



City of Hobart Equal Access

Strategy 2014 - 2019

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Introduction

History / Background

The provision of equal access enhances everyone's capacity to participate fully in community life, regardless of their physical or mental capabilities. People with a disability, and other people with access limitations, have the same fundamental rights as all members of the community, as articulated by the following principles.

- People with a disability should not be defined by their disability.
- People with a disability have a right to equal access to facilities, services, programs, activities, information and employment in order to fully participate in the community and have equal opportunity to fulfil their individual potential.
- Changes to the physical and social environment that improve access and equity to assist people with a disability and enhance their participation in the community, and also benefit the wider community.

In recognition of this, the City of Hobart developed its first strategy, presented as an action plan, in 1998. The third City of Hobart Equal Access Strategy was created in 2010, and has recently been reviewed.

The Equal Access Strategy 2014 - 2019 ensures that the City responds to all the relevant United Nations declarations relating to the rights of people with a disability and meets its requirements under the Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1992, and the Tasmanian Anti-Discrimination Act 1999, as a provider of goods and services and as an employer. The City of Hobart also has broader social responsibilities to its community, as reflected in its Strategic Plan 2014 – 2019, and the City of Hobart's Social Inclusion Strategy 2014 – 2019.

Community Engagement Process

For the review of the Equal Access Strategy 2010 – 2013 and the development of the Equal Access Strategy 2014 – 2019, engagement was undertaken with a range of community members and agencies. An invitation was extended to the wider community to contribute to reviewing the existing strategy and develop the new strategy. Target groups included community groups, advocacy groups and peak bodies, government agencies and the City of Hobart's Access Advisory Committee.

During the review process, the context for discussions included the current level of resourcing, the current environment of financial restraint, the activities currently being undertaken by the City of Hobart and the City's social inclusion roles.

The review process included:

- Two community forums held at Mathers House targeting the Access Advisory Committee and community agencies.
- Surveys emailed to service providers, advocacy groups, peak bodies and government agencies.
- An on line survey on the City of Hobart website seeking wide community feedback on all the City of Hobart's community strategies.

Issues

The engagement process confirmed that the issues facing people with a disability in the City of Hobart.

These include:

- Participation opportunities
- Accessible buildings, infrastructure and streetscapes
- Access to parking and transport
- Accessible information
- Disability awareness

Demographic Context

In 2012, Tasmania had the highest prevalence of disability, with a quarter of the state's population living with disability. This is compared to 16% in Western Australia and the Australian Capital Territory and 12% in the Northern Territory. The proportion of the population living with disability increases considerably with age. Tasmania also has the highest proportion of people aged 65 years and over with disability (55%).

Of the capital cities, Hobart is expected to have the highest proportion of residents aged 65 and over in the next 40 years. The proportion of Greater Hobart's population aged 65 and over is predicted to almost double to between 24.9% and 28.2% in 2056. It is reasonable to expect that the rate and degree of disability will increase in parallel with Hobart's ageing population.

Core Activity Disability is defined as: People needing help or assistance in one or more of the three core activity areas of self-care, mobility and communication, because of a disability or long term health condition (lasting six months or more). In 2011, 4.4% of Hobart LGA residents have a Core Activity Disability.

Hobart 2025 – A 20 Year Strategic Framework

Hobart 2025 was an extensive community visioning process that produced a framework for Council's long term strategic planning. It gives a solid picture of what the people of Hobart want the city to be like in 2025.

Key Future Direction Statements

This picture is expressed in seven Future Direction Statements, three of which specifically target social inclusion outcomes.

