

Finance

3. An amount \$107,435 is included within Community Services Branch 2020–21 budget to enable actions in the first year of the Plan to be undertaken.

Conflict of interest

4. No member of Council staff, or other person engaged under a contract, involved in advising on or preparing this report has declared a direct or indirect interest in relation to the matter of the report.

Health and Safety

5. The Plan outlines how the City of Melbourne will continue to reduce and eliminate barriers in the built, social and informational environments. This will improve access, inclusion and participation of people with disability who live, work, study in or visit our city. In addition, it will foster a heightened sense of belonging and help celebrate the diversity and contribution people with disability make to life of the city.

Stakeholder consultation

6. Stakeholder engagement to develop the Plan was undertaken as part of all research projects that informed the Plan. Many of the research methodologies were co-designed with people with disability from Council's Disability Advisory Committee, academics from Monash and Melbourne Universities and representatives with disability from community groups within the City of Melbourne.
7. Council's Disability Advisory Committee provided input to the research methodologies, plan framework, and participated in a workshop that informed the key outcomes of the draft Plan.
8. The draft Plan was promoted on Participate Melbourne from 8 July to 5 August.
9. Feedback from the consultation process has informed amendments and additions to the Plan.

Relation to Council policy

10. The recommendation in this report is consistent with Council Plan 2017-21, Goal 2, A City for People.

Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2020-2024 Embracing Equity in Participation

Foreword

We are delighted to present City of Melbourne's fifth Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2020-2024, Embracing Equity in Participation.

City of Melbourne prides itself on being a city for people, where all can participate in the vibrant life of our capital city. We celebrate our diverse communities and acknowledge people with disability as valuable members that live, work, visit and study in Melbourne. Since 1999, Council has outlined its commitment to reducing and eliminating barriers in our city, guided by the City of Melbourne Disability Advisory Committee whose members help identify access barriers and provide advice on practical and innovative solutions. We have come a long way and many access initiatives are embedded in the core business of the organisation.

However, we acknowledge that there is a long way to go in ensuring equity of participation for all people. That is why this plan is founded on best practice in universal access which is achieved through co-design engagement with people with disabilities. This process acknowledges the importance of lived experience and avails instrumental insights that support us to realise our vision to make Melbourne one of the most accessible and inclusive cities in the world.

Universally accessible environments result in equity of participation for all.

We will continue to work with community members, business stakeholders and other tiers of government to realise this vision and we will report annually on the achievements and progress of this very important work.

Sally Capp
Lord Mayor

Cr Beverley Pinder
Chair People City Committee
Chair City of Melbourne Disability Advisory Committee

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Introduction

Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners

The City of Melbourne respectfully acknowledges the traditional custodians of the land, the Bunurong Boon Wurrung and Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung peoples of the Eastern Kulin Nation and pays respect to their Elders past, present and emerging. We are committed to our reconciliation journey, because at its heart, reconciliation is about strengthening relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples, for the benefit of all Victorians.

Strategic context and organisation wide commitment

Future Melbourne 2026 sets out the community's aspirations for the city with one of the key goals being that Melbourne is a city that welcomes all people. The importance of the city being accessible, affordable, inclusive, safe and engaging are fundamental principles that guide strategic, policy and service provisions of the City of Melbourne. Similarly City of Melbourne's Public Health and Wellbeing Plan reinforces that wholistic health and wellbeing, for all demographic cohorts, is viable to a liveable city.

The seventeen United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals lay out our responsibility as a local government to consider the long term environmental, social and economic interests of our community. Of particular relevance are the sustainability goals that directly contribute to reducing inequalities and contribute to good health and well being, decent and meaningful work and economic growth.

With reference to these strategic contexts it acknowledged that working towards being a city that is truly inclusive of all people is the responsibility of all work areas across the organisation. This plan advocates and embeds a whole of council approach to understand and address access and inclusion barriers to enable the full participation of all people who live, work, and study in or visit the city.

By embracing equity in participation and furthering inclusivity, we aim to be a leader in providing universal access for all.

Equity of access, inclusion and participation is a legislative requirement

This plan has been developed with reference to international, national and state legislation, with an emphasis on meeting obligations in the Victorian Disability Act 2006. This Act requires all public sector bodies to prepare a Disability Action Plan and Section 38 stipulates that a plan should be developed for the purpose of:

- reducing barriers to persons with a disability accessing goods, services and facilities
- reducing barriers to persons with a disability obtaining and maintaining employment

- promoting inclusion and participation in the community of persons with a disability
- achieving tangible changes in attitudes and practices which discriminate against persons with a disability.

The Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth) makes it unlawful to discriminate directly and indirectly against a person with a disability in many areas of public life. This includes education, employment, getting or using services, renting or buying a house or unit, and accessing public places because of their disability.

The Local Government Act 2020 (Vic) states that each council must have a community engagement policy and that adheres to the following five principles:

- The engagement must state clearly defined objectives.
- Participants must be representative of community.
- There must be easy access to information.
- Support must be available to enable meaningful engagement.
- Participants must be informed on how the engagement process influenced decision making.

City of Melbourne's commitment to seeking and responding to the views and aspirations of people with disability have been captured within this plan, through ongoing civic participation of Council's Disability Advisory Committee, engagement through research and continual opportunity that will be advanced through adherence to universal best practice through co-design with people with disability.

How we are working to make Melbourne the world's most accessible and inclusive city

City of Melbourne's vision

The City of Melbourne is committed to being a 'city for people' — one that is welcoming, inclusive and accessible for all. As one of the world's most liveable cities, we strive to demonstrate and lead best practice in universal access.

Drawing on research undertaken, and contemporary policy shifts in the disability access and inclusion arena, this Plan defines best practice universal access as a co-design process of engagement with people with disability that results in environments that can be accessed, understood and used by all people regardless of their age and ability. This results in equity of participation and is the method that will be utilised across the organisation to engage with people with disability at the commencement of an initiative to embed access provisions that will enhance inclusion and participation of people with disability.

With continuous growth in our population and infrastructure, technological advancements and the revolutionary roll out of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) which funds individuals with disability to seek support and services to enhance their life goals there are new opportunities and challenges. Embracing opportunities and challenges will enable us to realise our vision **to make Melbourne the world's most accessible and inclusive city where all people can participate with dignity and independence.**

Best practice in universal access is the way we work to enhance equity of participation

To build on our status as one of the world's most liveable cities we will strive to demonstrate best practice in universal access through a co-design process of engagement with people with disability at the beginning of projects and developments. This process results in environments that can be accessed, understood and used by all people regardless of their age and ability. It enhances access and inclusion resulting in equity of participation for all.

Our commitment to civic participation provides ongoing opportunities for people with a disability to tell us about the barriers they face. Based on their lived experiences and feedback, we plan, collaborate and seek innovative solutions to reduce and eliminate barriers in our communities through systemic change.

Why we are addressing barriers to access

Equity of access is a human right. The City of Melbourne acknowledges the right of people with disabilities to equitable and full participation in all aspects of city life.

International, national and state disability and anti-discrimination legislation¹ clearly outlines obligations of organisations to address barriers to equity of access. More importantly, community expectations dictate that all people, irrespective of their abilities, have an equal right to participate and attain their desired goals in personal, community and civic life.

This societal expectation is reinforced by the roll out of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS)². This reform has resulted in more people with disabilities, their families, partners, carers and friends expecting greater access to all aspects of the built, social and informational environments including buildings, schools, employment, businesses, sport, leisure, entertainment and cultural venues and events.

This document outlines how we will continue to work to reduce and eliminate barriers, both within the City of Melbourne and with external partners through co-design to enable the full participation of people with a disability who live, work, visit and study in our city. While continuing to address barriers in our own facilities, services and programs, we will lead by example and work in partnership with community, business, academia and government stakeholders to realise our vision.

¹ United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cmw), Disability Act 2006 (Vic)

² The National Disability Insurance Scheme delivers a national system of disability support that allocates funding to individuals with permanent disabilities to choose services, supports and/or aids to help them reach their life goals

The cultural shift: disability versus diversity

In 1999, City of Melbourne endorsed its first Disability Action Plan that was premised on the social model of disability that shifted the emphasis from having a disability to the barriers within society and limit opportunities and choices for people with disability to fully and actively participate in all aspects of life. In 2020, this plan will build on the success and strength of previous plans and will further foster recognition that having a disability is just another aspect of diversity within our society and we will continue to promote celebrate and embrace the integral part people with disability have in our city.

National and international people with disabilities, who excel in their chosen field, demonstrate what is possible when there is equity of opportunity. Individuals like Stella Young, Nick Vujick, Stephen Hawking, Andrea Bocelli, and Greta Thunberg show us that having a disability is not a limiting factor. It is the built, social and informational environments that exclude and deny opportunities for individuals to reach their desired potential in life.

Barrier-free environments respond to diversity of access needs and enable all people, irrespective of their individual abilities, to attain their life goals. City of Melbourne will continue to reduce and eliminate barriers to enable full participation for all people in the life of the city. A city in which all aspects of diversity are acknowledged valued and celebrated – an inclusive city that enables the participation of all.

City of Melbourne's commitment

City of Melbourne has a long history of action and commitment to equity of access through a co-design process. Having established Victoria's first Disability Advisory Committee in 1999, we have heard the voices and acted on recommendations that have reduced barriers and enhanced access, inclusion and participation in our city and across the nation.

Key achievements include:

- **Advocacy** on legislation and policy reforms such as the Premises Standards and the National Disability Insurance Scheme.
- **Inclusive services and programs** that respond to the needs of people of disability of all ages through our children's centres, family services, recreation centres, libraries, festivals and events.
- **Education** of internal and external stakeholders on the importance of equity of access through ongoing disability awareness training.
- **Provision of access information** through access checklists, information in alternative formats and development of the Accessing Melbourne website that provides key access information and resources for community.
- **Adherence to access standards** stipulated in planning, building and on street by-laws and codes such as the Street Café Code and accessible parking schemes such as the City Access Pass, and city design and engineering standards.
- **Exploration and implementation of innovative technologies** such as Braille street signs and navigational technology to help people with vision impairments navigate around the city.
- **Capacity building** through grants and sponsorships that support community, disability, and social enterprise groups to pursue community projects.

- **Collaborative stakeholder relationships** with disability service providers, cultural venues, business stakeholders, travel providers, government departments and academia that have resulted in world class traveller services that facilitate mobility aids and companion services to help people get around the city. In addition, other access initiatives that have been advocated by government or community stakeholders include promotion and provision of Changing Places toilet facilities and new initiatives to support people with invisible disability such as the Sunflower lanyard that can be worn by people to indicate to staff at events or festivals that they may require additional assistance. Importantly, joint research assignments with university academics have resulted in greater rigour in understanding the needs of people with disability in our fast paced societal and technological world.

