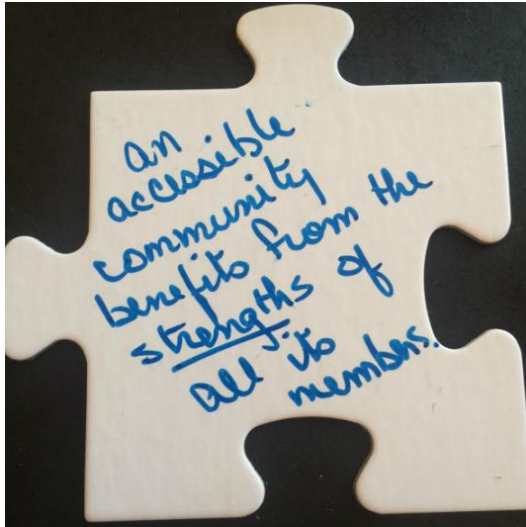




# CHARLOTTETOWN

Barrier-Free City Forum  
Report on Proceedings  
Hosted by the City of Charlottetown,  
Civic Board for People with Disabilities  
October 27, 2015



On October 27, 2015, the City of Charlottetown's Civic Board for Persons with Disabilities hosted a Barrier-Free forum to seek input from the community as the committee and the city work toward the goal of being a Barrier-Free City.

Mayor Clifford Lee and council created the Civic Board for Persons with Disabilities in 2004 to promote the inclusion and empowerment of people with disabilities within the Charlottetown community. The civic board is comprised of people who live with disabilities and those who support them, both through their paid employment and in their personal lives. Currently, Councilor Mitchell Tweel chairs the committee. (see Appendix A for Civic Board's Terms of Reference)

A Barrier-Free City is one that is developed with a set of design standards that will lead to the elimination of barriers for people with disabilities in the built environment. No cities exist that are wholly Barrier-Free, however, this is a concept that many cities around the world are actively working toward, with Charlottetown being one of them.

In June, the committee began exploring options for further engaging with the community to better understand the challenges People with Disabilities experience in the city. The committee invited Marcia Carroll, Executive Director for the Council of People with Disabilities to help plan the event and provide her expertise to the committee.

The group decided that if the City is going to make any headway in eliminating barriers for all persons with disabilities in the City of Charlottetown, they would need to talk to the organizations, policy makers, community groups and people who are the experts either through first-hand experience or extensive research.

The group wanted to further develop a collaborative approach to addressing issues affecting people with disabilities in the city. With the goal of a Barrier-Free City in mind, the committee's objectives for the forum were to:

- Increase awareness of City's current successes in addressing and supporting people with disabilities in the community;
- Provide an opportunity for people with disabilities and those who support them to share their knowledge and experience with key decision-makers in each City of Charlottetown department;
- And, begin the process of evaluating the steps the City is taking as they work toward creating a Barrier-Free City.

By asking the community to evaluate the options, the Civic Board for Persons with Disabilities will be able to work with council and City staff to identify and set benchmarks, short- and long-terms goals, as well as clarify how action is going to be measured. While the City council will have to make their own decisions about

how to action the priorities, they will have a sense of where the community's priorities lie.

The forum was held at the Murchison Center, an accessible space. More than 90 people registered for the forum. Attendees included people living with disabilities; people who support people with disabilities (family members, support workers, staff at disability serving organizations, etc.); federal, provincial and municipal government employees; the Charlottetown mayor and several City councilors and managers and supervisors from each City of Charlottetown department.

In planning the day, the committee was aware that people with disabilities in Charlottetown face many issues and challenges in their lives, not all of which the City has an ability to address. While there are many issues that are very important, the committee wanted to focus on issues that the City departments have some ability to manage, so with that in mind, the agenda was developed around the municipal departments.

The day began with a welcome from Mayor Clifford Lee and Civic Board for Persons with Disabilities Chair Mitchell Tweel (see Appendix B for meeting agenda). To keep the conversation focused on areas that the City can address, each table was asked to identify challenges, assets and potential solutions for each City department. Note takers and City department representatives moved from table to table capturing each group's feedback on every department.

In the afternoon, following remarks from Doug Currie, Minister of Health and Family and Human Services, the attendees worked collaboratively to further identify challenges, potential solutions and priority items for the City to address. The full scope of discussion for each City department was shared and discussed with the whole group in the afternoon.

