



City of Greater Geraldton

Disability Access and Inclusion Plan

2013 - 18

This Plan is available in alternative formats upon request in hard copy in standard and large print, electronically by email, in audio format by cassette or cd and on the City's website.

Foreword

The Disability Access and Inclusion Plan has been developed from community surveys, deliberative consultations and workshops and is underpinned with best practice principles. Our aim is for this plan is to be implemented and reviewed annually over a 5 year period as we continually strive to meet the needs of our growing population and respond to the needs of people with disability in our community.

The plan outlines the City strategies and plans of action to provide equitable access to the City's facilities and services and to build capacity, support and respond to the current and future identified needs. The plan will be overviewed by a newly formed Disability Working Group, who will meet regularly to review the progress, policy, processes and to evaluate new initiatives and make recommendations.

We look forward to implementing the Disability Access and Inclusion Plan for 2013-18 and the future developments and improvements to access facilities, services, programs and events and endorse our commitment in providing equitable access to all residents and visitors across all areas of our vibrant community.



Mayor Ian Carpenter



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Introduction

The City of Greater Geraldton is the service centre of Western Australia's Mid West region and lies 420km north of Perth, with a population of over 40,000 and is perched on a spectacular coastline to the west and a vast inland area stretching eastward to include the town of Mullewa.

The superb positioning and Mediterranean climate make Geraldton a unique location to visit and live. Geraldton is a port city servicing the agricultural and the mining resource industries, with a world leading rock lobster fishery. The City of Greater Geraldton is the hub of the Mid West region and is rapidly expanding with the population predictions forecasting that it will grow to more than 100,000 people. It is a thriving and sustainable regional city and is fast becoming a significant centre known internationally for its liveability; science, mining and trade industries; food production; and renewable energy.

Like many regional locations the percentage of persons with a disability is slightly higher than that of capital cities and it is estimated at around 21% of the current population. Given the predicted growth rate and an increasing ageing population this number will rise steadily every year.

The City is committed to facilitating the inclusion of people with disability through developing and improving its access to services, facilities, programs and events. The whole community benefits from better designed communal spaces and adopting the principles of universal access design and our commitment is to administer best practice principles through the Disability Access and Inclusion Plan to continually develop accessibility to a high standard.



Legislative Requirements for better access

It is a requirement of the Disability Services Act (WA) that all local government authorities develop and implement a Disability Access and Inclusion Plan that outlines the ways in which the authority will ensure that people with disability have equal access to its facilities and services and that each is required to lodge its Disability Access and Inclusion Plan with the WA Disability Services Commission. The legislative requirements of the Disability Services Act (WA) 1993 (amended 2004), also frame and include the Disability Discrimination Act (Cth) 1992, and the Equal Opportunity Act (WA) 1984 (amended 1988).

The Disability Services Act (WA) requires that the Disability Access and Inclusion Plan addresses 6 outcome principles and recommends developing strategies for each. The listed outcomes provide a framework for translating the principles and objectives of the Act into tangible and achievable results.

Schedule 3 of the Act cites the Disability Services Regulations, 2004 and sets out the seven outcomes of a Disability Access and Inclusion Plan are:

1. People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to access the services of, and any events organised by, a public authority.
2. People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to access the buildings and other facilities of a public authority.
3. People with disability receive information from a public authority in a format that will enable them to access the information as readily as other people are able to access it.
4. People with disability receive the same level and quality of service from the staff of a public authority as other people receive from the staff of that public authority.
5. People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to make complaints to a public authority.
6. People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to participate in any public consultation by a public authority.
7. People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to obtain and maintain employment with a public authority.



City Planning for better access

The City of Greater Geraldton has through its Strategic Community Plan a commitment to fostering democratic representation, social inclusion and community engagement and under its Community Engagement Policy and framework to obtain meaningful input from the community. In the development of the Disability Access and Inclusion Plan for the City of Greater Geraldton the community was invited to provide feedback and input on Access and Inclusion via a well-publicised survey and information from this was collated, together with all correspondence over the previous 2 years. The City simultaneously issued a staff survey and also collated this information. All information was presented to a working party comprising community members, disability organisation representatives and key staff to workshop the strategies and actions. The draft Disability Access and Inclusion Plan was endorsed by the working party and Council and given a further 42 day public comment period with notifications on the city website and local press before finalisation.

A draft plan was then developed from the workshop information together with additional consultations and expanded to encompass best practice principles and the formulation of assertive actions. The draft was presented for final editing with the working party and the Disability Services Commission before being presented formally to Council and the Disability Services Commission for endorsement.