In this plan, we reinforce that having a disability is an integral element of our diverse community and we will build on further embedding equity of participation in all aspects of operations across the City of Melbourne.

This plan has been finalised during the global COVID-19 pandemic which has resulted in a new ways of thinking and is transforming the way in which we live. It has a significant impact on the health and wellbeing of people, particularly people with disabilities and presents opportunities and challenges including the economic and social implications on mobility, participation and social wellbeing.

When working to reduce and eliminate access barriers we need to address the distinct needs of diverse disability groups. For example, implementing innovative navigational technologies that help people with vision impairment independently navigate through the city, and advocating recognition of assistive companion animals that support the participation of people with psycho-social disabilities in community life.

Types of disabilities

Disability is diverse. A disability may be acquired at birth or result from an accident, injury or disease. It may come and go. Many disabilities are visible, such as people using a mobility aid to get around whereas other disabilities are invisible, such as a person with a hearing impairment or psycho-social disability.

The different types of disabilities include:

- sensory and speech
- physical restriction
- intellectual
- head injury, stroke or acquired brain injury
- psychological
- others including diseases and auto-immune conditions.

The degree of a disability is different for every person and some people may have two or more types of disabilities. We understand the particular needs of each disability group and work to reduce and eliminate barriers to support inclusivity for all.

Socio-demographics³

Did you know?

People with a disability in Australia

- 18 per cent of Australians and Victorian populations live with a disability.
- 25 per cent of Australians live with a mental illness.
- 96 per cent of disabilities are invisible.
- 95 per cent of people with disability live at home or in the community.
- The likelihood of living with a disability increases with age which means the city will experience increased numbers of people with disabilities in the future.

Diversity of disability

- Only 4.4 per cent of people with a disability in Australia use a wheelchair.
- 1 in 6 Australians are affected by hearing loss.
- Vision Australia estimates there are currently 357,000 people in Australia who are blind or have low vision.
- 45 per cent of Australians aged 16–85 years, experience a mental health condition during their lifetime.
- 3 million Australians live with depression or anxiety.
- Over three-quarters (76.8 per cent) of people with disability reported a physical disorder as their main condition. The most common physical disorder was musculoskeletal disorder (29.6 per cent) including arthritis and related disorders (12.7 per cent) and back problems (12.6 per cent).

Diversity of disability reported by City of Melbourne residents

- 24 per cent physical
- 13 per cent psychosocial
- 10 per cent speech and sensory
- 8 per cent intellectual
- 27 per cent other

Assistance and carers

³ AURIN University of Melbourne Demographic and Service Mapping Across City of Melbourne Suburbs July 2017, Disability Demographics Infographics and International Best Practice, Nerd Digital, 2019

- Approximately 60 per cent of people with disability need assistance with at least one activity in daily life.
- 5.5 per cent of City of Melbourne residents assisted family members due to disability, long terms illness or old age (2016).
- A significant increase of 38 per cent (2011) that could be an indicator of a gap in service availability.
- 460,000 Australians are supported by the National Disability Insurance Scheme.
- 280,000 under the age of 65 receive services under the National Disability Agreement.

Employment of people with disability

- 53 per cent of people with disability participate in the workforce compared with 83 per cent of people with no reported disability.
- The weekly median income of people with disability was \$465, less than half of people with no reported disability.
- Graduates with disability take 61.5 per cent longer to gain full-time employment compared to other graduates.
- Almost one in five (18.9 per cent) people with disability aged 15–24 years experienced discrimination. In almost half of those instances, the source of discrimination is an employer.
- 34 per cent of people with disability are managers and professionals.

Disability inclusivity

- 36 per cent of people with disabilities are often treated less favourably than customers without a disability.
- 28 per cent of people with disability have experienced discrimination by one or more of the organisations they have recently interacted with.
- One in three people with disability report that their customer needs are often unmet.
- 35 per cent of people with disabilities have avoided situations because of their disabilities.
- 68 per cent of complaints regarding assistance animal access were from non-guide assistance animals. 72 per cent of these named a private business.

Economic benefit of universally accessible businesses and employing people with disability

- City of Melbourne attracts over 800,000 visitors into the city every day.
- The City of Melbourne is a major destination for domestic and international visitors.
- The social and economic life of the city is enhanced when everyone can actively participate in the life of the city.
- Employment returns: \$26 for every \$1 is the return for keeping people living with disability in employment.
- Return on investment: \$13 for every \$1 potential return on investment universally accessible environments.
- Increased tourism: up to four times use of facilities by City of Melbourne tourists with a disability when you improve access.
- More travellers means higher returns: every \$1 spent by people with disability returns \$7 for tourism and retail related revenue.
- Retail environments: 20–25 per cent increase in the turnover for universally accessible retail environments compared to non-accessible environments.

Benefits of employing people with disability

Eighty nine per cent of organisations who employ people with disability identify positive benefits. These include:

- 61 per cent improvement in workplace morale
- 49 per cent increase in the ability to fill skills gaps
- 42 per cent increase in productivity
- 90 per cent of employees with disability record productivity rates equal or greater than other workers and 86 per cent have average or superior attendance records.

City of Melbourne's Disability Advisory Committee

The City of Melbourne's Disability Advisory Committee was established as one of the key actions in City of Melbourne's first Disability Action Plan in 1999. This Committee, comprised of 12 community members with a diverse range of personal and professional expertise in disability access issues, provides an ongoing civic engagement process to inform Council on barriers that impact the life opportunities of people with disability and suggest ways in which these can be addressed to enhance inclusion and participation.

A key role of the Disability Advisory Committee is also to guide and participate in the development of Council's Disability Action Plan. The Committee's input into research, the framework design and advice in relation to key outcomes areas and actions has been instrumental in the development of this Plan.

The City of Melbourne Council acknowledges and values the ongoing input of the Disability Advisory Committee who will continue to provide guidance in the implementation of this plan at both a strategic and operational level over the next four years.

What the community has told us

City of Melbourne engages and listens to community members with disabilities, advocacy groups, access experts, academics and innovators to help us better understand and address barriers in ways that have not been tried before.

In preparing this plan, we have undertaken research and engaged with diverse groups of people with various disabilities, young people, children, and sought the insights of parents, carers, partners and siblings.

Our engagement and research has reinforced that although some access improvements have been made, significant barriers remain in the built, informational and social environments that limit equity of access and participation for many people with a disability. The feedback and views of community have been captured within this document following engagement on the draft Disability Access Plan 2020-2024, Embracing Equity in Participation in July – August 2020.

Community endorsed the vision, aspirations and key outcomes of the plan and suggested inclusion and high profiling of the embedded access initiatives undertaken across the organisation that will contribute to making Melbourne one of the world's most accessible and inclusive cities.

We share in the disability community motto of **'nothing about us without us'** and we will continue to be guided by the voices of people with disability through our Disability Advisory Committee, engagement and other co-design processes over the life of this plan.

Research undertaken to inform this plan

Rigorous research has been undertaken to expand understanding and knowledge on how we can better address persistent access barriers. City of Melbourne's Disability Advisory Committee, advocacy groups, academics and people with disabilities have helped co-design research methodologies and identify what needs to be investigated.

Research studies that have informed this plan include:

- 2012 Economic Benefits of Universal Access, Monash University*
- 2015 Understanding Accessibility for Sensory Disability – Qualitative Research Inquiry, Studio Thick*
- 2017 Demographics and Disability Service Mapping Across City of Melbourne Suburbs, AURIN Melbourne University
- 2019 Everyone's Moomba, Melbourne University in conjunction with Committee for Melbourne*
- 2019 Making Melbourne more inclusive for people with disability, Melbourne University (Disability Institute)*
- 2019 Disability Demographics Infographics and International Best Practice, Nerd Digital
- 2019 Showcasing Access and Inclusion – Cutting through a complex legislative and policy landscape with co-design, Visionary Design Development*
- 2020 Making Melbourne more inclusive for children and young people with disability, Melbourne University*.

*co-design research methodologies

The lived experiences of individuals who participated in the above studies and research, in addition to community engagement and internal feedback, have provided the evidence base for the setting of the vision, and definition of 'best access universal access' referred to in this plan.

These reports are available at www.accessingmelbourne.vic.gov.au and requests for reports in alternative formats can be made at 9658 9658 or www.melbourne.vic.gov.au.

Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2020-2024

Best practice in universal access is the way we work to enhance equity of participation

How this plan will be implemented, monitored and evaluated

The outcomes and actions in this access plan addressed barriers in the physical, information and social environment and which were identified during the undertaking of research and community engagement.

City of Melbourne's Disability Advisory Committee contributed to the research and plan framework and endorsed the three key outcomes:

Outcome 1: Infrastructure developments and public spaces demonstrate best practice in universal access.

Outcome 2: Our information, services, programs, events, festivals and civic engagements are accessible to people with disabilities.

Outcome 3: Diversity is valued and supported through education, advocacy and promotional activities.

Actions and measures to achieve these outcomes have been formulated based on research and community feedback and will be reported on annually, when there will be opportunity for further community input.

This plan will be lodged with the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission as the City of Melbourne endorsed Disability Access Plan 2020–2024 and progress on implementation of all actions will be reported annually.

Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2020-2024, Embracing Equity in Participation

Outcome 1: Infrastructure development and public spaces demonstrate best practice in universal access

Action	Measure	Branch	Year of Implementation
1.1 Deliver best practice universal access design in 'city shaping' in public realm new and redevelopment initiatives.	1.1.1 Number of people with disability engaged in co-design and number of branches conducting co-design from development stage.	All branches	1, 2, 3, 4
	1.1.2 Number of access audits and number of access provisions addressed in design and delivery.	Design Studio, State Infrastructure	2, 3, 4
	1.1.3 Number of instances people with disabilities are invited to review the functionality of plans and projects.	All branches	2, 3, 4
1.2 Address Building Code and Australian Standards access requirements in all City of Melbourne capital works facility upgrades.	1.2.1 Upgrade Council infrastructure with reference to building access audits (2012).	Property	1, 2, 3, 4
1.3 Continue to improve accessibility on City of Melbourne streets and roads.	1.3.1 Increase percentage of central business district tactile surfaces in key locations.	Infrastructure and Assets	1, 2, 3, 4
	1.3.2 Increase percentage of way-finding that is tactile and audible based on effectiveness and current usage.	Infrastructure and Assets, Tourism and Events	1, 2, 3, 4
1.4 Establish and promote accessible adult changing facilities within City of Melbourne, as prescribed in the National Construction.	1.4.1 Increase in the number of accessible adult changing facilities available to community across the City of Melbourne.	Property and Capital Works	2, 3, 4

	1.4.2 Number of new and redeveloped City of Melbourne facilities that investigate installation of changing place facilities.	Property and Capital works	2, 3, 4
1.5 Explore the establishment of a demonstration best practice universal access 'Inclusive Access Zone'.	1.5.1 Develop a concept plan and feasibility in partnership with people with disability and key stakeholders: researchers, tourism industry, businesses and innovators.	Community Services, City Lab	1
	1.5.2 Deliver and demonstrate an 'inclusive access zone' within a Melbourne Innovation District and promote the IAZ nationally and internationally.	Community Service, City Lab	2, 3
	1.5.3 Explore financial cost and placed based approach for additional areas across the municipality.	Community Services, CityLab, City Design Studio	3, 4
1.6 Work with Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) to improve standards for design, construction and safety equipment that apply to domestic commercial vessels to improve accessibility.	1.6.1 Promote accessibility requirements for domestic vehicles from AMSA.	Recreation and Waterways,	1
	1.6.2 Work with AMSA and commercial vehicle owners to increase the number of accessible domestic commercial river craft.	Recreation and Waterways	1
	1.6.3 Work with sector to increase percentage of people with disability utilising river craft.	Recreation and Waterways	2
	1.6.4 Convene disability awareness training for river craft operators and businesses.	Recreation and Waterways,	2, 4
1.7 Ensure safety and emergency management processes address needs of people with disability.	1.7.1 Safety and emergency plans address and outline specific needs and procedures for assisting people with disability.	On Street Support and Compliance	1
	1.7.2 Drills and evacuations include hypothetical instances of people with access difficulties.	On Street Support and Compliance	1, 2, 3, 4

1.8. Ensure parking bays meet Australian Standards.	1.8.1 Increase percentage of on street City of Melbourne disabled parking bays and ensure existing bays meet accessibility standards.	Infrastructure and Assets, Community Services, City Design Studio	1, 2, 3, 4
	1.8.2 Work with Southern Cross and Flinders Street stations to increase availability of parking spaces for pick up and drop off and adequate space for Maxi Taxis.	Infrastructure and Assets, City Design Studio	2, 3
	1.8.3 Advocate to private car parking providers to provide additional numbers of bays that are accessible and affordable.	Infrastructure and Assets, Community Services	2, 3
	1.8.4 Number of City Access Parking Permits.	Infrastructure and Assets	1, 2, 3, 4
1.9 Provide safe, clear and well lit accessible paths of travel within parks and open spaces	1.9.1 Increase percentage or number of park paths upgraded to Australian Standards access standards.	Parks and City Greening	1, 2, 3, 4
	1.9.2 Number of path surfaces upgraded for ease of access.	Parks and City Greening, City Design Studio	1, 2, 3, 4
	1.9.3 Number of public spaces or parks where lighting is improved.	Infrastructure and Assets, City Design Studio	1, 2, 3, 4
1.10 Continue to explore and implement innovative technologies to assist people with disability navigate through the city.	1.10.1 Test effectiveness and usage of current navigational technology utilised within City of Melbourne.	Tourism and Events, Infrastructure and Assets, City Design Studio	1, 2
	1.10.2 Disseminate information on precincts with navigational technologies to vision impaired groups and the wider community.	Community Services	1, 2, 3, 4

Outcome 2: Our information, services, programs, events, festivals and civic engagements are accessible to people with disabilities

Action	Measure	Branch	Year of Implementation
2.1 Translation of information in alternative formats and provision of 'disability access keys' to support visitors with orientation and sensory information at events and festivals.	2.1.1 Number of Council meetings captioned or Auslan interpreted.	Governance	1, 2, 3, 4
	2.1.2 Develop an easy English translation factsheet for use across branches.	Community Services	1, 2, 3, 4
	2.1.3 Increase number of 'disability access keys' available to community for facilities, arts venues, libraries, events and festivals delivered by City of Melbourne.	Community Services Applicable branches	1, 2, 3, 4 2, 3, 4
2.2 Enable independent and dignified interactions at service centres and concierge desks of City of Melbourne.	2.2.1 Percentage of public interface customer serviced counters and desks with communication boards.	Creative City, Recreation, Community Services, Events and Tourism, Customer Relations, On Street Support and Compliance, International and Civic	1, 2, 3, 4
2.3 Maintain, review and update access information on the City of Melbourne Accessing Melbourne website.	2.3.1 Update content of website following engagement with people with disability.	Public Relations and Media	1, 2, 3, 4
	2.3.2 Scope generating of analytics reports and incorporate inclusion of customer satisfaction survey within webpage.	Community Services	2
2.4 Further enhancements in equity of access and facilitate co-design initiatives where practicable	2.4.1 Development of co-design guidelines to support best practice in universal access and disseminate across branches.	Community Services	1

	2.4.2 Number of people with disability engaged to identify access and inclusion barriers and scope solutions to reduce and eliminate these.	Design Studio, Community Services, Creative City, Events and Tourism, Recreation, Health and Wellbeing	2, 3, 4
	2.4.3 Number of services/program with specific disability action plans.	All branches	2, 3, 4
	2.4.4 Number of staff who complete disability awareness training.	All branches	1, 2, 3, 4
	2.4.5 Number of engagements, consultations and meetings that provide access provisions.	All branches	1, 2, 3, 4
	2.4.6 Number of programs that are inclusive and respond to the needs of people with disabilities.	All branches	1, 2, 3, 4
	2.4.7 Number of equity of access complaints that are resolved.	Customer Relations	2, 3, 4
	2.4.8 Nominated 'champion' in each division to promote and encourage equity of access.	All branches	1, 2, 3, 4
2.5 Facilitate opportunities for young people and children to have their say through forums.	2.5.1 Establish best practice approach to engage children and young people to ensure their voices are heard and feedback on matters that impact them.	Community Services	1, 2, 3, 4
2.6 Work with business to enhance and promote their access provisions.	2.6.1 Number of instances access checklists promoted to business and tourist providers.	City Economy and Activation	1, 2, 3, 4
	2.6.2 With industry partners review how to best deliver the message on importance of universal access.	Community Services, City Economy and Activation	2, 3, 4

2.7 Facilitate and enable equity of participation in all events delivered by City of Melbourne and support enhanced access provision delivered through the Events Partnership Program.	2.7.1 Update event planning permit process to ensure all events address access provisions at planning and delivery stage.	Tourism and Events	2, 3, 4
	2.7.2 Number of events that provided access information such as mobility maps, disability access keys, and clear signage and accessible facilities, toilet, seating, viewing platforms and services (mobility aids/companions).	Tourism and Events	2, 3, 4
	2.7.3 Number of events that incorporate a 'quiet' hour.	Tourism and Events	2, 3, 4
	2.7.4 Number of events that provided a 'chill out' area.	Tourism and Events	2, 3, 4
	2.7.5 Number of events that actively engaged and included people with disability in the planning, volunteering or workers at an event.	Tourism and Events	2, 3, 4
	2.7.6 Number of events that provide Auslan, captions and other alternative communication methods.	Tourism and Events	2, 3, 4
2.8 Continue to advocate, promote and provide information on mobility access options for people with disabilities.	2.8.1 Update the access information on Accessing Melbourne on City of Melbourne communication platforms.	Community Services	1, 2, 3, 4
	2.8.2 Work with industry bodies such as Visit Victoria to promote and link Accessing Melbourne on their webpage.	Tourism and Events, Community Services	2, 3, 4
	2.8.3 Continue to fund mobility support services such as companion services and mobility equipment hire.	Community Services	1
2.9 Promote Melbourne as an accessible destination nationally and internationally.	2.9.1 Explore joining the Cities for All – Global Compact on Inclusive and Accessible Cities ⁴ .	Community Services	2, 3, 4
	2.9.2 Promote access initiatives through multiple communication and social media mediums.	Community Services	1, 2, 3, 4

⁴ <http://www.cities4all.org/join-the-global-compact-on-inclusive-and-accessible-cities/>

Outcome 3: Diversity is valued and supported through education, advocacy and promotional activities

Action	Measure	Branch	Year of Implementation
3.1 Continue to convene a Disability Advisory Committee to provide strategic and functionality input to City of Melbourne initiatives and host a bi-annual forum.	3.1.1 Number of recommendations from the Disability Advisory Committee that influenced change in projects and initiatives pursued.	Community Service	1, 2, 3, 4
	3.1.2 Number of disability advocacy groups attending forum.	Community Services	2, 4
	3.1.3 Increase number of people with disability represented on Council committees, panels or advisory groups.	Community Services	2, 3, 4
3.2 Enhance employment and volunteering opportunities for people with disability at City of Melbourne through recruitment process and procurement contacts.	3.2.1 Review the diversity and inclusion strategy to highlight the importance of increasing the number of employees with disability across the organisation.	People, Culture and Leadership	1
	3.2.2 Number of vacancies promoted with disability recruitment agencies.	People, Culture and Leadership	1, 2, 3, 4
	3.2.3 Development of a measure to map number of employees with disability and percentage increase in recruitment of people with disability.	People, Culture and Leadership	2, 3, 4
	3.4.4 Number of interns, trainees and students with disability in placement every year.	People, Culture and Leadership	2, 3, 4

	3.2.5 Update procurement agreements to stipulate requirement to employ people with disability and review number of people with disability employed through contract.	Procurement and contract management	1, 2, 3, 4
	3.2.6 Volunteer leaders to attend disability awareness training annually	People, Culture and Leadership	2, 3, 4
	3.2.7 Review volunteer recruitment process to ensure the CoM volunteer program is accessible and inclusive of people with disability.	People, Culture and Leadership	2
3.3 Conduct disability awareness training for external stakeholders.	3.3.1 Number of volunteers and Ambassadors that attend disability awareness training.	Community Services	1, 2, 3, 4
3.4 Advocate to other tiers of government and government departments on matters that impact on people with disability and/or equity of access issues (mental health, people sleeping rough and transport issues).	3.4.1 Number and type of issues advocated on behalf of people with a disability.	Community Services	1, 2, 3, 4
	3.4.2 Advocate and work with the Victorian Government Office of Disability to establish an Assistance Animal Registration Scheme.	Community Services, On Street Support and Compliance	1, 2, 3, 4
	3.4.3 Map mental health services and program provision for all ages and continue to advocate for increase in services gaps.	Community Services, Health and Wellbeing	2, 3, 4
	3.4.4 Collate data on dual disadvantage experienced by people sleeping rough with disability and mental health issues to support appropriate provision.	Strategic Projects, Health and Wellbeing, On Street Support and Compliance	2, 3, 4
	3.4.5 Number of meetings attended and/or facilitated with transport providers to advocate on equity of access issues.	Community Services	1, 2, 3, 4