In addition, participants were invited to share their thoughts on blank puzzle pieces, some of which are also included in this report.

The City departments included in the consultation process were:

- 1) HUMAN RESOURCES (Includes Health and Safety)
  - a. Mandy Feuerstack – Human Resources (Manager)
  - b. Bethany Peters – Human Resources (HR Services Officer)
  - c. Lenny Murphy – Human Resources (Health and Safety Coordinator)
  
- 2) PLANNING
  - a. Alex Forbes – Planning (Manager)
  - b. Mel Cheverie – Planning (Chief Building Inspector)
  - c. Greg Morrison – Planning (Planning Development Officer)

- 3) PUBLIC WORKS and FINANCE
  - a. Paul Johnston – Public Works (Manager)
  - b. Mike Bradley – Public Works (Supervisor)
  - c. Scott MacDonald – Public Works (Superintendent)
  - d. Scott Ryan – Finance (Manager)
  
- 4) SUSTAINABILITY, TRANSIT and TOURISM
  - a. Ramona Doyle (Sustainability Officer)
  - b. Donna Waddell (Director of Corporate Services)
  - c. Donna Hurry (Tourism Officer)
  
- 5) EMERGENCY SERVICES (Police and Fire)
  - a. Kent Mitchell – Fire Department (Fire Inspector)
  - b. Paul Smith – Police Department (Chief)
  - c. Randy MacDonald – Fire Chief
  
- 6) PARKS/RECREATION and WATER/SEWER UTILITY
  - a. Richard MacEwen – Water/Sewer Utility (Assistant Manager)
  - b. Frank Quinn – Parks and Recreation (Manager)

### **Feedback from Forum Attendees:**

There were a number of common threads that weaved through many of the discussions, regardless of the topic whether it was Public Works or Tourism.

As a result, this report is a combination of general and specific feedback provided by the attendees of the Barrier-Free City forum to the City. It should be noted that this report and the feedback within it may not be inclusive of all items that the public would like to see addressed. The City recognizes there may have been groups or individuals unable to attend to forum. Their feedback is still welcome. The following information was derived only from the feedback received at the forum.

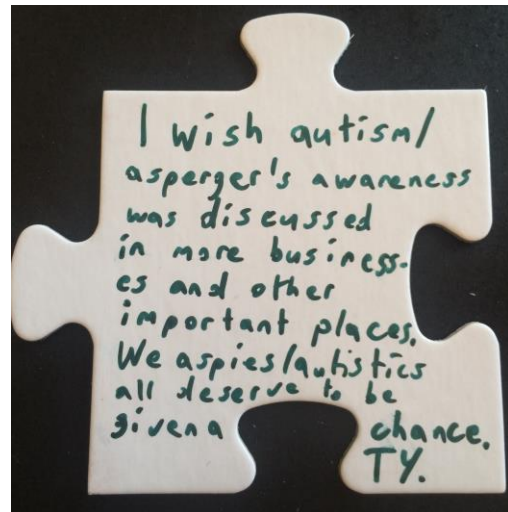
### **General Feedback:**

1. Be a leader in using a disability lens  
Overwhelmingly there was a significant amount of goodwill directed toward the City. People were happy that the City undertook the consultation process and many acknowledged the City's leadership in hosting such an event, the first of its kind for the City. They also recognized that the City employs people with disabilities and is actively working to address issues facing people with disabilities in the City. There was a general reminder that decision-makers need to value the person, not the disability.

The City already does think about how its policies, programs and services impact people with disabilities to some degree, so this would be improving that existing lens.

People discussed the City integrating a disability lens into all aspects of running the City, whether it through policy, program, systems, and structural review and development. While not comprehensive, some examples suggested include:

- Consult with end-users when planning improvements to facilities;
- Develop a long-term vision for baby boomers and how they will access municipal services as they age;
- Small changes in regulations can make big improvements in quality of life.