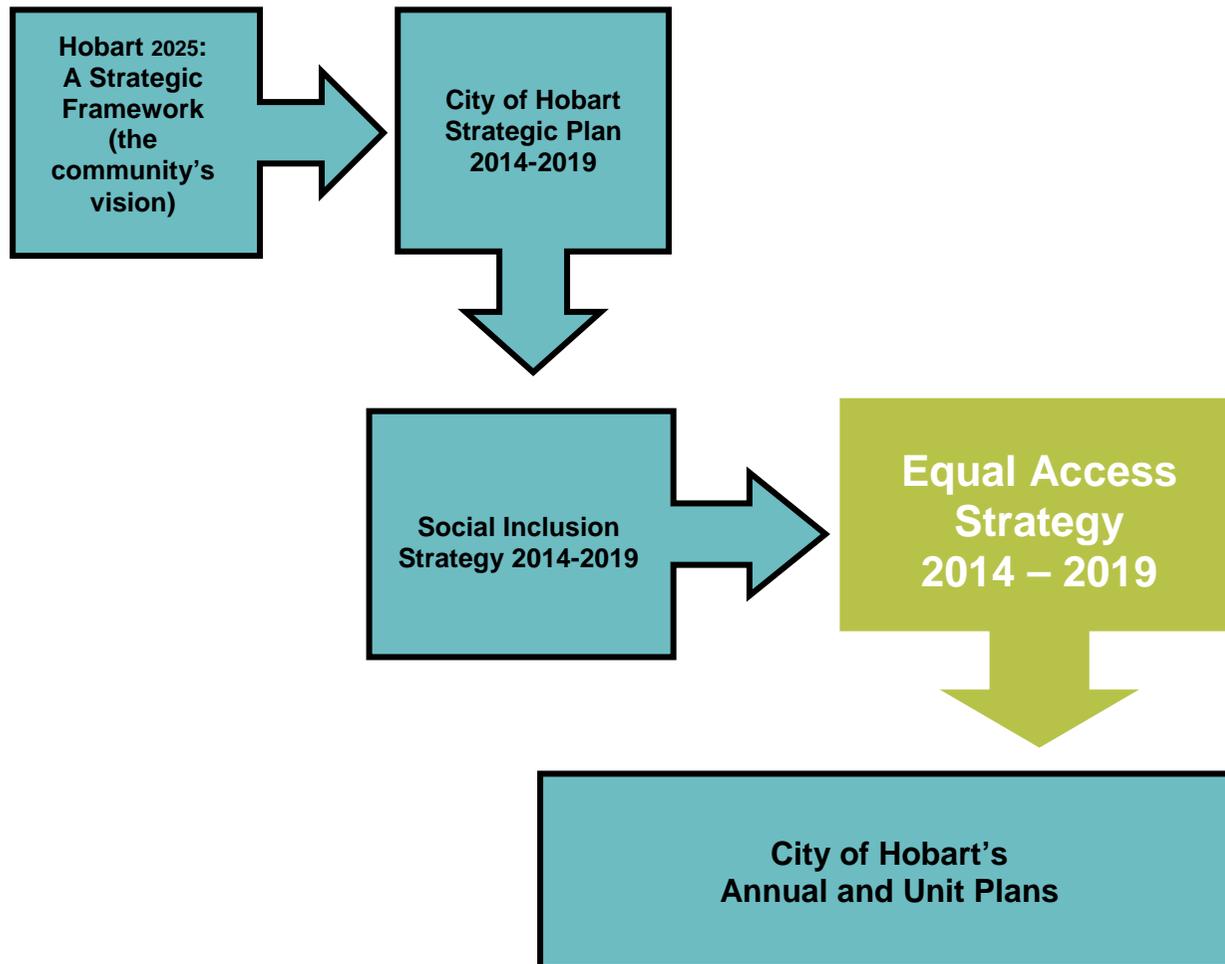
- *Offers opportunities for all ages and a city for life*
In 2025 Hobart will be a city that provides opportunities for education, employment and fulfilling careers. A city that is able to retain its young people and provide a lifestyle that will encourage all ages to see the city as a desirable location and lifelong home.
- *Builds strong and healthy communities through diversity, participation and empathy*
In 2025 Hobart will be a city that reflects a spirit of community and tolerance. By valuing diversity and encouraging participation by all ages in the life of their community a friendly and compassionate society will underpin a safe and healthy city.

- *Is dynamic, vibrant and culturally expressive*

In 2025 Hobart will be a city that is a destination of choice and a place for business. Clever thinking and support for creativity will help build a strong economic foundation, and entertainment, arts and cultural activities promote the distinctive character of the city. Lifestyle opportunities and strong communities will ensure a vibrancy and a way of life that is Hobart.

Strategic Plans

The City of Hobart's Strategic Plan 2014 – 2019 identifies the actions the City of Hobart will take over the five year period to achieve the community's vision. The Social Inclusion Strategy specifically identifies the social outcomes for the city and informs the Equal Access Strategy 2014 - 2019. These documents inform the Annual and Unit Plans produced each year by the Council. This strategic framework is provided as a visual representation below.