	3.4.6 Number of stakeholder relationships established with various transport providers (train, tram, bus, taxi, Uber, airport buses, planes and cruise ships).	Community Services	1, 2, 3, 4
	3.4.7 Advocate with transport providers to progress the rights of people with assistive dogs to access public and taxi transport.	Community Services	1, 2, 3, 4
3.5 Promote the positive contribution of people with disability to our society.	3.5.1 Number of International Day of Disability (3 December) events that are promoted and celebrated.	Community Services	1, 2, 3, 4
	3.5.2 Host a state-wide forum in 2022 for the 30 year anniversary of Disability Discrimination Act, 1992 (Cth) promoting local governments role in fostering inclusive communities.	Community Services	3
	3.5.3 Explore the feasibility of an accessibility category within Melbourne Awards.	Public Affairs and Marketing	2
	3.5.4 Number of articles in corporate communications that feature stories of contribution and achievements of people with disability such as Disability Pride events and initiatives.	Public Affairs and Marketing	1, 2, 3, 4
3.6 Advocate for the establishment of an Assistive Dog Scheme in Victoria.	3.6.1 Convene a consumer group to identify need and recommendations for establishing a scheme in Victoria.	Community Services, On Street Support and Compliance	1
	3.6.2 Advocate to Office of Disability to establish a Public Access Test and Registration Scheme.	Community Services	1
	3.6.3 Promotion to and encouragement of business stakeholders and transport providers (including aviation) to be engaged in scheme development.	City Activation and Economy	2

	3.6.4 Ascertain needs and changes required within City of Melbourne footpaths, programs and green spaces/parks to meet the need of assistive animals.	City Design Studio, Parks and City Greening	2, 3
	3.6.5 Raise awareness of business and tourism operators of the rights of people with assistive animals to be accompanied by their dogs through forums and promotional information annually.	City Economy and Activation, Events and Tourism	1, 2, 3, 4
3.7 Build capacity of community through grants that empower disability groups and individuals.	3.7.1 Number of grants that deliver equity of access projects and initiatives.	Creative City, Community Services, City Economy and Activation	2, 3, 4
	3.7.2 Number of projects or events funded through grants that promote 3 December International Day of People with Disability.	Community Services	1, 2, 3, 4
	3.7.3 Increase the number of funding and sponsorship contracts that include reporting on provision of disability access elements and information.	Creative City, Community Services	1, 2, 3, 4
3.8 Raise community awareness on the importance of 'caring' for fellow citizens.	3.8.1 Promote City of Melbourne's affiliation with Champion and Carers Cards in all community interface facilities and through corporate communications annually.	Community Services, Public Affairs and Media	1, 2, 3, 4
3.9 Promote and explore affiliation with the Hidden Disability Sunflower Lanyard (Discreetly indicates need for additional support, help or a little more time)	3.9.1 Sign up to Hidden Disabilities Sunflower Lanyard scheme.	Community Services	2
	3.9.2 Number of events and festivals that promoted, distributed and raised staff awareness of sunflower lanyards.	Community Services	2, 3, 4
3.10 Work with the tourism and business sectors to promote and highlight the benefits of universal access.	3.10.1 Dollar Value of Access publications promoted to business collectives twice per year via forums, business newsletter.	City Economy and Activation	1, 2, 3, 4

3.11 Undertake research to ensure currency of knowledge in relation to the needs of people with disability and innovations in universal access delivery.	3.11.1 Maintain demographic, service use and service gap information relating to people with disability in City of Melbourne.	Community Services	1, 2, 3, 4
	3.11.2 Utilise information from the Census of Land Use and Environment (CLUE) to collate data on the range and type of services available for people with a disability and access maps.	Community Services, Technical and Digital Innovation	1, 2, 3, 4
	3.11.3 Research projects undertaken are promoted and available on Accessing Melbourne web pages.	Community Services, Public Affairs and Marketing	1, 2, 3, 4



Global Research
Turning **Information** Into **Insight**

CoM Draft Disability Access Plan

Community Engagement Analysis

SUMMARY REPORT

13 August 2020

Prepared by Global Research Ltd

For



CITY OF MELBOURNE

Let's make Melbourne one of the most accessible and inclusive cities in the world

The City of Melbourne has drafted its fifth Disability Access Plan, with input from the community and our Disability Advisory Committee.

Our goal is to make Melbourne one of the world's most accessible and inclusive cities.

We developed our first Disability Action Plan in 1999, and since then we have been working to reduce and eliminate barriers in our physical, informational and social environments.

We have undertaken research and asked people with disability for their views on what needs to be done to make the city more inclusive. The findings of this research and the views of community members have informed the draft Disability Access Plan 2020–2024.

The draft Plan outlines three key outcomes that will guide actions over the next four years:

- 1.1 Outcome 1: Infrastructure developments and public spaces demonstrate best practice in universal access.
- 1.2 Outcome 2: Our information, services, programs, events, festivals, and civic engagements are accessible to people with disabilities.
- 1.3 Outcome 3: Diversity is valued and supported through education, advocacy, and promotional activities.

This summary report provides an overview of the consultation analysis and findings.



How we engaged with the community

On July 8 2020, the draft Disability Access Plan (DAP) was released. A public consultation seeking feedback on the document was open between July 8th and August 5th 2020. Feedback was collected primarily via an online Participate Melbourne survey, though respondents could also make submissions via email. CoM conducted 15 online meetings with community members to discuss the draft DAP as well.

To increase awareness about the public consultation, CoM advertised the consultation on various social media channels. Below is a breakdown of the social media reach during this consultation, alongside the feedback we received:



What you told us about the draft Disability Access Plan

The City of Melbourne is committed to being a 'city for people' — one that is welcoming, inclusive and accessible for all. As one of the world's most liveable cities, we strive to demonstrate and lead best practice in universal access.

We define best practice universal access as a co-design process of engagement with people with disability that results in environments that can be accessed, understood and used by all people regardless of their age and ability. This results in equity of participation for all.

- Draft Disability Access Plan

We found...

- > Respondents had a range of different connections with the draft DAP, including 'visitor', 'worker', 'resident', and 'carer'.
- > Respondents were from a broad range of Melbourne postcodes, demonstrating that the capital city is *everyone's* city.
- > Over two-thirds of respondents thought it was 'likely' or 'highly likely' that the draft Disability Access Plan would help 'us' work towards making Melbourne one of the world's most accessible and inclusive cities.
- > The 'Participate Melbourne website' was the most popular method by which respondents wished to be kept informed about the DAP, closely followed by 'direct emails'.

38%

of respondents were visitors to the city of Melbourne

33%

of respondents were workers in the city of Melbourne

What respondents liked about the draft DAP

These are the things that the community liked most about the draft Disability Access Plan:

You said...

"I feel the three main outcomes combined are not only really important, but this vision will really help support making the City of Melbourne more accessible, safe and inclusive of people living with a disability"

- Online Survey Respondent

67%

of respondents thought it was 'likely' or 'highly likely' that the draft DAP would help 'us' work towards making Melbourne one of the world's most accessible and inclusive cities.

We heard...

General praise for the draft Disability Access Plan

- > The majority of positive comments about the draft DAP offered general praise for the Plan.
- > Respondents liked that the plan was focused on making Melbourne more accessible for *all*.
- > People liked that the draft DAP has three very clear goals.

Support for a collaborative and inclusive approach

- > Respondents liked the focus on 'co-designing'. They wanted people with lived experience of disability to be actively involved in the plan.
- > People liked the "nothing for us without us" approach taken in the draft DAP.
- > Respondents appreciated the inclusiveness of the document, like the acknowledgement of invisible disabilities.



What respondents felt was missing from the draft DAP

These are the things that the community thought were missing from the draft Disability Access Plan:

You said...

"For a DAP to be effective, it also needs indicators which indicate success or otherwise, e.g. four or more boat operators trained by Dec 2022. This needs monitoring at intervals throughout the plan to indicate whether the projected outcome is working or if it needs adjustment or changing altogether."

- Online Survey Respondent

The number of different Melbourne postcodes that respondents came from was

38

We heard...

Draft report missing detail

- > Some people felt that the draft Disability Access Plan was too vague.
- > These people wanted more details about how City of Melbourne was going to make changes to benefit people with disabilities.
- > They wanted measurable targets so that City of Melbourne could be held accountable.

Suggestions about the process

- > Some respondents gave CoM tips to help improve the draft DAP, and how they engage with the community.

Training and education

- > People wanted easier access to information and training for people with and without disabilities.
- > People felt that educating the building industry about universal design principles would create better outcomes for all.



How Your Feedback Will Be Used

This feedback will be used to inform the final document and specific feedback in relation to greater detail and more definitive measures will be included in the Monitoring and Evaluation Framework.

This report has been prepared by:

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Global Research
Turning **Information** Into **Insight**



Draft Disability Access Plan Community Engagement Analysis

13 August 2020

Prepared by Global Research Ltd

for



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Executive Summary

Background and process

People with a disability comprise eighteen percent of the population and contribute socially and economically as residents, workers, students, and visitors to the city. Since 1999, when Council endorsed its first Disability Action Plan, the City of Melbourne has demonstrated ongoing commitment to reducing and eliminating barriers through access initiatives undertaken across many branches.

The contemporary societal context of disability is impacted by the continual growth in our population, infrastructure developments and technological advancements within our city. In addition, the revolutionary roll out of the National Disability Insurance Scheme presents opportunities and challenges that allow us to embrace these changes to realise our vision to make Melbourne the world's most accessible and inclusive city.

This engagement process was undertaken following robust research and community engagement which informed the drafting of City of Melbourne's draft Disability Access Plan. Many research projects were co-designed by people with disability and all involved engagement with people with disability. Key research undertaken included the following

1. 2012 Economic Benefits of Universal Access, Monash University *
2. 2015 Understanding Accessibility for Sensory Disability – Qualitative Research Inquiry, Studio Thick *
3. 2017 Demographics and Disability Service Mapping Across City of Melbourne Suburbs, AURIN Melbourne University
4. 2019 Everyone's Moomba April Melbourne University *
5. 2019 Making Melbourne more inclusive for people with disability May Melbourne University Disability Institute *
6. 2019 Disability Demographics Infographics and International Best Practice
7. 2019 Showcasing Access and Inclusion – Cutting through a complex legislative and policy landscape with co-design December 2019 Visionary Design Development

* co-design research process

With reference to good governance and to ensure community input prior to the finalization of this plan feedback gathered through this engagement process contributed to the final document and will be used to inform further refinement of actions and measures as the implementation of the plan progresses.