Finally, in terms of a general disability lens, people recommended that the City should take a leadership role in advocating for people with disabilities with the private sector and with the provincial and federal governments. Suggestions included:

- Advocate for changes to government policies (EI eligibility requirement for some programs and services);
- Communicate feedback from the forum to private sector – provide benefits to private sector that work toward improved accessibility;
- Advocating for 'safe' and 'quiet' rooms in shopping malls and spaces;
- Share Barrier-Free City information with provincial and federal governments and encourage them to use the City's process and host their own Barrier-Free consultations;
- Talk to Canada Post about accessibility concerns for new community mailboxes;
- Advocate for working wheelchair buttons in all public buildings;
- Communicate to business owners about sandwich boards on sidewalks and the challenges they present for people with disabilities;
- Enhance partnerships with advocacy groups for better communication, understanding and coordination of services.

## 2. Continue to address accessibility issues

Accessibility and mobility are of critical concern for people with disabilities. There was a general understanding that there are challenges to creating a Barrier-Free City in a municipality as old as Charlottetown with historic properties and a city design that was not created with accessibility in mind. However, striving toward a

balance of preserving the history and enthusiastically embracing the principles of Barrier-Free design needs careful attention.

Any new infrastructure and renovations need to be developed with accessibility at the forefront.

Provide more information about what buildings are accessible with better signage and advertising. Keep the community up-to-date as buildings become more or fully accessible.

People also identified a wide range of accessibility needs and urged the City to be aware of the full range of physical disabilities and accommodations that are required. While not a comprehensive list some of the accessibility issues identified include:

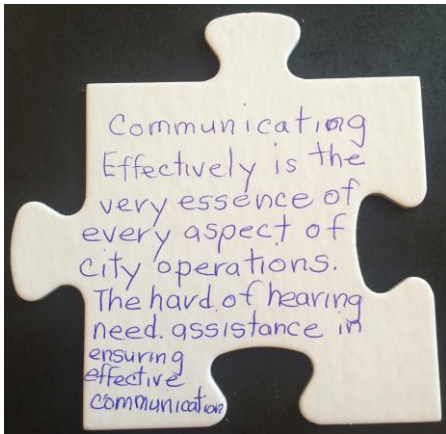
- Accessible public spaces, streets, parks, etc.;
- Timely snow and ice removal from sidewalks and disabled parking spots;
- More places to take breaks on streets and in buildings (benches, etc.);
- Ensure when construction is being done, accessible alternate routes are available;
- Bathroom accessibility, lower sinks and higher toilets, sinks in stalls;
- Ramps;
- Fluorescent lights replaced with better lighting (LED);
- Soothing colours when looking at décor;
- Replace door knobs with door latches;
- Family washrooms within city;
- Designated quiet spaces in public buildings;
- More automatic doors and grab bars;

### 3. Increase Communications:

Generally speaking, communication was a priority issue for attendees at the Barrier-Free City Forum. While there were many suggestions for improvement, people acknowledged that the City has an open approach to communication and each department welcomes the general public to contact them with any concerns.

Other examples of positive communication included:

- City employees present at the forum, listening;
- Public given the opportunity for input into budgets;
- Good use of social media;
- Good coordination of services with Police and Fire;
- Frontline staff are always knowledgeable.



The group also identified opportunities to improve communications between the City and its citizens. As one person said, "I work with people with disabilities every day and I thought I knew pretty much everything that was happening – all the programs and services available and I learned something new from every City department I spoke to here today."

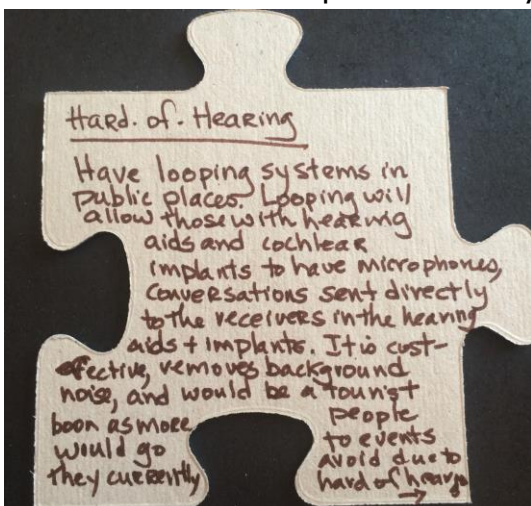
There was significant discussion about different and most effective ways to managing communications, both internally and externally.