Guiding Principles

The City of Hobart's Equal Access policy position sits within the context of the City of Hobart's Social Inclusion Guiding Principles, as outlined below.

Social Inclusion – Guiding Principles

In recognition of the fundamental right of all citizens of Hobart to have the opportunity to participate fully socially, culturally, economically, physically and politically in the life of their community, the City of Hobart is committed to the following guiding principles:

- Recognising that diversity in the community is one of its greatest strengths
- Acknowledging that all individuals and communities have strengths, and building capacity through a whole-of-community approach
- Ensuring that the needs and aspirations of the most vulnerable and disadvantaged people in the community are addressed in partnership with other key stakeholders
- Understanding and being informed about all aspects of the community
- Engaging the community as identifiers of community needs and aspirations and participators in the responses
- Identifying and understanding the underlying causes of social exclusion and giving priority to supporting early intervention and prevention approaches

- Promoting and providing equity and access to all City of Hobart's activities, programs, facilities and services
- Ensuring the City of Hobart's practices, policies and procedures actively build social inclusion and do not contribute to social exclusion
- Utilising a whole-of-organisation approach to address the barriers that exclude people from full participation in community life through the implementation of the Social Inclusion Strategy

Role of the City of Hobart

The City of Hobart has a unique role in promoting and providing equal access in the Hobart municipal area. With this in mind, the City's role in equal access is fully aligned with its social inclusion roles, which are defined as follows:

Leadership

Hobart has a unique role as the capital city and regional hub. Many people who live outside the municipal area look to the City of Hobart as a key driver in addressing social issues.

Advocacy

There are many issues and opportunities where the City of Hobart can use its voice to advocate for outcomes that will benefit all.

Management

The City of Hobart has a key role in the strategic planning, development and management of land, infrastructure and facilities in order to benefit the community.

Connection

The City of Hobart has a significant lead role in bringing people and organisations together and establishing relationships in order to achieve community outcomes.

Informing

The City of Hobart as an organisation has access to a vast array of information, is a collector and source of information for the community and has a vital role in raising awareness on issues.

Facilitation

The City of Hobart is in a unique position of being able to provide a broad range of support to facilitate innovative community-based initiatives that respond to local need, and may include delivery of services when there is a clear need and a lack of capacity in the community to provide the required service.

Accountability

In terms of monitoring the City of Hobart's performance in the delivery of its Equal Access Strategy, the following approach will be utilised:

- Regular reporting to the Council. This is done three times a year for all City of Hobart operations, and annually through the Annual Report that is also presented to the community at the Council's Annual General Meeting held in November.
- City of Hobart's Access Advisory Committee. This committee, which was established in February 1996, comprises representatives, and support people where appropriate, from groups who have an interest in access issues in Hobart, including people with a disability, older people, people from other cultural backgrounds, parents of young children, public sector agencies, Aldermen and City of Hobart staff. The role of the Access Advisory Committee is to provide advice and assistance to the City of Hobart on matters relating to access, including in the development, implementation and review of its Equal Access Strategy. The Committee meets bi-monthly.

Areas for Activity

Priority Area 1: Participation Opportunities

Social isolation and a loss of connectedness with community is of major significance to many people with a disability. They may have a lack of confidence and motivation to join new activities or social networks and may become increasingly withdrawn and homebound.

The City of Hobart has a vital role to play by supporting, encouraging, facilitating and advocating for community participation opportunities for those with access and mobility issues.

Equal access ensures that everyone can participate in community life, regardless of their physical, intellectual, social or economic position in society. Participation in a range of social, recreational, sporting, learning and employment opportunities is a fundamental right of every member of the community.

The City of Hobart aims to remove the physical, communication and attitudinal barriers that may prevent people with disabilities and other people with access limitations from participation and access to City of Hobart facilities, services, programs and activities.

Priority Area 2: Accessible buildings, infrastructure and streetscapes

An accessible physical environment benefits the wider community, not just people with a disability. Through the Access Advisory Committee, the City of Hobart monitors new city developments and upgrades at design stage, and regularly monitors and reviews existing facilities for modification where necessary. Access to buildings, streetscapes, parks, playgrounds and bushland is important to the community and there is a clear expectation that the City of Hobart will continue to play a role in this area.