Research results

Research projects and community engagement undertaken in developing the draft Plan indicate that although many access improvements have been made there remain persistent barriers in our built, social and informational environments. People of all ages with disability have told us that these barriers impact on their equity of access and limit opportunities to reach their desired potential.

The draft Plan outlines three key outcomes that will guide actions over the next four years:

- 1.1. Outcome 1: Infrastructure developments and public spaces demonstrate best practice in universal access.
- 1.2. Outcome 2: Our information, services, programs, events, festivals, and civic engagements are accessible to people with disabilities.
- 1.3. Outcome 3: Diversity is valued and supported through education, advocacy, and promotional activities.

This engagement process has availed further opportunity for community to confirm CoM's understanding and contribute to current and future access priorities.

Engagement findings

Quantitative:

- > Respondents had a range of different connections with the draft DAP, including 'visitor', 'worker', 'resident', and 'carer' (in order of most-to-least frequently represented).
- > Respondents were from a broad range of Melbourne postcodes, demonstrating that the capital city is everyone's city.
- > Over two-thirds of respondents thought it was 'likely' or 'highly likely' that the draft Disability Access Plan would help 'us' work towards making Melbourne one of the world's most accessible and inclusive cities.
- > The 'Participate Melbourne website' was the most popular method by which respondents wished to be kept informed about the DAP, closely followed by 'direct emails'.

Qualitative:

What people liked most about the draft DAP:

- > The majority of positive comments about the draft DAP offered general praise for the Plan.
- > Respondents liked that the plan was focused on making Melbourne more accessible for *all*.
- > Respondents thought that the collaborative and inclusive approach of the document (both in the context of the document itself, as well as its goals and aspirations) was positive.
- > Respondents felt that the co-design approach would ensure better outcomes for people with disabilities.

What people felt was missing from the draft DAP:

- > A moderate number of respondents felt the draft DAP lacked detail and tangible/measurable goals.
- > Respondents wanted more information about *how* CoM planned to achieve outcomes. Some comments suggested that respondents may not have seen both the summary 'Plain English' version of the plan, and the full plan.
- > Several respondents offered suggestions about how the engagement process and development of the DAP could be improved, such as specific wording suggestions, or ideas of other things that should be included in the DAP.

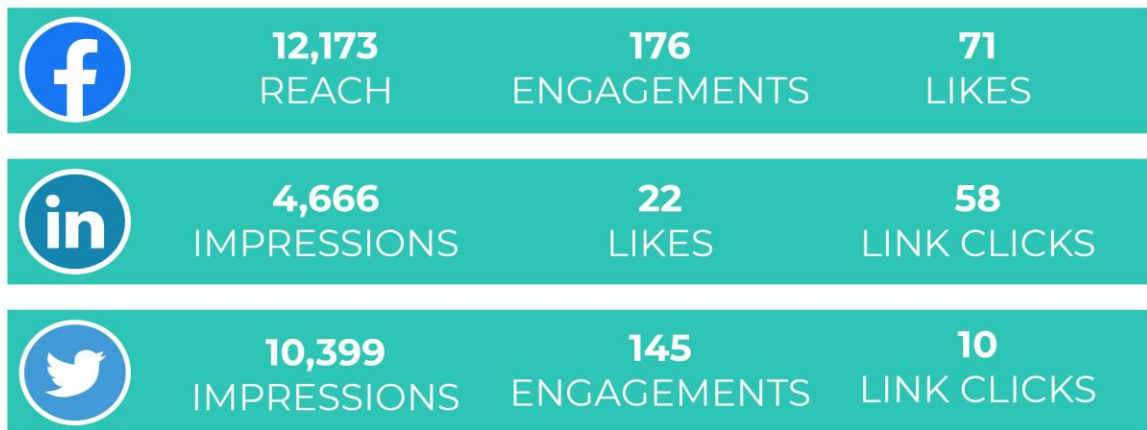
CoM DRAFT DISABILITY ACCESS PLAN

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT RESULTS

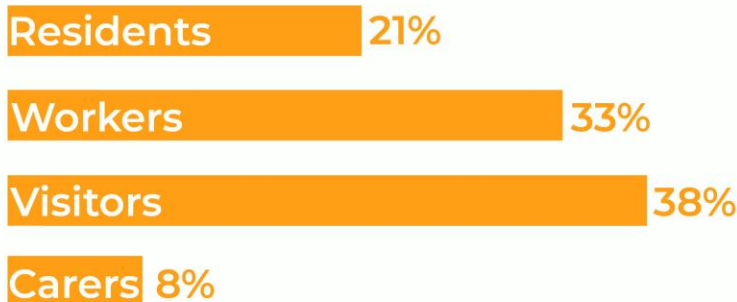
In July 2020, CoM asked for your feedback about the draft Disability Access Plan (DAP). This is what we learned:

ENGAGEMENT REACH

We received:



WHO RESPONDENTS WERE



From **38** different Melbourne postcodes

WHAT YOU TOLD US

67% of respondents thought the draft DAP was likely to help us work towards making Melbourne one of the world's most accessible and inclusive cities.

Respondents wanted to be kept informed of DAP progress through the Participate Melbourne website and/or direct emails.

KEY FINDINGS

WHAT RESPONDENTS LIKED...



General praise

"I feel the three main outcomes combined are not only really important, but this vision will really help support making the City of Melbourne more accessible, safe and inclusive of people living with a disability."



Inclusive

"I think the plan is fantastic! Melbourne is home to a wide range of people from all walks of life and varying abilities. The plan to make Melbourne a truly accessible and inclusive city, and a global gold standard in accessibility is inspiring."



Collaborative

"I love the co-designing aspect. I think including those with disabilities in the process is deeply important."

WHAT RESPONDENTS FELT WAS MISSING...



Detail and clear goals

"A general comment is that it is a bit vague and general. It looks as if responsibilities are not assigned for the achievement of each action - no individual and no department. This is usually an essential part of a DAP to ensure that someone is responsible for carrying out actions and achieving outcomes."



Other specific suggestions

"More needs to be said on support for carers."

"Nature strips. Re-levelling on paths. Roads."

"The sunflower lanyard scheme would need to be promoted. I have worked in disability for many years and have never heard of it. "

Introduction

Purpose

The purpose of this engagement was to ensure community had opportunity for feedback and input to the draft Disability Access Plan 2020-2024, Embracing Equity in Participation

Background

The City of Melbourne has drafted its fifth Disability Access Plan, with input from the community and the Disability Advisory Committee.

The goal is to make Melbourne one of the world's most accessible and inclusive cities.

The first Disability Action Plan was developed in 1999, and since then there has been work to reduce and eliminate barriers in our physical, informational and social environments.

The CoM have undertaken research and asked people with disability for their views on what needs to be done to make the city more inclusive. The findings of this research and the views of community members have informed the draft Disability Access Plan 2020–2024.

Engagement approach

On 8 July 2020, the draft Disability Access Plan (DAP) was released. A public consultation seeking feedback on the document was open between July 8th and August 5th, 2020. Feedback was collected primarily via an online Participate Melbourne survey, though respondents could also make submissions via email. CoM also conducted 15 online meetings with community members to discuss the draft DAP.

To increase awareness about the public consultation, CoM advertised the engagement on various social media channels. Below is a breakdown of the social media reach during this consultation:

Platform	Engagement Reach	Example comments:
Twitter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impressions: 10,399 • Engagements: 145 • Likes: 22 • Link clicks: 10 	<p><i>'Get rid of those cement tiles covering the city's streets. They're far too slippery when wet & they'd be an absolute nightmare 4 those who are blind & disabled.'</i></p> <p><i>'The bitumen is much safer in the suburbs. U can't always judge things on looks. They're too damn dangerous 4 the city.'</i></p>
LinkedIn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impressions: 4,666 • Comments: 2 • Link clicks: 58 	
Facebook	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reach: 12,173 • Engagements: 176 • Likes: 71 • Comments: 4 	<p><i>'All pedestrian crossings across the city of Melbourne should be automatic, not just the CBD, to avoid contact with the crossing buttons'</i></p>

Table 1: Social Media engagement data

Definitions:

Impressions/Reach – The number of times the post was shown to users.

Engagements – The number of actions that were taken on a post e.g. shares, likes, comments.

Link clicks – To the Participate Melbourne site

Methodology

During this consultation, community responses were received primarily through an online survey hosted on the Participate Melbourne website. In addition, City of Melbourne received 4 email submissions, and held 15 online meetings with community members to discuss the draft Disability Access Plan.

In total 52 respondents contributed via Participate Melbourne. The survey consisted of six questions, including two open-ended, free text questions. The survey questions were:

1. Do you think the draft Disability Access Plan will help us work towards making Melbourne one of the world's most accessible and inclusive cities? (Highly likely, Likely, Neutral, Unlikely, Highly Unlikely)
2. What do you like most about the draft plan?
3. Is there anything missing from the draft plan?
4. What is the best way to keep community informed on the implementation and progress of the draft Disability Access Plan? - Participate Melbourne website, Direct emails, Regular meetings, or Other
5. What is your connection to the draft Disability Access Plan? - Resident, Worker, Visitor, Carer
6. Postcode

The data collected from the **four quantitative** questions (*Do you think the draft Disability Access Plan will help us work towards making Melbourne one of the world's most accessible and inclusive cities?*, *What is the best way to keep community informed on the implementation and progress of the draft Disability Access Plan?*, *What is your connection to the draft Disability Access Plan?* And, *Postcode*) have been analysed and presented in charts within this report.

Comments offered in response to the **two qualitative** questions (*What do you like most about the draft plan?* and *Is there anything missing from the draft plan?*) were read and sorted (coded) into relevant themes and topics. These comments have been discussed in the *Discussion* section of this report.

To give a clear and consistent indication of then number of comments received on each topic, the following key was used to describe the relative number of comments on each topic:

Key for comment numbers	
3 comments	A few
4–7 comments	A small number
8–14 comments	Several
15–24 comments	A moderate number
25–49 comments	A considerable number
50–74 comments	A substantial number

Note that participant quotes from the Participate Melbourne survey and email submissions are included verbatim; however, some spelling and grammar errors have been corrected where these changes did not alter the meaning.