Suggestions included:

- Reduce confusions by creating a one-stop for information for people with disabilities – suggestions included:
  - A single location where front line staff could help
  - Plain language and picture based guides
  - Creating a system's navigator
  - Creating a database of services and programs
  - Creating a website or special section on City website to capture all disability related information
- Create plain language and picture-based communication tools
- Host regular information sessions
- Create targeted awareness campaigns both internally and externally around disability issues.

#### 4. Embrace technology

Technology can provide new, emerging and innovative ways to support people with disabilities. Examples offered by people at the forum for technology-based solutions include:



- Adopt new technologies to widen employability for employees with disabilities;
- Create and build partnerships with technology industry and not-for-profit organizations to develop and implement strategies for people with disabilities (seek out experts);
- Seek experts to identify technology advances that can help with housing issues;

- Education and awareness around technologies that can support people with disabilities' better access to safety, including smoke detectors that flash and vibrate;
- Purchase closed captioned screen to enhance Public Address (PA) systems to increase accessibility for people with hearing impairments;
- Loop technology for people who are hard of hearing (eliminates background noise);
- More voice activated pedestrian crossings.

#### 5. Sensitivity training

While people identified that municipal employees are often sensitive to the needs of people with disabilities, there was a significant amount of discussion about the need for on-going sensitivity and diversity training both for City employees (at all levels including front-line, casual and contractors) and for the general public.

#### 6. Parking Fines

There were a number of suggestions to increase parking fines for people illegally parking in disabled spots. Other people suggested that the City could use the revenue generated from the fines to support their own accessibility plans or to support the work of other community organizations that support people with disabilities.

### **Departmental-specific issues, assets and feedback:**

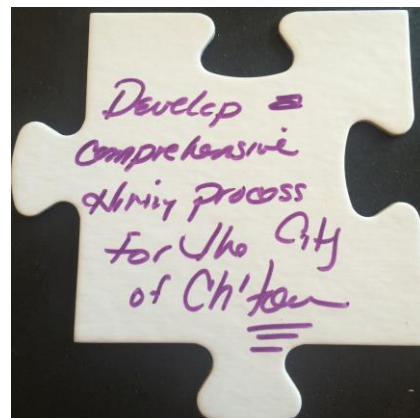
As previously mentioned, the Barrier-Free City Forum was designed so each municipal department could meet with small groups of forum participants to hear challenges, assets and possible solutions related to each department.

#### **Human Resources**

The Human Resources Department supports the City of Charlottetown's vision to manage the Human Resources of the City of Charlottetown to the optimal benefit of its citizens and the community through sound employee/labour relations and administrative support to the administration and employees of the City.

#### Employee Value:

There was overlapping discussion at a number of tables reminding the Human Resources department to value the person, not the disability and of the importance of seeing the person first and the disability second. People talked about the need for meaningful work. Others urged the department to remember that not everyone may self-identify as having a disability, which is why it is important to work to create an environment





where people can disclose when they feel it is safe. People identified limited opportunities to work from home for people with disabilities and suggested more flexibility in job postings to hire people with disabilities, including job sharing.

#### Accommodations:

Many of the challenges people with disabilities face around employment with the city can be addressed through accommodations. A variety was suggested and include:

- Accommodating emergency safety plans for people with disabilities
- Improving workplace physical accessibility;
- Providing job sharing opportunities;
- Understand and accommodate different (unconventional) forms of work;
- Accommodations need not be expensive. e.g. SMART pen;
- Adopt new technologies to widen employability for employees with disabilities;
- Accommodations for visually/hearing impairment that can include specialized software and looping technology.

#### Policies and Practices:

People acknowledged that the City does already employ people with disabilities. There were specific questions about recruitment – how it is done and if the City currently has diversity targets. Others commended the City for building in Hearing Health programs into training and everyday practices for municipal workers.

#### Suggestions for the Human Resources department included:

- Build partnerships within the departments to promote current programs supporting employees' health and wellness;
- If not in place, develop process to ensure a diversity lens is applied to recruitment practices;
- Increase awareness around the supports people need through the interview/hiring process and training stages.

### **Public Works**

The Public Works Department for the City of Charlottetown is tasked with maintenance of City streets, sidewalks, storm water systems, parking meter repairs, street lighting, and also municipal building maintenance with the exception of recreational facilities and water and sewer stations.