All the developed strategies have been allocated to one of the designated outcomes as set by the WA Disability Services Regulations, and although certain actions can apply to more than one strategy, for reporting processes each implementation activity is assigned to just one strategy to meet the reporting requirements. The City will annually provide advice to the community on the City's website, to staff and elected members regarding the implementation of the Disability Access and Inclusion Plan and seek feedback on the effectiveness of strategies which will inform the further implementation of the plan. An annual Disability Access and Inclusion Plan report as provided to the Disability Services Commission will be available on the City's website and a summary included in the City of Greater Geraldton Annual Report.

A recommendation from the working party was made to initiate a Disability Working Group to be responsible for overseeing the progress of the Disability Access and Inclusion implementation plan and the annual progress report and to evaluate policy, processes, new initiatives and recommendations and has a key role to play in providing strategic advice to Council on behalf of people with a disability, their families and carers. The overview process by the Disability Working Group is administered by the Community Development staff of the Creative Communities directorate who will also seek community consultation and sector advice where appropriate. This provides a monitoring and evaluation of access and inclusion projects and a formal reporting avenue to Council as well as providing an advocacy avenue for the community.



The City undertook a review of the previous Disability Access and Inclusion Plan and identified achievements and shortfalls. The recent projects included;

1. Significant footpath upgrades including new paving and concrete paths in the City business area.
2. Additional disability access toilets on the foreshore in Geraldton's primary events area.
3. Access features for building fit out and parking for the relocated Library.
4. The establishment of a disability working party.
5. The development of policy and procedure documents.
6. Access and Inclusion embedded in the Community Strategic Plan.
7. Developed Access register through the statewide 'You're Welcome' program.
8. Equal opportunity and diversity training provided for staff.
9. Comprehensive community and staff consultations, surveys and needs analysis.
10. Investigations and budgets for improvements for accessible communication aids.
11. Support and collaboration with disability service providers including community grants, arts projects, learning and skills projects.

City Action for better access

The Disability Access and Inclusion Plan is a dynamic document to guide the City of Greater Geraldton in its work to continue to create an accessible and inclusive community for all. The Disability Access and Inclusion Plan is available on the City website and is promoted amongst our staff and publicised widely within the community, including key community disability groups.

The City will endeavour to address and progress all items in the Disability Access and Inclusion Plan and prioritise and set budgets within its resource capabilities. The responsibility for implementing the Disability Access and Inclusion Plan is inclusive of all areas within the City, and all Directors and Managers are responsible for ensuring staff and contractors apply best practice access and inclusion principles and are familiar with any relevant legislation, policy and applicable items of the Disability Access and Inclusion Plan.

The City will actively apply best practice access principles to services, facilities, programs and events and apply and review policy and procedures for functional implementation of the Disability Access and Inclusion Plan. The strategies within the Disability Access and Inclusion Plan will remain throughout the 5 year life of the plan and the implementation plan will be reviewed annually to evaluate the effectiveness of the actions from each strategy.

The City will promote disability awareness and advocate to the community by providing access guidelines to community and commercial sectors to consider the needs of people with a disability.



The City's agents and contractors are informed about the Disability Access and Inclusion Plan and its obligations through the following mechanisms:

1. Contractors engaged to design infrastructure for the City are guided by the statutory access requirements.
2. Tender contracts reference the Disability Access and Inclusion Plan where appropriate and directs contractors to the City website to access the Plan.
3. Selection of contractors or award of tender can be assessed in accordance with the contractors observation and promotion of the Disability Access and Inclusion Plan outcomes.

The Disability Access and Inclusion Plan is available via:

1. City website.
2. City office counters.
3. Available in alternative formats.

The Plan is distributed and promoted to local disability service providers and community groups.

City Strategies for better access

The City has developed the following strategies to direct the planning and implementation of Disability Access and Inclusion Plan, and each is allocated to one of the designated six outcomes as set by the WA Disability Services Regulations.

Outcome 1 – People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to access services and events organised by City of Greater Geraldton.

- 1.1 Provide governance and review of access to services, facilities, programs and events.
- 1.2 Provide and develop policy, procedures and guideline information on access to services, facilities, programs and events.
- 1.3 Advocate to community and commercial sectors to consider the needs of people with disability in the provision of services, facilities, programs and events.
- 1.4 Promote inclusion and participation of people with disability in the community.
- 1.5 Develop relationships and liaise with disability agencies and community organisations and address local issues affecting people with disability.

Outcome 2 – People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to access buildings and other facilities of City of Greater Geraldton.