Engagement reach and range

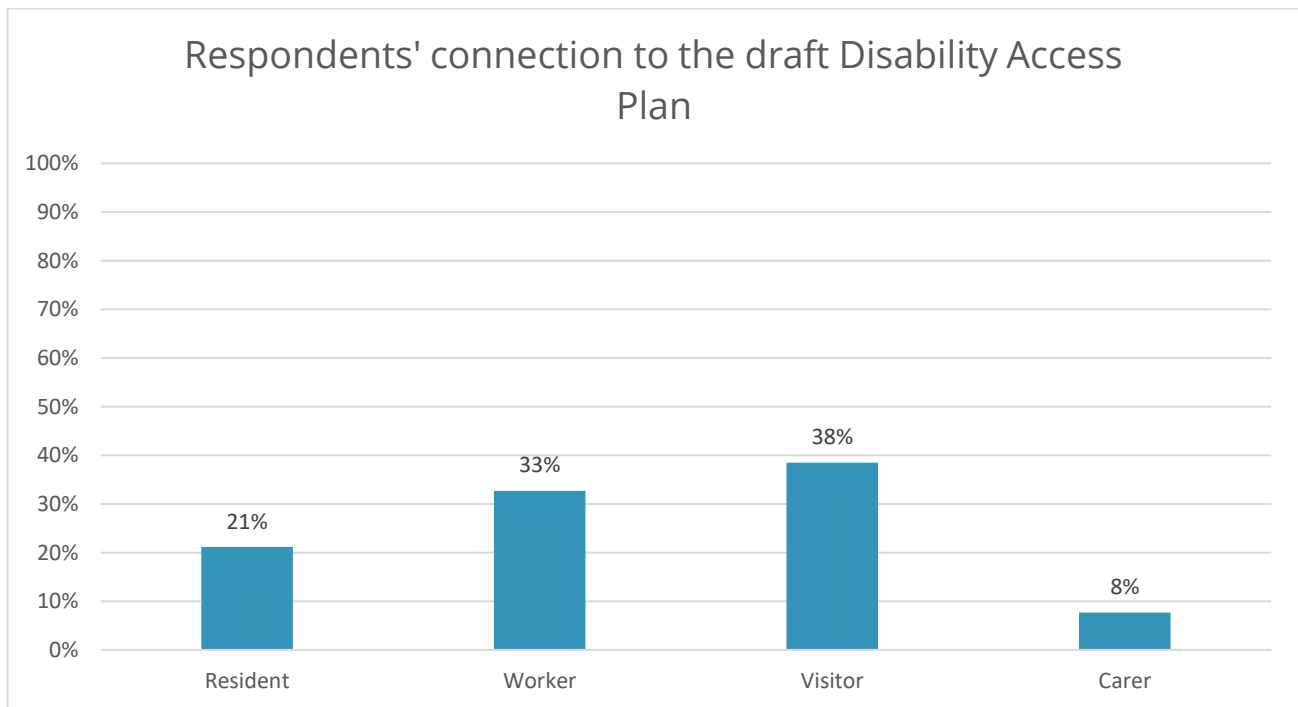
In total 56 individual respondents contributed to this engagement via the following channels:

- > Participate Melbourne survey: 52
- > Email submitters: 4

In addition, 15 online meetings were held. Social media engagement data can be seen in *Table 1* on page 8.

The charts below present the characteristics of the 52 respondents who contributed via Participate Melbourne. Email respondents were not asked to provide information that could be included in this dataset.

Respondent connections to the DAP

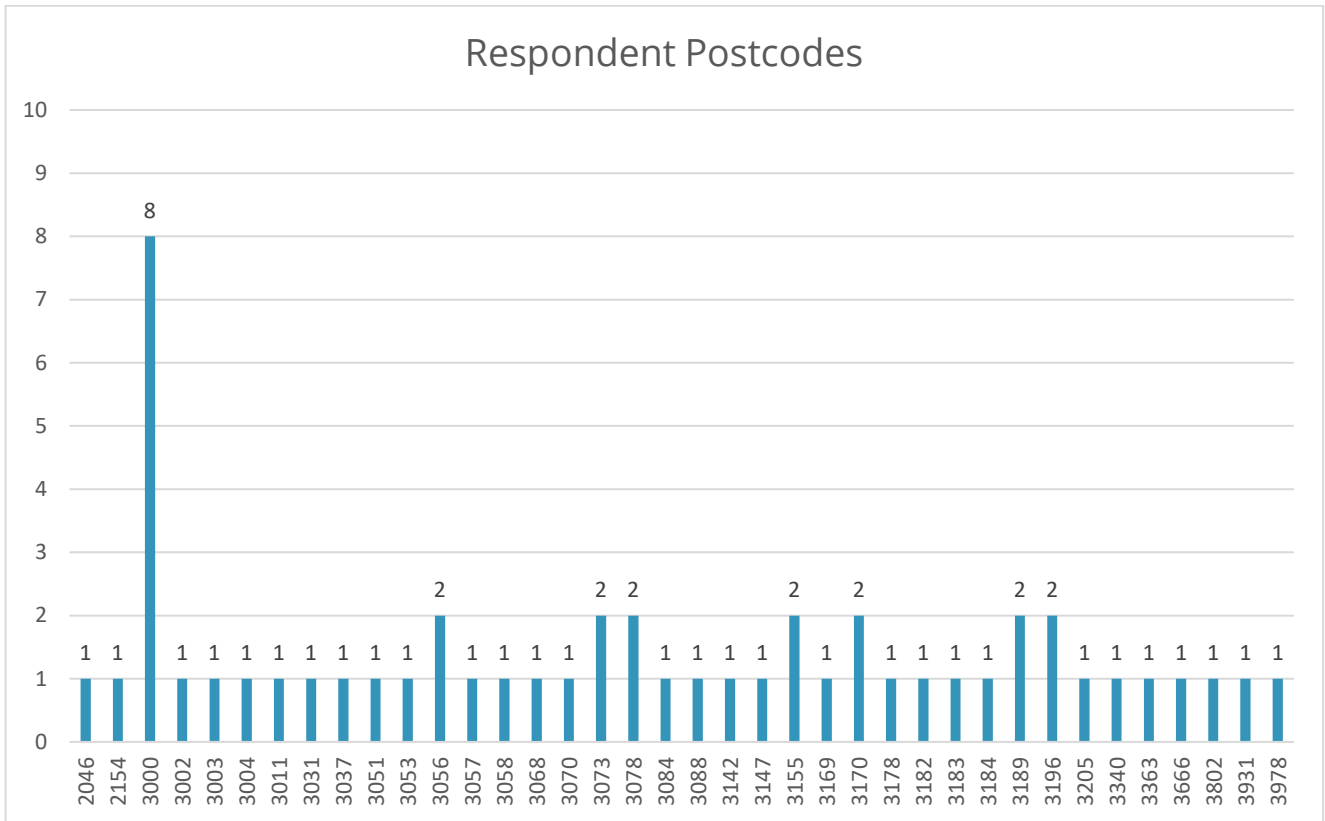


Note that respondents were only able to select one connection to Melbourne.

Findings:

- > The most common connection identified was 'visitor' (38%, 20 respondents).
- > Thirty-three percent (17 respondents) worked in the City of Melbourne, while 21% (11 respondents) lived in the area.
- > The group with the lowest representation was 'carer' (8%, 4 respondents).

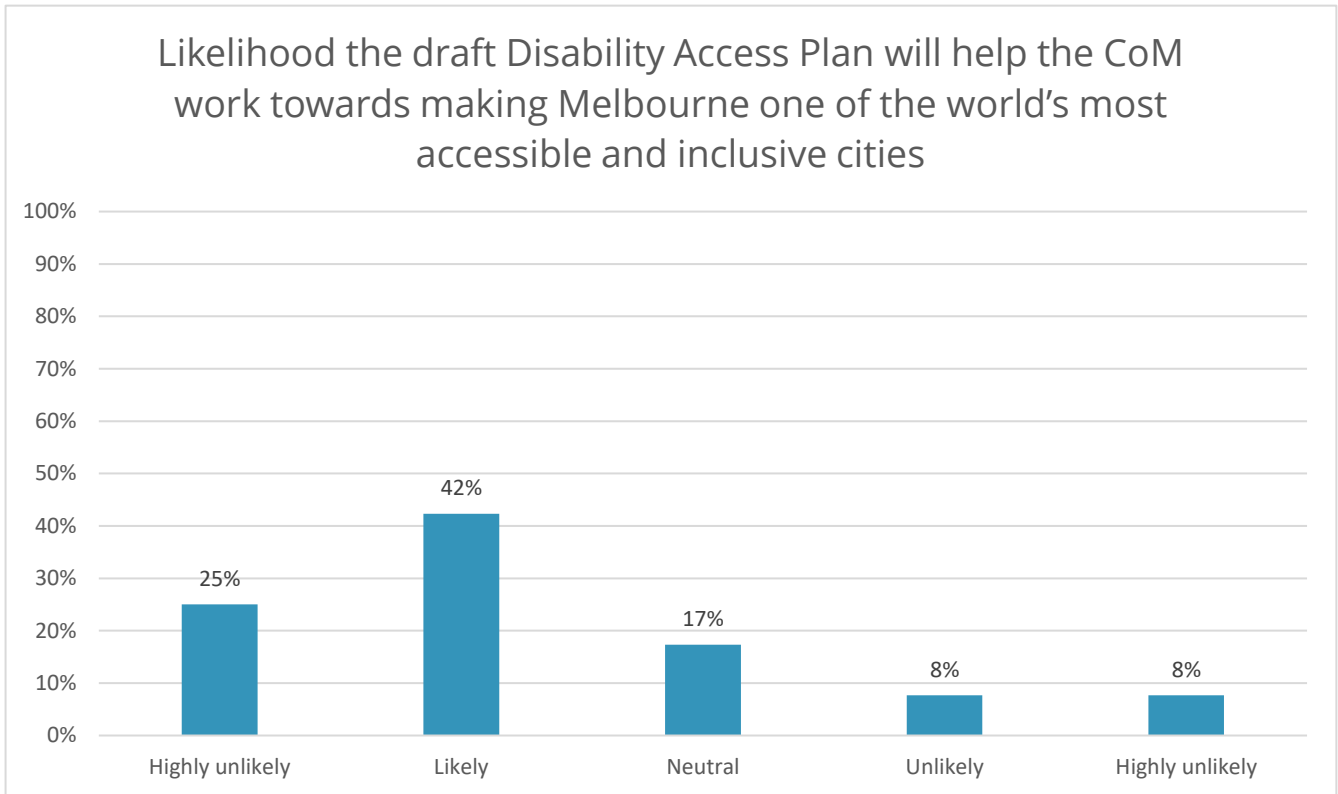
Where Respondents Live



Findings:

- > Respondents were from a broad range of City of Melbourne postcodes.
 - o This demonstrates the capital city as 'everyone's city'
- > The most common respondent postcode was 3000 (8).
- > All other postcodes were reported by either 1 or 2 respondents.
- > A total of 38 different postcodes were reported by respondents.