#### Snow removal

Many of the most significant challenges people with disabilities face in the City of Charlottetown fall under the Public Works department. There was a great deal of discussion of the basic accessibility challenges people with disabilities face on a

daily basis. Faced with record snowfall two years in a row, some people talked about being physically unable to leave their home for weeks at a time.

While comments were overwhelmingly (and as noted several times by Public Works representatives, understandably) critical of accessibility issues related to snow removal, one person noted the City did a good job keeping up with snow removal near Tremplon.

People also indicated that the Public Works department employees are willing to take the time to listen to concerns and questions and they were commended for attending and listening to people's concerns at the Barrier-Free City Forum.

Suggestions around snow removal included:

- A greater attention to prioritizing sidewalk snow removal as well as street snow removal;
- Better coordination between street plows and sidewalk plows;
- More salt, sand – prioritize resources;
- Create more openings to the sidewalks in winter;
- Real time information on snow removal – Integrate technology with existing processes to provide up-to-date information to the public about what streets are plowed and which sidewalks are currently accessible.

Streets, Sidewalks and Crosswalks:

Sidewalks were another significant issue identified by people at the forum. For people in wheelchairs, a seemingly insignificant lip or inadequate grade on a sidewalk makes travel challenging to downright impossible. While there have been new sidewalks added and others upgraded, there are still many sidewalks that are not Barrier-Free in their design. Laphorne Avenue was used as an example of an excellent sidewalk replacement project.

People said they would like to see ongoing inspections and maintenance to streets, sidewalks and crosswalks, as well as attention to Barrier-Free design when new infrastructure money is spent. Specifically, the crosswalk button on Euston Street and University Ave needs to be fixed. In addition to improved crosswalks, more "listening and seeing" crosswalks with lights and sounds would increase accessibility for people who have a variety of physical disabilities.

Parking:

Many people noted that there is a good amount of disabled parking spots in Charlottetown, while others thought there were not enough parking spots for individuals with special needs and staff members, especially during big events.

Suggestions for the Public Works department included:

- Making disabled parking spots bigger, as there is often not enough room on either side to get in and out;
- Increase attention to safety in all parking lots/buildings.

Other area of concern and solutions for Public Works include:

- Inform the public on accessibility levels of municipal buildings;
- Improve bathroom accessibility;
- Upgrade to LED lights, knobs and latches;
- LED lights to replace florescent bulbs.

### **Planning and Heritage**

The Planning Department helps neighborhoods grow and change by working with citizens, businesses, and others on both short and long-term plans or projects.

People at the forum talked about ways to find common ground between planning for a Barrier-Free City and maintaining the heritage of the city.

Lack of accessibility in heritage buildings is a concern for many people. While certainly not ideal, some people suggested having temporary ramps and automatic doors to help improve the accessibility of heritage buildings. Others suggested providing new or improved signage to indicate accessibility levels of older buildings.

Housing:

Access to safe and affordable housing is a basic need that can create undue stress for people with disabilities. For some people who become disabled, they face insurmountable costs to upgrade their homes, while others struggle to find affordable housing of any sort that will meet their needs.



People suggested grants or funding to improve or upgrade existing homes could be a solution for the City to explore while others said changes in regulations to allow Garden Suites can be a solution for some people. Garden Suites are small moveable homes that can be put on a resident's property.

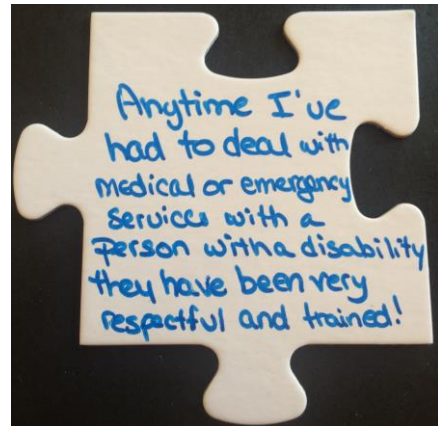
There were also suggestions that the City upgrade building codes and insist the builders adhere to more than minimum standards, while others raised serious concerns about builders who get special treatment for building accessible and affordable apartments but they only have to keep rates low for a certain number of years and then they can increase the rent.

There was confusion about why new buildings designed for seniors are permitted to be constructed without elevators, given the high likelihood of limited mobility for that population.