2.1 Provide for the needs of people with disability in the design, construction, refurbishment and maintenance of City buildings and infrastructure.

2.2 Advocate to the community and commercial sectors to provide for the needs of people with disability in the design, construction, refurbishment and maintenance of buildings and infrastructure.

Outcome 3 - People with disability receive information from the City of Greater Geraldton in a format that will enable them to access the information as readily as other people are able to access it.

3.1 Provide for the needs of people with disability to access information.

3.2 Advocate to the community and commercial sectors to provide for the needs of people with disability to access information.

Outcome 4 – People with disability receive the same level and quality of service from the staff of City of Greater Geraldton as other people receive from the staff.

4.1 Provide for the needs of people with disability to receive quality of service.

4.2 Advocate to the community and commercial sectors to provide for the needs of people with disability to receive quality of service.

Outcome 5 – People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to provide feedback and make complaints to the City of Greater Geraldton.

5.1 Provide for the needs of people with disability to provide feedback and make complaints.

5.2 Advocate to the community and commercial sectors to provide for the needs of people with disability to provide feedback and make complaints.

Outcome 6 – People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to participate in any consultation by the City of Greater Geraldton.

6.1 Provide for the needs of people with disability to participate in any consultation.

6.2 Advocate to the community and commercial sectors to provide for the needs of people with disability to participate in any consultation.

Outcome 7 – People with a disability have the same opportunity as other people to obtain and maintain employment with the City of Greater Geraldton.

7.1 Provide for the needs of people with disability to obtain and maintain employment.

7.2 Advocate to the community and commercial sections to provide the needs of people with disability to obtain and maintain employment.



City Acknowledgements

City would like to thank all the contributors involved in the coordination and consultation involved in developing the Disability Access and Inclusion Plan, with special thanks to the working party.

Community members

Jo Bunney (Batist Care), Zane D'Mello (ATLAS), Stacey Forrester (DSC), Louisa Franceschini-Piil (Geraldton Secondary College), Angie Godden (MWLCA), Des Griffiths (DSC), Lesley Jones (DSC), Chris Kerr (GPI), Cath van de Velde (DSC), Gerard Westerik (DSC).

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City of Greater Geraldton Community Organisations supporting Disability

The following list of contacts of local disability organisations has been developed and is current as of March 2013.

Activ Business Services

208 Shenton St
Geraldton 6530
(08) 99213477
-employment

Activ Accommodation & Community Services

Geraldton Lotteries House
4/ 114 Sanford St
Geraldton 6530
(08) 9938 0770
-service

Advanced Personnel Management

87-103 Marine Tce
Geraldton 6530
(08) 9965 0466
-employment

Aidan's Place

11/114 Sanford St
Geraldton 6530
(08) 9938 0793
- autism

ATLAS (Access To Leisure And Sport)

PO box 135
Geraldton 6530
(08) 9956 2180
-recreation

Australian Hearing – Geraldton

151 Durlacher St
Geraldton 6530
(08) 9920 7500
-health

Baptistcare Partners in Purpose Program

76 Forrest St
Geraldton 6530
(08) 9921 2281
- service

Bethanie Care Services

38 Cairncross St
Geraldton 6530
(08) 9964 6552
- care

Centacare Family Services

3 Maitland St
Geraldton 6530
(08) 9921 1433
-service

Central West Mental Health Service

Shenton St
Geraldton 6530
(08) 9956 1999
-health



Disability Services Commission – Mid West

78 Forrest St
Geraldton 6530
(08) 9964 3455
-service

Durack Institute of Technology

175 Fitzgerald St
Geraldton 6530
Client services
(08) 9956 2780
-training

Geraldton Personnel Inc.

180 Durlacher St
Geraldton 6530
(08) 9964 3525
-employment

Geraldton Resource Centre

114 Sanford St
Geraldton 6530
(08) 9938 0600
-service

Geraldton Senior College

Carson Tce
Geraldton 6530
(08) 9965 8400

Holland St School

12 Holland St
Geraldton 6530
(08) 9921 2342
-education

Mid West Community Living Association

4 Armstrong St
Geraldton 6530
(08) 8821 1505
-service

Mid West Men's Health

130 Flores Rd
Geraldton 6530
(08) 9921 8512
-service

Regional Home Care Services- Geraldton

114 Sanford St
Geraldton 6530
(08)9921 7600
-care

Women's Health Resource Centre

28 Sanford St
Geraldton 6530
(08) 9964 2742
- service



The City of Greater Geraldton Disability Access and Inclusion Implementation Plan 2013-18



Outcome 1 – People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to **access services and events** organised by City of Greater Geraldton.