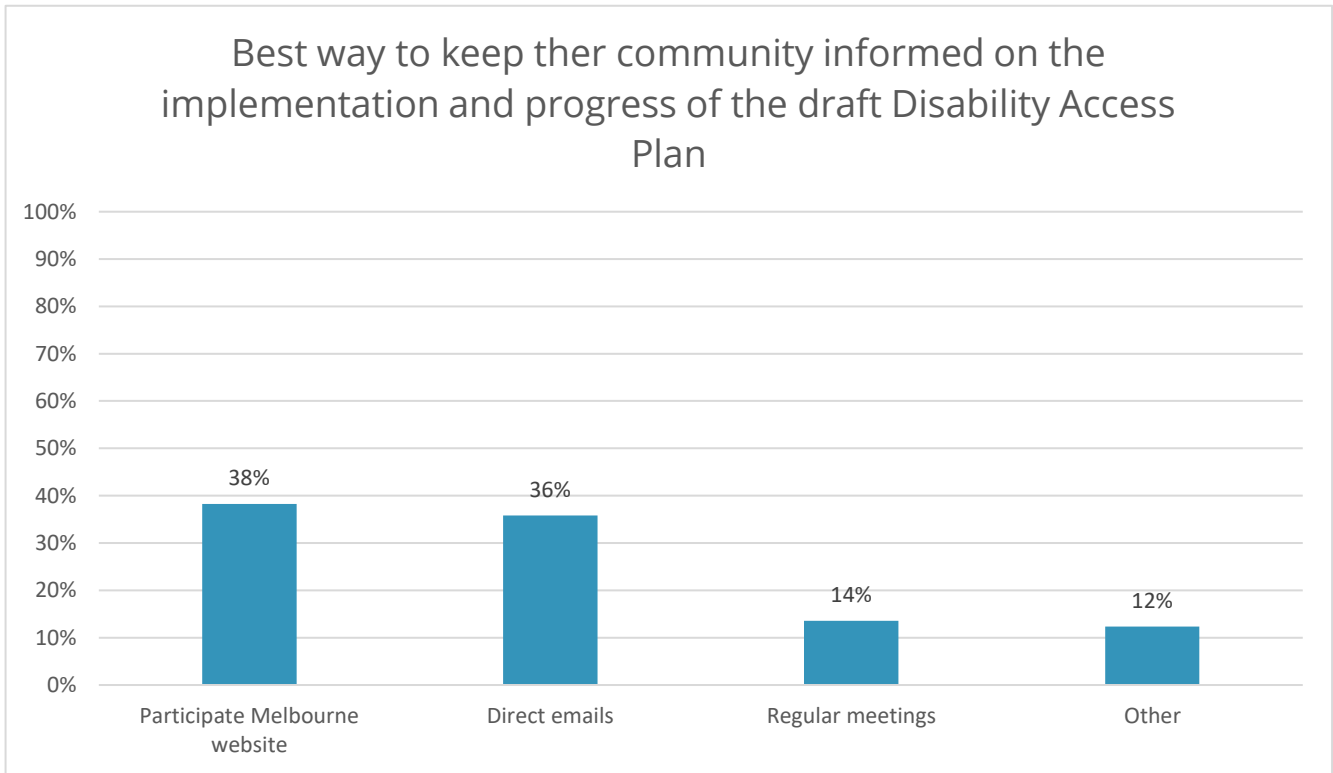
Likelihood the DAP will help make Melbourne one of the world’s most accessible and inclusive cities



Findings:

- > One quarter of respondents thought it was ‘highly likely’ that the draft Disability Access Plan would help ‘us’ work towards making Melbourne one of the world’s most accessible and inclusive cities (25%).
- > Over two-thirds of respondents thought it was ‘likely’ (42%) or ‘highly likely’ (25%).
- > Sixteen percent of respondents felt it was ‘unlikely’ (8%) or ‘highly unlikely’ (8%).
- > Seventeen percent of respondents were neutral on this issue.

Best way to keep the community informed about DAP progress



Findings:

- > The 'Participate Melbourne website' was the most popular method by which respondents wished to be kept informed about the DAP (38%), this was closely followed by 'direct emails' (36%).
- > 'Regular meetings' was selected by 14% of respondents.
- > 'Other' ideas (12%) included: social media; community hubs; forums utilising accessibility experts; and one respondent stated 'all of the above'.

Note, respondents were able to select only one option.

Discussion

Key findings

- > A considerable number of respondents offered general praise for the vision presented in the draft Disability Access Plan.
- > Specific elements that respondents liked most were: the inclusive focus of the draft DAP – both in the document itself (i.e. the acknowledgement of a diverse range of disabilities including ‘invisible disabilities’), and in its focus (i.e. to make Melbourne a better place for all to live); and the collaborative co-design approach.
- > Respondents appreciated the document’s easy to read, accessible format.
- > A moderate number of respondents felt that the draft DAP was lacking detail and strong commitments. It is unclear whether these comments came from respondents who had read the full draft DAP, or simply the summary version – though a clear theme emerged that respondents wanted stronger, measurable commitments from CoM.
- > Other elements commented on by respondents in relation to what they felt was missing from the draft DAP included: specific suggestions of things they wished to see added; comments about the engagement process and wording of the draft DAP; training and education; and collaboration and inclusivity.

What respondents liked most about the draft Disability Access Plan

This section discusses the responses to Q2 of the Participate Melbourne survey, “What do you like most about the draft plan?”. Comments have been sorted into relevant themes and topics where possible, and have been discussed in order of most-to-least frequently mentioned.

General praise for the draft Disability Access Plan 25 comments

The majority of comments on this topic were general in nature, commending the overall vision of the draft Disability Access Plan, though not elaborating on their assessment. Below are some examples of such comments:

The aspiration is nice

More opportunities for disabilities

It provides a path forward for the city

Other comments provided slightly more detail in their praise for the overall vision, though were still quite general in nature. Examples include:

It is great to see that the city of Melbourne is finally recognising that the city isn't accessible to everyone and this plan is the first step of many to make the city accessible to all.

Focus on universal access. Embedding universal access within building design and adaptation is particularly important.

A couple of respondents specifically commended the three goals of the draft DAP. These comments expressed that the three chosen areas were important, and that respondents felt the report had a suitable focus. These comments read:

I feel the three main outcomes combined are not only really important, but this vision will really help support making the City of Melbourne more accessible, safe and inclusive of people living with a disability.

I think the plan has three very clear goals with strategies to implement it.

One respondent made the following observation about the tone of the DAP:

I like the ambitious goal of making Melbourne the most accessible city. I also like the notion of the cultural shift from a focus on disability to a focus on diversity

Inclusive

14 comments

Another key topic that respondents praised was the inclusivity of the DAP. This was referred to both in the context of how inclusive the document itself was (i.e. in acknowledging the diverse range of disabilities including invisible disabilities), and the DAP's general focus on inclusivity (i.e. the focus on making Melbourne one of the most accessible *and* inclusive cities). The following comment sums up this overall sentiment well:

I think the plan is fantastic! Melbourne is home to a wide range of people from all walks of life and varying abilities. The plan to make Melbourne a truly accessible and inclusive city, and a global gold standard in accessibility is inspiring.

A small number of comments were made that acknowledged the inclusion of diverse representation of people with disabilities within the DAP; these included:

That diversity of communities with a disability are included.

I love that the plan includes the use of the Hidden Disabilities Sunflower Lanyards scheme. This will truly help those with a hidden disability feel included and supported.

Other responses expressed praise for the DAP's focus on making Melbourne a more inclusive city overall. Comments along this theme included:

Investment in innovative technologies, such as BindiMaps, for accessible navigation and wayfinding is a great step in equipping the city with the fundamental infrastructure so everyone can call Melbourne home.

The plan highlights the benefits of an inclusive society – social, economic and legal along with increasing awareness of the positive contribution that people with disability bring to society and local communities as participants. The plan also indicates the use of best practice in universal access through a co-design process of engagement with people with disability.

The theme of inclusiveness is very strong. I love that access to events and activities is also a key goal.

One respondent made the following comment in response to the statement, "Our vision to make Melbourne the world's most accessible and inclusive city where all people can participate with dignity and independence.":

This statement is extremely powerful up front and separating it from Melbourne being the worlds most liveable...cities in the world suggests that regardless of the title, inclusion is paramount.

Collaborative approach

11 comments

The collaborative approach promoted within the DAP was praised by several respondents, who felt that the co-design approach would ensure better outcomes for people with disabilities. One comment which sums up the general sentiment reads:

The co-design approaches used to develop the draft plan are essential to ensure the goals are led by people with disability and their lived experience is valued. Co-design will generate better outcomes, develop ideas for problem solving and understand the needs of people with a disability.

The majority of comments under this topic were general in nature, and provided broad praise for the co-design approach. The following comments are representative.

I love the co-designing aspect. I think including those with disabilities in the process is deeply important.

It involves collaboration with disability groups including youth.

... the idea of co-design and the Council setting examples of what can be done sounds promising.

A few more detailed comments about the collaborative approach outlines in the DAP were given. Below is an example:

I'm happy to see there has also been a consultation and consultative process with people living with a disability. It's often so important to find what would most benefit them. What do they want to see, feel, hear when they visit.

Easy to read/understand, accessible

5 comments

A small number of respondents appreciated the easy to understand format of the draft Disability Access Plan. These respondents liked that the DAP was presented in a clear, plainly written, easy to read and accessible format. The following comments are indicative:

Short and to the point. I also like the more detailed disability stats.

It's clearly and plainly written.

Comprehensive and easy to follow.

Other topics

5 comments

Remaining comments did not fit neatly into the above topics. The following responses were given to the question: 'What do you like most about the draft plan?':

The draft plan tries to make CoM compliant with existing laws

The emphasis on creating more changing places is great! This needs to be an absolute priority in making Melbourne more accessible.

Second step about: information, services, programs, events, festivals and civic engagements are accessible to people with disabilities

I feel as a person as a Victorian with a disability I can see myself in the plan. I feel there are many opportunities which can be drawn from the plan.

I feel the plan identifies the built environment is what is disabling. Not the person with the disability.

What respondents felt was missing from the draft plan

This section contains analysis of responses to Q3 of the survey, “Is there anything missing from the draft plan?”.

Not detailed enough / commitment too weak 24 comments

The most frequently mentioned element that respondents felt was missing or could be improved was the focus of the survey. Over a third of those who stated they felt the plan was not detailed enough simply expressed a desire for more detail. Some comments suggested that respondents may not have seen both the summary ‘Plain English’ version of the plan, and the full plan. An example of this is the following comment:

Its accessible format is great but means it is a bit light on detail. There could be a supporting document that elaborates on some of the key objectives (unless I missed it).