### **Emergency Services: Fire and Police**

Charlottetown Police Services, working together with the community, strives to protect life and property, and in so doing, hopes to improve the quality of life for the citizens of Charlottetown and its visitors.

The Charlottetown Fire Department's goal is to protect life and property of the City's residents from fire, dangerous goods, environmental emergency and other hazards.



There were interesting conversations around emergency services provided by the City of Charlottetown and how they can be continued to be improved to better support people with disabilities.

Much of the discussion focused around improving awareness of emergency services providers of how to support a person with a disability in a crisis situation. Challenges currently exist for people with a range of disabilities when it comes to accessing emergency services, including not all responders being trained how to use a chair lift.

Suggestions for emergency services included having better communications and awareness for emergency workers on how to manage specialized needs in difficult situations. Suggestions included:

- Developed a standardized method for first responders on a scene to know if there are any people with disabilities and what they are. This could also include identifying people with invisible disabilities;
- Develop a sticker for invisible disabilities for first responders for inside the house/car;
- Police, fire and paramedics need picture-based, plain language assessment tools to support them to provide better services to people with disabilities;
- More partnerships with advocacy groups, which could include webinars and video conferencing, best practices and round tables;
- Awareness campaign ensuring first responders know full details before arriving on the scene – people with disabilities, certain circumstances;
- Utilize the 911 database for special needs identification.

### **Parks and Recreation**

The City of Charlottetown Parks and Recreation department consists of seasonal, permanent and casual employees working together to serve the needs of residents in the delivery of recreation related services.

Many of the City's parks are heavily used and some have good accessibility, including the boardwalk by Victoria Park, although for people with visual impairment, their canes can get stuck in the cracks. There was discussion that making the trails accessible with improved lighting and new material on the trail was successful.

There was discussion that there needs to be continued development of access for parks and recreation facilities with Barrier-Free playgrounds being priority and that consultation with user groups when planning will improve facilities. Others cautioned that there many solutions to increase accessibility should be explored and it is not just about paving everything.

Special events in the city can cause challenges for people with disabilities to attend. This can include lack of access to bathrooms, parking, venues that are too packed for people with limited mobility and noise levels that are challenging for people with certain disabilities. Some people suggested making sure the spaces are fully accessible and providing discount ticket prices to people who travel as companions and helpers to people with disabilities.

### **Water and Sewer**

In terms of Water and Sewer, people identified being able to read the bill as a challenge for people with visual impairments. When paying their bills, they have to tell the City staff their pin numbers in earshot of other customers. Moving to an electronic billing system would allow people to use assistive technology.

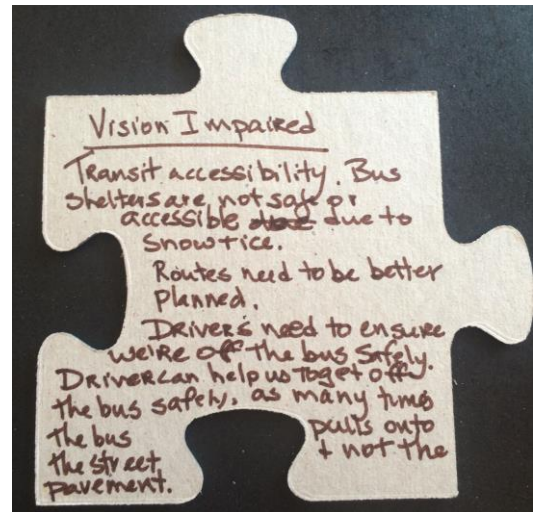
People with hearing impairments also indicated that the wickets make it challenging to read lips and get close enough to hear what staff is saying.

The relatively new meter water is free installation and can help financially by saving people money on their bills.

## Transit

There were many challenges identified with the local bus transit system. They include:

- Lifts don't always work on buses;
- Level of distraction on buses – how it affects individuals with disabilities;
- Ability to hear or see announcements;
- Bus shelters are not always accessible, especially in winter;
- Some bus stops are not in the right place – for example Ellis Bros bus depot is at the fire hall, which requires crossing a busy street and parking lot;
- Not all busses are accessible.



People suggested that there should be a reduced rate for transit for people with disabilities for both transit system and private taxis.