Strategy	Implementation
1.1 Provide governance and review of access to services, facilities, programs and events.	1.1.a. Implement a Disability Working Group to be responsible for overseeing the progress of the Disability Access and Inclusion implementation plan and the annual progress report and to evaluate policy, processes and recommendations.
	1.1.b. Provide access initiatives via the Disability Working Group to appraise community and city recommendations and implementation plans on a regular basis for evaluation.
1.2 Provide and develop policy, procedures and guideline information on access to services, facilities, programs and events.	1.2.a. Provide legislative requirements and guideline information to staff to develop best practice for access to services, facilities, programs and events.
	1.2.b. Identify, review and amend public documents pertaining to access to services, facilities, programs and events.
	1.2.c. Review event application documents and develop an events accessibility checklist to ensure proposed events meet access requirements.
1.3 Advocate to community and commercial sectors to consider the needs of people with disability in the provision of services, facilities, programs and events.	1.3.a. Provide legislative requirements and guideline information to community and commercial sectors to develop best practice for access to services, facilities, programs and events.

	1.3.b. Provide best practice information to community and commercial sectors on accessible events and an events accessibility checklist.
1.4 Promote inclusion and participation of people with disability in the community.	1.4.a. Promote awareness and support significant dates and events relevant to people with disability.
	1.4.b. Support and promote accessible services, programs, attractions and accommodation.
1.5 Develop relationships and liaise with disability agencies and community organisations and address local issues affecting people with disability.	1.5.a. Liaise with and participate in meetings and networks addressing the needs of local people with disability and elevate concerns to the Disability Working Group.
	1.5.b. Support and assist local disability service providers and community groups with disability focus for the purposes of disability lobbying or applying for funding and sponsorship.

Outcome 2 – People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to **access buildings and other facilities** of City of Greater Geraldton.

Strategy	Implementation
2.1 Provide for the needs of people with disability in the design, construction, refurbishment and maintenance of City buildings and infrastructure.	2.1.a. Develop Disability Access Audit procedures and an Access Audit Register documenting recommendations and implement a coordinated audit of council buildings and infrastructure.
	2.1.b. Ensure that new or redeveloped public City buildings and infrastructure incorporate the principles of universal access design and that all relevant City staff are adept in implementing the requirements of legislative and building access standards.
	2.1.c. Identify and report the needs and improvements for access to assistive technologies in all council buildings and venues and implement a coordinated City wide program for redevelopment.
	2.1.d. Identify and report the needs and improvements for access in high volume pedestrian areas and disability services locations with suitable access pathways, ramps and aids and implement a coordinated City wide program for redevelopment.
	2.1.e. Identify and report the needs for access signage where accessible features are available and implement a coordinated City wide program for redevelopment.

	2.1.f. Identify and report the needs and improvements for accessible amenities in public areas and implement a coordinated City wide program for redevelopment.
	2.1.g. Identify and report the needs and improvements for access parking in public areas and implement a coordinated City wide program for redevelopment.
	2.1.h. Identify and report the needs and improvements for access to public beaches, accessible boat ramps and accessible fishing platforms and implement a coordinated City wide program for redevelopment.
	2.1.i. Identify and report the needs and improvements for access to public tourist sites and recreational areas including universally designed play spaces and implement a coordinated City wide program for redevelopment.
2.2 Advocate to the community and commercial sectors to provide for the needs of people with disability in the design, construction, refurbishment and maintenance of buildings and infrastructure.	2.2.a. Provide best practice information to the community and commercial sectors on the principles of universal access design and the requirements of legislative and building access standards.
	2.2.b. Promote the principles of Universal Housing Design to be more accessible and to meet the changing needs of households.
	2.2.c. Provide best practice information and support to the community and commercial sectors on accessible parking and amenities requirements.

	2.2.d. Promote and encourage to support the community and commercial sectors to use signage to applicable standards of their accessible features.
	2.2.e. Encourage and provide support to the community and commercial sectors to publicise their accessible features both locally and via the state wide You're Welcome website, www.accesswa.com.au .

Outcome 3 – People with disability receive information from the City of Greater Geraldton in a format that will enable them to access the information as readily as other people are able to access it.

