AUBURN CITY COUNCIL
Many Cultures One Community

AUBURN COMMUNITY ACCESS PLAN 2013 – 2017

ACCESS AND INCLUSION PLAN FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITY

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ACCESS AND INCLUSION PLAN
FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITY

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INTRODUCTION

Disability is an issue that affects a significant proportion of the population. An estimated 15.4% of the population of Auburn City have some form of disability, including 4.5% who have a profound to severe disability. 10% of Auburn City residents also identify themselves as being a carer for a person with disability.

Auburn City Council strives for a community in which all people can participate and can function as independently as possible. The purpose of the Auburn Community Access Plan is to ensure, as far as possible, that people with disability have full and equal access to the facilities, programs, services and information that Council provides on an equitable basis without facing discrimination or barriers.

The Plan takes into consideration barriers which prevent members of the community from fully participating in community life. Barriers can be:

- **Physical**, such as inaccessible buildings and streetscapes;
- **Infrastructural**, such as a lack of appropriate transportation;
- **Procedural**, such as accepting applications only in writing; or
- **Social**, such as a lack of information in accessible formats or the attitudes of people.

The Community Access Plan 2013 - 2017 provides strategies for changing Council practices over the next four years and focuses on 35 strategic actions. It will guide Council on how to be more inclusive of people with disability and their carer's.

The Plan will also assist other members of the community who may not consider themselves as having a disability but who will benefit from improved access. These include: people with limited mobility or temporary illness or injury; older people; and parents or carers of young children, particularly those with strollers or prams.

Although it is not compulsory for Council to develop and implement a Community Access Plan, it is widely accepted as good practice to do so. The Access Plan will enable Council to meet its obligations under the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1992 and assist Council to identify and change Council practices that may result in discrimination, whether intentional or unintentional, against people with disability.

The Auburn Community Access Plan was developed in consultation with Council's Community Access Committee, local residents and service providers.

Following its adoption by Council, the Auburn Community Access Plan will be lodged with the Australian Human Rights Commission in accordance with the Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1992.

WHY HAVE A COMMUNITY ACCESS PLAN?

A Community Access Plan is a strategic document which outlines Council's commitment to working with the community to ensure resources, facilities and services provided throughout the Local Government Area (LGA) are accessible.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE PLAN

The goal of the Community Access Plan is to identify and eliminate Council practices that may result in discrimination against people with disability and to build capacity for service delivery and accessibility to all people.

The aims of the Community Access Plan are to:

- Implement standards of universal access to Council facilities and infrastructure.
- Ensure Equal Opportunity Employment and relevant training within Council.
- Engage and partner with people with disability, carers and local service providers.
- Provide for advocacy and promote awareness of disability and opportunities for participation.
- Provide accessible Council programs and services.

WHAT DOES 'ACCESS' MEAN?

'Access' is the opportunity for all community members to actively participate in community life and includes physical access as well as social and economic opportunities.

Access is related to the notion of inclusion which is defined in the Federal Government's National Social Inclusion Agenda[1] as having the resources, opportunity and capacity to:

- Learn (participate in education and training);
- Work (participate in employment, unpaid or voluntary work including family and carer responsibilities);
- Engage (connect with people, use local services and participate in local, cultural, civic and recreational activities); and
- Have a voice (influence decisions that affect them).

BENEFITS OF THE PLAN

Principles of accessibility benefit the entire community, in particular those who have formerly been restricted in accessing the physical and social environment including:
- Parents with prams;
- Carers;
- Seniors with mobility aids; and
- People who are suffering from permanent and non-permanent medical conditions.

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[1] Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (2012), *'Social Inclusion in Australia: How Australia is faring - 2nd Edition'*

THE PLAN IN CONTEXT

THE DISABILITY DISCRIMINATION ACT

The Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (DDA) makes it unlawful to discriminate in the provision of goods, services or facilities against people on the basis that they have, or may have, a disability.

The Disability Discrimination Act reinforces Council's general obligation not to treat a person with disability less favourably than they would treat a person without a disability in similar circumstances. The DDA recognises that people with disabilities have a right to participate as fully as possible in the life of the community and requires that appropriate anti-discrimination standards be met where possible and reasonable, no matter how many people are involved.

COUNCIL AND THE DISABILITY DISCRIMINATION ACT

The main area affecting Council under the Disability Discrimination Act is access to goods and services. This includes access to buildings and infrastructure, public space, development applications, and employment. Practical examples of access include being able to fully utilise public Council facilities such as libraries and sporting grounds, accessible toilets and play equipment, hearing loops and using assistance animals in Council premises.