Priority Area 3: Access to parking and transport

Difficulties with accessing suitable parking and transport are situations that people with a disability, particularly those with a mobility disability, often face on a daily basis. The inability to attend appointments, do shopping or visit services due to being unable to access parking in close proximity causes a major problem. Other issues include a perception of a shortage of accessible parking spaces throughout the City both on-street and off-street; the utilisation of community transport; a dependence on public transport options including accessible Metro buses and accessible taxis and perceptions of the reliability of these services; and lack of infrastructure to enable easy access onto accessible buses and taxis.

Priority Area 4: Accessible information

The ability to access information is vital for everyone in the community but people with a disability, older people and those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds face specific barriers to gaining information. Appropriate information assists in enabling them to be independent and feel valued in the community. Accessible signage, brochures, websites and information sheets all have a part to play. Application of best practice way-finding principles will assist people with vision impairment to safely access buildings and streetscapes.

Priority Area 5: Disability awareness

People with a disability have needs and aspirations and they have a right to voice these and be heard. The City of Hobart has a role to advocate on behalf of people with a disability to ensure that the community is inclusive and has an awareness of the issues facing people with a disability. The community see the City of Hobart taking a leadership role as the Capital City Council, leading the way in advocacy and awareness.

2017 - 18 Action Plan

Priority Area of Activity 1: Participation Opportunities		
Priority Areas for Action	Actions / Initiatives	Performance Measure
Social and Cultural Opportunities	Continue to provide information on participation opportunities through the Access Advisory Committee.	Information shared.
	Partner with other councils and Tascare for Children in the delivery of an International Day for People with Disability event to be held in Clarence in December. *	Event delivered.
	Promote participation opportunities and events through City of Hobart newsletters and the website.	Information promoted.
	Create an e-newsletter to share information with the sector about changes to Hobart events and social activity.	E-newsletter developed and distributed.

Priority Area of Activity 1: Participation Opportunities

Priority Areas for Action	Actions / Initiatives	Performance Measure
	Ensure accessibility to space which facilitates participation opportunities for people with disabilities are included in Inner City Action Plan projects, including Stage Two of Collins Court, and upgrading the Elizabeth Street Bus Mall.	Officers participating on project teams.
	Celebrate the work created through the shared ability art program at Mathers House with a launch and exhibition.	Exhibition held at Mathers House.
	Work in partnership with key stakeholders to deliver an event at Waterside Pavilion, Mawson Place. *	Event held at Waterside Pavilion.
	Work in partnership with the sector to develop a community program of creative activities to be included in current City of Hobart events in the city.	Partnership developed. Participation in the Taste Festival; Light up the Lane; Franklin Square Summer entertainment.

Priority Area of Activity 1: Participation Opportunities

Priority Areas for Action	Actions / Initiatives	Performance Measure
	Work with the City of Hobart's youth participation team in expanding activities at Youth Arts and Recreation Centre for young people with a disability.	Program expanded.
Recreation Opportunities	Work actively to support the upgrade at the Doone Kennedy Hobart Aquatic Centre to enhance participation opportunities.	Participate in planning and work to develop programs.
	Support recreation programs for people with disabilities held in City of Hobart facilities.	Provide venue / support.
Consultative Opportunities	Facilitate community and sector participation through the Access Advisory Committee.	Convene Access Advisory Committee.
	Utilise assistive technology to facilitate participation including promote the availability of hearing augmentation technology in the Town Hall Ballroom.	Promote availability of assistive technology.

Priority Area of Activity 2: Accessible buildings, infrastructure and streetscapes

Priority Areas for Action	Actions / Initiatives	Performance Measure
Access to buildings, streetscapes, parks, playgrounds, bushland and public toilets.	Access to buildings In consultation with the Access Advisory Committee: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor new City of Hobart developments and upgrades at design stage, and regularly monitor and review existing facilities. 	Design plans presented to Access Advisory Committee.
	Commit to undertake access improvements to City of Hobart facilities.	Identify opportunities for access improvements.
	Access to streetscapes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain the dedicated budget in the Council's Annual Plan for specific streetscape access improvements. • Map priority routes to ensure easy travel across Hobart. 	Budget maintained. Mapped: Battery Point, Cornelian Bay, South Hobart, New Town.