Solutions to make bus transit more accessible for people include:

- Plain language guides for transits;
- Making sure bus stops are in the right spot (i.e. Sherwood Medical Center);
- Provide identification card/badge for people who need assistance in buses/taxis;
- Need more visual landmarks (you are here), pictures, etc.;
- Consideration of lighting issues for some people with disabilities;
- Replace bus infrastructure, including signs;
- Website to identify any deficiencies on bus system, etc.;
- Advertise on website if bus is not going to be accessible;
- Use money from fines to fund solutions (i.e. Richmond Hill);
- Place flip-out ramps on transit buses.

Taxis:

People also identified a need for more accessible taxis. Many are vans, which are difficult for people with disabilities, while others talked about it being cost-prohibitive to take taxis for short distances and suggested meters would create a more fair system.

## Tourism:

The Tourism department is responsible for coordinating and promoting the City of Charlottetown's Tourism and Special Events and liaises with City departments, businesses, and private groups.

There was discussion about the importance of having an accessible city as a tourism driver. People suggested more appropriate pricing for families of disabled persons and the clients themselves at tourism events, sites, special events, etc. would allow tourism and special events to be more accessible.



**BARRIER-FREE CITY FORUM - REPORT  
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The City of Charlottetown's Civic Board for Persons with Disabilities hosted a Barrier-Free forum in the fall of 2015 to seek input from the community as the committee and the city work toward the goal of being a Barrier-Free City. **A Barrier-Free City is one that is developed with a set of design standards that will lead to the elimination of barriers for people with disabilities in the built environment.**

The forum was held at the Murchison Center, an accessible space. More than 90 people registered for the forum. Attendees included people living with disabilities; people who support people with disabilities (family members, support workers, staff at disability serving organizations, etc.); federal, provincial and municipal government employees; Charlottetown Mayor Clifford Lee, and several city councillors, managers and supervisors from each City of Charlottetown department.

Although there was overwhelming acknowledgement of City staff, policies and programs supporting people with disabilities, several improvement areas were identified for Charlottetown.

General feedback for the City includes:

**1. Be a leader in using a disability lens**

Integrating a disability lens into planning and reviewing policies, programs and development is important. Consulting with people with disabilities when planning facility improvements can help ensure accessibility for everyone. City officials and staff can advocate for people with disabilities when considering EI eligibility for government programs and accessibility for new community mailboxes. The City can also communicate solutions to the private sector to help businesses be more sensitive to the challenges of people with disabilities.

**2. Continue to address accessibility issues**

Ensuring public spaces, streets and parks are accessible should be at the forefront when planning new developments and improvements. Some suggestions include timely snow removal; having accessible alternate routes in construction zones;



having lower sinks and higher toilets in public washrooms and more ramps on sidewalks and entrances to buildings. Better signage and advertising can help increase awareness of which buildings are accessible.

### **3. Increase communications**

Better service coordination and awareness of available services for people with disabilities was a common suggestion. Potential solutions include creating a 'one stop' information centre for accessibility information and using social media and other media to raise awareness. Creating plain language and picture-based communication tools can also spread the word of available services.

### **4. Embrace technology**

Creating partnerships with the technology industry and not-for-profit organizations was suggested to develop and implement strategies for people with disabilities. Adopting new technologies can help address housing issues as well as employability for employees with disabilities.

### **5. Sensitivity training**

While people identified that municipal employees are often sensitive to the needs of people with disabilities, there was a significant amount of discussion about the need for on-going sensitivity and diversity training both for City employees (at all levels including front-line, casual and contractors) and for the general public.

### **6. Parking fines**

To support accessibility plans and the work of organizations that support people with disabilities, it was suggested the City increase parking fines for people illegally parking in disabled spots.

City departmental-specific feedback includes:

#### **Human Resources Department:**

- Employee Value: Valuing the person and not the disability is critical to feeling appreciated and safe at work. The need for meaningful work and flexibility such as job sharing and working from home were also identified.
- Accommodations: Many of the challenges people with disabilities face around employment can be addressed through accommodations. Some accommodation opportunities include emergency safety plans, workplace physical accessibility, new technologies and different forms of work.

- **Policies and Practices:** Clarifying recruitment procedures for people with disabilities would be useful for those interested in working with the City. Incorporating municipal training for supporting people with disabilities through the hiring and training processes is also needed.

### **Public Works:**

Issues around snow and ice removal were most frequently discussed for this department.