Strategy	Implementation
3.1 Provide for the needs of people with disability to access information.	3.1.a. Develop and implement all City websites to be accessible in line with the guidelines set by the World Wide Web Consortiums Web Accessibility Initiative Guidelines 1.0.
	3.1.b. Develop and implement the City's websites to prominently promote and navigate from front pages all access features of the website and to easily navigate to all information regarding access to people with disability.
	3.1.c. Provide general information on the City's website on assistive technologies, alternative format services and contact information and resetting computer access features.
	3.1.d. Develop and implement design and style guidelines for all public printed materials and brochures to access standards and also ensure all City generated print material is readily available in digital media formats.
	3.1.e. Develop directory information of local disability service organisations on both on the City website and as an appendix to the Disability Access & Inclusion Plan.
	3.1.f. For the visually impaired, implement and apply a text to voice and digital recording software service for requested public documents or correspondence pertaining to City business and provide instructional information to all staff to access and translate text to voice and provide an audio digital recording.

	3.1.g. Continually improve, develop and implement community information. Support the lives of individuals with initiatives such as “You’re Welcome” project, also maps on locations of accessible buildings, parking, ramps, pathways and amenities and make printed and electronic copies available in visitor information centres, community centres and libraries.
	3.1.h. Develop and implement training sessions suitably tailored to educate disability service providers and people with disability to access information with assistive technologies.
3.2 Advocate to the community and commercial sectors to provide for the needs of people with disability to access information.	3.2.a. Provide best practice information to the community and commercial sectors to develop provisions for the needs of people with disability to access information.
	3.2.b. Develop and implement processes to provide Disability Access & Inclusion Plan and updates to services to all local disability service organisations and make available on the web as general information.

Outcome 4 – People with disability receive the same level and **quality of service** from the staff of City of Greater Geraldton as other people receive from the staff.

Strategy	Implementation
4.1 Provide for the needs of people with disability to receive quality of service.	4.1.a. Develop and implement best practice access and inclusion awareness training and induction resources for staff, volunteers, contractors and elected members.
	4.1.b. Develop and implement disability etiquette protocols into the Customer Service charter, policy and procedures.
	4.1.c. Develop and implement procedures on providing information in a range of alternative formats.
4.2 Advocate to the community and commercial sectors to provide for the needs of people with disability to receive quality of service.	4.2.a. Provide best practice information to the community and commercial sectors to develop provisions for the needs of people with disability to receive quality of service.
	4.2.b. Develop and implement a city wide disability access and inclusion awareness campaign with the Disability Working Group overseeing and evaluating.

Outcome 5 – People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to **provide feedback and make complaints** to the City of Greater Geraldton.

Strategy	Implementation
5.1 Provide for the needs of people with disability to provide feedback and make complaints.	5.1.a. Develop and implement best practice access processes for the needs of people with disability to provide feedback and lodge complaints through Customer Services with the Disability Working Group appraising and assessing processes.
	5.1.b. Develop and implement communication in accessible alternative formats for feedback and lodging complaints to provide for the needs of people with disability.
	5.1.c. Develop and implement the promotion of access assistance to provide feedback and lodge complaints.
5.2 Advocate to the community and commercial sectors to provide for the needs of people with disability to provide feedback and make complaints.	5.2.a. Provide best practice information to the community and commercial sectors to develop provisions for the needs of people with disability to provide feedback and make complaints.

Outcome 6 – People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to **participate in any consultation** by the City of Greater Geraldton.

Strategy	Implementation
6.1 Provide for the needs of people with disability to participate in any consultation.	6.1.a. Develop and implement best practice access processes for the needs of people with disability to participate in any consultation.
	6.1.b. Develop and implement Community Engagement strategies and processes to provide for the needs of people with disability to participate in any consultation.
	6.1.c. Develop and implement communication in accessible alternative formats to provide for the needs of people with disability to participate in any consultation.
	6.1.d. Develop and implement the promotion of access assistance to provide for the needs of people with disability to participate in any consultation.
6.2 Advocate to the community and commercial sectors to provide for the needs of people with disability to participate in any consultation.	6.2.a. Provide best practice information to the community and commercial sectors to develop provisions for the needs of people with disability to participate in any consultation.

Outcome 7 – People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to **obtain and maintain employment** with the City of Greater Geraldton.

Strategy	Implementation
7.1 Provide for the needs of people with disability to obtain and maintain employment.	7.1.a. Develop, implement and promote access processes for the needs of people with disability in obtaining employment.
	7.1.b. Develop, implement and promote access processes for the needs of staff with disability to be supported in their employment.
7.2 Advocate to the community and commercial sectors to provide for the needs of people with disability to obtain and maintain employment.	7.2.a. Provide best practice information to the community and commercial sectors to develop provisions for the needs of people with disability to obtain and maintain employment.





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