Priority Area of Activity 2: Accessible buildings, infrastructure and streetscapes		
Priority Areas for Action	Actions / Initiatives	Performance Measure
	<p>In consultation with the Access Advisory Committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor streetscape upgrades at design stage. • Design plans presented to Access Advisory Committee. 	Streetscape planning meeting held in April / May 2018.
	<p>Access to parks, playgrounds and bushland</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain the dedicated budget in the Council's Annual Plan for specific parks and playgrounds access improvements. 	Budget maintained.

Priority Area of Activity 2: Accessible buildings, infrastructure and streetscapes		
Priority Areas for Action	Actions / Initiatives	Performance Measure
	<p>In consultation with the Access Advisory Committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set priorities for 2017 - 18 budget, monitor parks and playground upgrades at design stage and regularly monitor and review existing facilities which may include site audits as appropriate to identify barriers to access. 	Parks planning meeting held annually and site visit undertaken if required.
	Investigate the options to provide equal access to the Town Hall stage.	Opportunities investigated.

Priority Area of Activity 2: Accessible buildings, infrastructure and streetscapes		
Priority Areas for Action	Actions / Initiatives	Performance Measure
	<p>Public Toilets</p> <p>In consultation with the Access Advisory Committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor toilet facility upgrades at design stage and regularly monitor and review existing facilities. • Install accessible toilet at Mount Nelson Community Hall. • Install accessible toilet adjacent to the Town Hall Ballroom. 	<p>Design plans presented to Access Advisory Committee.</p> <p>Accessible toilet installed.</p> <p>Accessible toilet installed.</p>

Priority Area of Activity 3: Access to parking and transport

Priority Areas for Action	Actions / Initiatives	Performance Measure
Parking and transport	Monitor the outcomes from actions undertaken in relation to accessible parking in the City of Hobart's parking strategy - <i>A plan for the future 2013</i> .	Monitor outcomes.
	Ensure the provision of adequate accessible parking spaces at all City of Hobart and Council funded events.	Officers to work with Events Team.
	Continue the provision of the accessible Hobart Hopper shuttle bus.	Officers to work with Events and Salamanca Market Unit.
	Advocate for the rights of people with disabilities to have access to all public transport.	Officers to advocate where possible.
	Input into the Council's Transport Strategy by the Committee.	Input into the Transport Strategy.
	When necessary, work with the Department of State Growth through the Access Advisory Committee to respond to issues in the areas of parking and transport.	Department of State Growth contacted as required.

Priority Area of Activity 4: Accessible Information

Priority Areas for Action	Actions / Initiatives	Performance Measure
	Advocate for all City of Hobart hard copy publications to be made available in accessible and electronic formats.	Publications monitored.
	Ensure that event information is provided in an accessible format and assistive technology, such as interpreters, signers and captioning is provided wherever possible.	Events Team consulted.
	Continue to distribute the Hobart Mobility Map as widely as possible.	Hobart Mobility Map distributed.
	Ensure information regarding City of Hobart events are distributed to the disability sector.	Information distributed.

Priority Area of Activity 5: Disability Awareness

Priority Areas for Action	Actions / Initiatives	Performance Measure
Community awareness and education	Identify opportunities for raising awareness to the wider community about access issues for people with disabilities.	Opportunities indentified.
	Support awareness raising activities, such as access expos and challenges, undertaken by other organisations.	Support provided.
	Promote the rights of people with a disability through advocating on their behalf when issues are raised through the Access Advisory Committee.	Advocacy undertaken.
	Advocate for the rights of people with a disability through any consultation with Commonwealth Government, State Government, Metro Tasmania, building developers, business owners etc.	Advocacy undertaken.
	Continue to monitor accessibility of the new City of Hobart website.	Monitor site.

Priority Area of Activity 5: Disability Awareness

Priority Areas for Action	Actions / Initiatives	Performance Measure
	Advise and promote to the disability sector and the wider community, information relating to City of Hobart staff that have access responsibilities as part of their role.	Information disseminated.
	Create an e-newsletter to share information with the sector about changes to Hobart infrastructure, events and social activity.	E-newsletter developed and distributed. Four per year.
	Provide Equity and Discrimination training to relevant City of Hobart staff.	Training provided.