Some suggestions around snow removal included prioritizing sidewalk and street snow removal and informing the public with real-time information on which sidewalks and streets are currently accessible. Upgrading city sidewalks and fixing cross-walk buttons can mean easier travelling for people with physical disabilities. Increasing the size of disabled parking spaces was also suggested.

### **Planning and Heritage:**

People at the forum talked about ways to find common ground between planning for a Barrier-Free city and maintaining the heritage of Charlottetown. Some suggestions include having temporary ramps and automatic doors to help improve the accessibility of heritage buildings.

Housing issues were some of the most significant discussed since many people with disabilities cannot find affordable and accessible housing options. Some potential solutions include grants or funding to improve or upgrade existing homes; permitting Garden Suites (small moveable homes) and enforcing standards for new buildings.

### **Emergency Services: Fire and Police:**

Suggestions for emergency services include having better communications and awareness for emergency workers on how to manage specialized needs in difficult situations. One way to achieve this is developing a standardized method for first responders to identify people with disabilities. Having picture-based and plain language assessment tools can support emergency workers to provide better services to people with disabilities.

### **Parks and Recreation:**

Consultation with people with disabilities can help improve accessibility to City park and recreation facilities as well as special events. Providing discount ticket prices to people who travel as companions and helpers to people with disabilities can also help more people attend City events.

### **Water and Sewer:**

Moving to an electronic billing system would allow people to use assistive technology. People with hearing impairments also indicated that the wickets make it challenging to read lips and get close enough to hear what staff is saying.

### **Transit:**

There are many improvements that can be made to ensure accessibility for public transit. Some suggestions for City buses include putting in flip ramps; fixing lifts; having more maps at bus stops; having visual on-board stop announcements and ensuring bus shelters and stops are in accessible locations. People also suggested that there should be a reduced rate for transit for people with disabilities for both the bus system and private taxis.

### **Tourism:**

There was discussion about the importance of having an accessible city as a tourism driver. People suggested more appropriate pricing for families of disabled persons and the clients themselves at tourism events, sites and special events to allow tourism and special events to be more accessible.

Appendix A:

**CIVIC BOARD FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES  
TERMS OF REFERENCE**

The Civic Board for Persons with Disabilities will be responsible for:

- Providing City council with advice on disability and inclusion issues;
- Providing feedback and advice to City council on its policies, plans and services that may impact persons with disabilities in the community;
- Ensuring that the transit system meets the needs of people with disabilities;
- Advocate on behalf of persons with disabilities;
- Provide input to the Mayor, senior staff and City council on how to remove all barriers for residents of the community;
- Host a workshop/forum to hear input/concerns/suggestions from the community which would assist in the elimination of barriers for all persons with disabilities to create a more inclusive city;
- Reviewing all City policies through a diversity lens to ensure they are meeting the needs of all residents of our community;
- Providing a communication link between persons with disabilities in the City and City council, and to encourage facilities and programs that will enhance the quality of life, health and well-being of all citizens of our community;
- The organization of the annual disability/inclusion awards in the fall of each year;
- The Civic Board for Persons with Disabilities will provide a minimum of two (updates) to City council each year;
- The Chair will be responsible to call monthly meetings of the Civic Board for Persons with Disabilities.

Appendix B: Agenda

**AGENDA**

**Creating a Barrier-Free City Forum**

**Location: Murchison Center**

**Date: Tuesday, October 27, 2015**

**Time: 8:45-4:00**

8:30 – 8:45 Registration

8:45-9:15 Welcome by Mayor Clifford Lee and Councillor Mitchell Tweel

9:15-9:25 What is a Barrier-Free City

9:40-10:00 Housekeeping & Group Introductions

10:00-10:30 Small Group discussion on issues facing people with disabilities in the City of Charlottetown (particularly in relation to Municipal Departments)

10:30-10:50 Break

10:50 – 12:00 Small group discussions continued

Noon-12:45 Lunch (provided)

12:45-12:55 Gathering in

12:55-1:00 Remarks by Minister Doug Currie

1:00-1:20 Reporting back: Review of morning discussions and plans for afternoon.

1:20-2:05 Small group discussion – developing and evaluating proposed action plan(s)

2:05-2:25 Break

2:25-3:30 Reporting back to large group

3:30-4:00 Closing, discussion of next steps and evaluation