The Community Access Plan is a tool which seeks to ensure that people with disability have full and equal access to the facilities, programs, services and information that Council provides, in accordance with the Disability Discrimination Act 1992.

ALIGNMENT WITH COUNCIL'S STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES & PLANS

The Community Access Plan aligns with the Auburn City Community Strategic Plan which identifies a 'diverse and inclusive' community as a key outcome area. Development of this Plan is also a specific action identified in Council's Delivery Program and Operational Plan.

The Access Plan outlines actions linked to projects and budgets identified in the Operational Plan and Delivery Program. This will ensure that the needs of people with disability will be included in all aspects of Auburn's infrastructure, resources and services.

The Plan will be monitored and implemented as part of Council's integrated planning and reporting framework.

The Auburn City Community Engagement Strategy also includes consideration of people with disability.

WHO ARE PEOPLE WITH DISABILITY?

People with disability are a diverse group of people. They include people who were born with disability and those who acquire disability during their life through accident, ageing or illness.

The type of disability and the way it impacts on a person's life can be variable. The NSW Disability Services Act 1993 describes disability as resulting in 'a significantly reduced capacity in one or more major life activities, such as communication, learning, mobility, decision making or self-care; and the need for support, whether or not of an ongoing nature'.

A person may be affected by more than one form of disability. The main categories include:

- **Sensory** - affecting vision and/or hearing.
- **Physical** - affecting mobility and/or a person's ability to use their upper and/or lower body.
- **Neurological** - affecting a person's ability to control their movements, e.g. cerebral palsy.

- **Intellectual** - affecting a person's judgement, ability to learn and communicate.
- **Cognitive** - affecting a person's thought processes, personality and memory e.g. acquired brain injury.
- **Psychiatric** - affecting a person's emotions, thought processes and behaviour e.g. clinically diagnosed depression or schizophrenia.

The ageing of the Australian population and its increased longevity are also leading to increasing numbers of people with disability.

Unpaid carers are the main providers of assistance to people with disability. Recent research has identified that carers and families of people with disability experience high rates of mental health problems, poorer physical health, employment restrictions, financial hardship and relationship breakdown.[2]

[2] Australian Institute of Family Studies (2008), *'The nature and impact of caring for family members with a disability in Australia'* Research Report No 16.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE PLAN

BACKGROUND

The Community Access Plan is a tool to assist Council to identify potential barriers for people with disability in accessing services and facilities. The Plan will guide Council on how to be more inclusive and outlines strategies to eliminate, where possible, these barriers over the next four years.

This Plan has been developed in consultation with Council's Community Access Committee comprising community members, community service providers, Councillors and Council staff. It also builds upon consultations undertaken with residents, carers and service providers as well as other Council staff.

ACCESS AUDIT

In 2004, an Access Audit was conducted of all Council facilities in order to identify physical barriers that restrict access to premises. The audit identified a significant list of items that did not meet accessibility requirements. Over time and as a result of many of the new works undertaken by Council in the intervening period, the bulk of issues have been addressed. Those that remain have been incorporated into Council's Capital Works Program for the next ten years.

DISABILITY DATA

Council undertook a review of data from a number of sources including Australian Bureau of Statistics (Census and disability projections), Roads and Maritime Services, Department of Human Services and relevant Council data.

COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

Research and community consultations were undertaken between September 2011 and March 2012 on the needs of people living with disability in the Auburn Local Government Area (LGA).

Two surveys were distributed - one to be completed by disability service providers and the other for people with disability and/or their carers. The surveys were distributed to schools, people with disability, carers, members of the Auburn Community Access Committee, and local disability service providers.

60% of respondents to the individual survey indicated that they either had a disability or were the carer of a person with disability.

Four local community forums were held to engage with people with a disability, carers and disability service providers/advocacy groups. Consultations were also held with special needs children from two local schools. Internal consultations were also undertaken with staff and senior managers from across Council.

The following is a summary of the key access issues identified from the consultations involving people with disability:

- Stigmatisation and social isolation of people with disability and their carers

- Cultural barriers and taboos related to attitudes and awareness of disabilities

- Poor access to information and awareness of services (issues also included language barriers, long waiting lists and transport)

- Burn out of carers

- Physical access and transport

Consultations highlighted that the term 'disability' does not have a universally understood definition with the word not even existing in many cultures and languages. Attitudes towards people with disability are also a significant barrier to their participation. Cultural and linguistic barriers can further impact access to disability services. People from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds continue to remain under-represented in their access to disability services.