Where respondents discussed the content of the DAP, it was sometimes difficult to determine whether they were discussing the full plan or the summary document. Comments suggested that although the simple format of ‘the document’ was helpful, it led to a lack of detail and measurable targets.

With targets described as ‘vague’ or ‘shallow’, respondents felt that CoM was not making a strong enough commitment, and that any change would be difficult to assess or measure. One respondent summed up a common concern about how this lack of detail may lead to lack of action or meaningful outcomes:

A general comment is that it is a bit vague and general. It looks as if responsibilities are not assigned for the achievement of each action-no individual and no department. This is usually an essential part of a DAP to ensure that someone is responsible for carrying out actions and achieving outcomes.

A few comments similarly suggested that more transparency and accountability is necessary to ensure that positive changes do come as a result of the Disability Access Plan, they suggested things such as:

For a DAP to be effective, it also needs indicators which indicate success or otherwise, e.g. four or more boat operators trained by Dec 2022. This needs monitoring at intervals throughout the plan to indicate whether the projected outcome is working or if it needs adjustment or changing altogether.

and

Leadership from the highest levels, budget and business case development, accountability.

A solution to this issue was provided by one respondent, who noted that CoM should introduce measures for its success, stating:

Yes, the plan asserts that events are inclusive and accessible and then aims to make them so. An audit needs to be undertaken, ideally with Scope and other partners/ disability experts, to ascertain where current practice is not compliant with legislation and also where it can exceed the expectations. It needs to be specific in measures and actions.

Meanwhile, another respondent raised the following question about the next step for the draft DAP:

Will there be any governance structures in place to either input to the next phase of the plan or guide its implementation ie. An oversight committee comprising predominately of the disabled community and key delivery partners?

A few respondents specifically noted a lack of clear information about *how* CoM were planning to achieve the goals laid out in the draft Plan, stating:

There is no clear action on how you will deliver a plan. It's token language that seeks to make people feel less guilty.

How does a council plan not articulate a budget, success metrics or engagement plan (I expect more detail than well talk to young people with a disability).

and

Your actions give no indication of HOW you will get there you have listed the what, and a measure but no transparency on detailed actions? Example: how will you increase employment? Advertising roles will not get you there? Changing wording in a strategy will not get you there? What are you doing to eliminate bias in the recruitment process? How are you providing support to employees with disability to feel included? How are you capturing disability information?

Meanwhile, one respondent felt that the focus of the draft Plan was too narrow, stating:

I believe it is narrow and too focussed on access to buildings and not about involving businesses and inclusion.

In addition, a couple of respondents focused specifically on employment, stating that the employment commitment made in the plan was too weak:

Employment commitment is very weak. It's disheartening there is no commitment on your website or information on adjustments to apply for a role. If you don't start with increasing employment of disability your organisation won't have a full understanding of what an accessible city would look like.

Other specific suggestions

16 comments

A moderate number of respondents made specific suggestions about how CoM could improve the Disability Access Plan. These suggestions included: providing extra promotion of the Sunflower Lanyard scheme to ensure that people with disabilities know what is available to them; re-levelling paths; and increasing discussion of support for carers. Other comments were:

I would like to see the Assistive Animals section specify that Melbourne City will advocate for consultation with users of assistant dogs across physical, learning and psychological use groups. Only some users are covered by larger organisations and it's important that when this consultation begins, it includes small private trainers.

While hidden disabilities are mentioned, I would like to see included in the action something around developing story boards/social stories and potentially virtual tours of certain sites that can then link with what the major transport providers are in the process of developing for their stops/stations and rolling stock.

I would like to say that restaurants with food for people with swallowing problems should be made aware and included. thank you

and

I would be good to turn Swanston St and Elizabeth no cars zone so it is more accessible for everyone with gardens in it smoke free more Auslan interpreters information centres for help and assistance accessible mobility centres with clean toilets cleaned frequently with parents access etc.

Another couple of respondents discussed how, at present, the plan fails to address the fact that many of the barriers that people with disabilities face are due to the built environment and that specific training and

education needs to be aimed at professionals responsible for designing buildings and other infrastructure (e.g. architects, planners, developers). One respondent summed this up by noting:

Experiencing difficulty at points of access is common throughout Melbourne's existing built environment. Often, doors are too narrow for wheelchair entry. Kerb cuts are insufficient in number and frequently unsafe for diverse users and/ or mobility devices. Graphic signage communicating safe access points is routinely missing. Unfortunately, Visionary Design Development' team members' personal carer experience of built environment inaccessibility mirrors our, extensive, professional experience. Currently, the Plan fails to consider the immediate consequences of the existing (inaccessible) built environment.

Another noted:

The Plan implies the importance of access and inclusion education. Education is, doubtless, effective in assisting the development of more inclusive communities. However, to remove barriers within the existing built environment, specifically educating built environment professionals about accessibility being a human right is crucial.

These two comments highlight again the perception that it is important to involve people with lived experience of disability in the decision-making process, particularly in relation to the built environment. The following comment sums up this sentiment:

The plan does not acknowledge how the city is intending to raise the matter of equitable and dignified access when these kinds of decisions are being made by people who may not even realise their decisions have consequences for how persons with a disability interact with the city.

Comments about the process

11 comments

Some respondents had comments about the process, including specific wording suggestions for the Disability Access Plan, or other suggestions as to how CoM could improve the engagement process and the development of the DAP.

Following the 'Nothing for us without us' approach was generally applauded by respondents, though one respondent noted that the more commonly used form of this phrase is 'Nothing about us without us', and suggested that this version be used as it has more impact due to the rhyme.

One longer email submission contained a few specific wording or formatting suggestions relating to the DAP document. One of these suggestions referred to the name of the document itself, stating:

Would council consider renaming of this plan to reflect City of Melbourne's commitment and vision to accessibility AND inclusivity i.e. Access and Inclusion Plan? I understand the Victorian Disability Act 2006 requires all public sector bodies to have a DAP, however, could consideration be extended to recognise the significant difference in definition and action when using the terminology 'access' and inclusion?

Another suggestion made by the same respondent touched on the visual representations/images within the report. The comment reads:

Given Australians who use a wheelchair make up only 4.4% of people with a disability, would council consider including images on cover of plan that represent extensive diversity of disability rather than an image that represents the minority?

Another respondent discussed the term 'Changing Places', and suggested that 'accessible toilets' is a more appropriate way of wording this, as 'changing places' implies nappy changing for parents.

An additional comment addressed the section of the draft Plan that reads: *“Disability is diverse. A disability may be acquired at birth or result from an accident, injury or disease. It may come and go. Many disabilities are visible, such as people using a mobility aid to get around whereas other disabilities are invisible, such as a person with a hearing impairment or psycho-social disability”*. The respondent suggested that this discussion would be more useful if placed at the beginning of the document to ensure that those less familiar with the world of disability can be aware of this concept as they read on.

One respondent suggested that a glossary of terms, and that the draft Plan should include:

more about positive outcomes in economic development and relationships with businesses and accessible recreation options in and about Melbourne.

Additionally, two respondents suggested that a paper copy (or printable copy) of the survey should be made available so that the community could provide feedback in alternative formats.

Training, education and support

5 comments

A small number of respondents suggested that greater access to information, training, and education around how to accommodate people with disabilities (for everyone) would be beneficial. This was discussed in terms of: offering education and training to builders/developers and the general public so that accessibility is at the forefront of everyone’s minds during the design process; providing support for CoM for business owners to become more inclusive and accessible; and, providing information for people without disabilities on how to be more inclusive.

Other comments included:

I think the plan has three very clear goals with strategies to implement it. I think one of the areas missing is for training across the state around disability and access. For example, there may be more jobs created but will the training and structures be in place to make sure that that person is supported in their job and for the lifetime of that job. It would be great to have training for small and local businesses to encourage and show the benefits of employing a person with a disability beyond them getting government funding or subsidies.

and

Funding to do level 1 Auslan courses across all state schools with education on access. Disability and access needs to be a part of the school curriculum.

Collaboration

3 comments

A few respondents suggested that the CoM could take a more collaborative approach with the draft DAP. Suggestions included adopting a co-production model that involved hiring ‘living experts’ (those with lived experience of disability) to run projects and be on teams to implement ideas. Another suggestion read:

In these extremely challenging times and unpredictable environment the key to success is going to be the effective collaboration between CoM and external agencies. It is important for CoM to drive these collaborations as economic pressure increases and community organisations seek to secure their own financial security and organisational survival. How can CoM strongly highlight its role as a facilitator of collaboration and make that more obvious in the plan so that agencies don’t see the CoM as only a prospective funder but rather a partner?

Another comment suggested that CoM could be more ambitious with the wording of the Plan, for example by rewording "No. of people with disability engaged in review process" to "No. of people with disability who co-authored a project plan".

Not inclusive enough

3 comments

A few respondents made comments that the CoM could make the Disabilities Access Plan more inclusive. One respondent felt that forums were not an effective way to gather input from communities with disabilities. This comment stated:

Why forums? many communities with disabilities want access and input into how the world around them works. Forums are the easiest way to say you have engaged without investing anything into a relationship. Running a forum is not a viable option for many people with disabilities, because of the travel, cognitive overload and inability to really get their message across in a 30 minute brainstorm or a panel like discussion. We need to do better.

Two comments were also made which mentioned disabilities they wanted to see included in the Disability Access Plan. The comments were:

Please think and target people with swallowing problems as they have close to nothing to eat in restaurants. They do not cater for them.

and

It feels as though the plan is missing a lot of people with disabilities. In my opinion, Autism is not included in this plan as it isn't classed as a sensory or speech disability as autism affects people in different ways. Not all autistics experience sensory issues and not all experience speech problems. It isn't that autistics can't talk it is that we struggle to read social cues.

Universal design and housing access

2 comments

One respondent suggested that the Disability Access Plan should place a greater focus on universal design. Similarly, another respondent discussed Melbourne's low rate of residents with disabilities compared to the national rate, questioning whether Melbourne should be providing more 'disability-friendly' residences.

Other topics

10 comments

The majority of comments under this topic noted that respondents did not have any further suggestions about things they felt were missing from the DAP. Comments like these were general in nature, and included:

I don't think so.

Looks quite comprehensive in its actions.

I think everything is well covered.

Not that I can think of.

Another respondent made the following suggestion:

The overall goal and vision is great! It would be awesome to see more focus around the technology the city hopes to deploy to achieve the vision.

How the feedback will be used

This feedback will be used to inform the final document and specific feedback in relation to greater detail and more definitive measures will be included in the Monitoring and Evaluation Framework.

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