Results from a Community Priorities Survey undertaken in 2012 identified 'aged care and support for people with a disability' as an area of very high importance. Residents in the Auburn region, Lidcombe, Regents Park and Silverwater attributed a higher level of importance to 'aged care and support for people with a disability' than did those in the Newington/Sydney Olympic Park region.

COMMUNITY PROFILE

AUBURN CITY OVERVIEW

Auburn City has a population of 78,286[3] and is the second fastest growing urban Council in metropolitan Sydney and NSW.

Auburn is ranked as the second most disadvantaged Local Government Area in the Sydney Statistical Division (SEIFA Index of disadvantage) (ABS, 2006 Census).

Auburn is one of the most culturally and linguistically diverse local government areas in Australia:

- 56.9% of the population was born overseas.
- 27% arrived in Australia within the last 5 years.
- 71% speak a language other than English.

THE TOP 5 COUNTRIES OF BIRTH*:

1. China (11.3%)
2. Vietnam (4.5%)
3. South Korea (4.2%)
4. India (3.6%)
5. Turkey (3.5%)

* Other than Australia
Source: ABS, Census 2011.

THE TOP 5 LANGUAGES*:

1. Arabic (10.7%)
2. Cantonese (9.9%)
3. Mandarin (9.2%)
4. Turkish (6.7%)
5. Korean (5%)

* Other than English
Source: ABS, Census 2011.

[3] Australian Bureau of Statistics (2011), Census of Population and Housing 2011. Compiled using id Profile (Usual residence data).

Age Profile - Auburn City Population		
AUBURN CITY	**2011**	
Service age group (years)	**Number**	**%**
Babies and pre-schoolers (0 to 4)	5,644	7.7
Primary schoolers (5 to 11)	6,214	8.4
Secondary schoolers (12 to 17)	5,340	7.2
Tertiary education & independence (18 to 24)	8,787	11.9
Young workforce (25 to 34)	15,126	20.5
Parents and homebuilders (35 to 49)	15,278	20.7
Older workers & pre-retirees (50 to 59)	8,205	11.1
Empty nesters and retirees (60 to 69)	4,729	6.4
Seniors (70 to 84)	3,560	4.8
Frail aged (85 and over)	855	1.2
Total population	**73,738**	**100.0**

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census of Population and Housing 2006 and 2011. (Usual residence data)

57% of Auburn's residents live in transport disadvantaged areas where facilities and services are difficult to access or unavailable.[4]

[4] Hurni, A. (2006), *'Transport and Social Disadvantage in Western Sydney a Partnership Research Project'*, http://www.wscf.org.au/uploads/File/Transport_disadvantage_report_web.pdf

PEOPLE WITH DISABILITY LIVING IN AUBURN CITY

The estimated proportion of the population of people with a disability in the Auburn Local Government Area (LGA) is 15.4% or 11,417 people (4,904 males and 6,513 females).[5]

3,320 people or 4.5% of the population in Auburn City report needing help in their day-to-day lives due to a severe or profound disability. This includes people whose disability causes severe core activity limitation (i.e. requiring help or assistance in one or more of the three core activity areas of self-care, mobility and communication because of a disability, long term health condition or old age).[6]

Need for Assistance with Core Activities by Age		
AUBURN CITY	**2011**	
Assistance needed by age group (years)	**Number**	**%**
0 to 4	40	0.7
5 to 9	65	1.4
10 to 19	116	1.3
20 to 59	1,131	2.5
60 to 64	290	10.2
65 to 69	266	14.0
70 to 74	296	19.3
75 to 79	304	27.2
80 to 84	346	38.5
85 and over	466	54.5
Total persons needing assistance	**3,320**	**4.5**

Source: ABS, Census 2011.

[5] Australian Bureau of Statistics *Synthetic Estimates of Disability and Severity from survey data 2009*
[6] Australian Bureau of Statistics (2011), Census of Population and Housing 2011. Compiled using id Profile (Usual residence data).

Need for Assistance with Core Activities by Suburb		
AUBURN CITY	**2011**	
Assistance needed by suburb	**Number**	**% of population**
Auburn	1,735	2.4
Berala	394	0.5
Lidcombe	777	1.1
Newington	53	0.1
Regents Park	230	0.3
Silverwater	32	0.0
Sydney Olympic Park	0	0.0
Wentworth Point	22	0.0
Not stated	77	0.1
Total persons needing assistance	**3,320**	**4.5**

Source: ABS, Census 2011

More than 2,749 people in Auburn City receive a Disability Support Pension.[7] This includes people over 16 years who have a physical, intellectual, or psychiatric condition that stops them from working or who are permanently blind.

It is widely recognised that as people get older, their experience of disability increases, particularly in the area of mobility and physical disability. As Auburn's population ages, together with its increased longevity, the rate of disability is also expected to increase substantially over time.

Disability Support Pension Recipients by Gender and Postcode			
Suburb/Postcode	Female	Male	Total
Auburn (2144)	755	789	1,544
Lidcombe & Berala (2141)	374	395	769
Regents Park (2143)	155	176	331
Wentworth Point & Newington (2127)	28	27	55
Silverwater (2128)	20	30	50
Total	1,332	1,417	2,749

Source: FaHCSIA, March 2012

There are 2,894 Mobility Parking Scheme (MPS) permit holders in Auburn City. This includes 49 permits issued to organisations, 2,745 individual permits and 100 temporary permits. Of the total number of MPS permits, the majority (76%) are issued to persons over the age of 60.[8]

[7] Data provided by FaHCSIA Basic Dataset - March 2012 Quarter - Source date 30 March 2012
[8] Roads and Maritime Services, (December 2012), Mobility Parking Scheme permits issued in Auburn LGA.

Mobility Parking Scheme permits on issue in Auburn LGA					
Age group	Individual	Organisation	Temporary	Total	*% of population*
0-9	26	-	2	28	*0.28*
10-19	35	-	-	35	*0.39*
20-29	51	-	9	60	*0.40*
30-39	102	-	9	111	*0.90*
40-49	198	-	16	214	*2.18*
50-59	395	-	35	430	*5.24*
60-69	633	-	16	649	*13.72*
70-79	634	-	7	641	*24.09*
80+	671	-	6	677	*38.60*
No age	-	49	-	49	
All	**2745**	**49**	**100**	**2894**	**3.92**

Source: Roads and Maritime Services as at 31 December 2012

Within Auburn City, there are 55 mobility parking spots available in public areas including on street parking in town centres and outside Council facilities. An additional 25 mobility parking places are available within public carparks located in Auburn, Lidcombe and Regents Park.

CARERS OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITY

10% of Auburn City residents (5,915 persons) over the age of 15 provide unpaid care to a person with disability, with long term illness or due to old age.[9]

People with disability and their carers constitute a significant proportion of Auburn City's population (25.4%) and with the expected growth of the Auburn area they will continue to do so in the future.

[9] Australian Bureau of Statistics (2011), Census of Population and Housing 2011. Compiled using id Profile (Usual residence data).

IMPLEMENTING THE PLAN

MONITORING AND EVALUATING THE PLAN

Council will monitor the implementation of the following Action Plan 2013 - 2017. This will be overseen by Council's Community Development Officer for Age and Disability together with the Auburn Community Access Committee.

Action Plan strategies will be formally incorporated into Council's Delivery Program and Operational Plan with accompanying responsibilities, resources and timeframes identified. Progress will be monitored through regular reports to management, Council and the community.

The implementation of the Plan will also be incorporated as a standing item on the Auburn Community Access Committee agenda.

The Plan will be registered with the Australian Human Rights Commission.

A comprehensive review and evaluation of the Plan will be undertaken at the completion of the four year (2013 - 2017) term of the plan. The results will be reported to Council and the Australian Human Rights Commission as well as service providers and the community on the outcomes achieved.

Auburn Community Access Committee

The Auburn Community Access Committee is an advisory committee of Council which was established in 1997 to provide advice to Council on preventing and minimising access difficulties. The aim of the Access Committee is to enable the provision of the highest standard of access for the Auburn community.

The Access Committee meets regularly to achieve the following objectives:
1. To identify the access needs of people with disability.
2. To work with Council to identify strategies to improve access.
3. To provide a forum for raising issues of concern regarding access.
4. To examine and audit access concerns in the Auburn Local Government Area.
5. To establishing Council access policies and monitor their implementation.
6. To ensure that Council considers access to and within buildings, with all development and building applications affecting the public.
7. To inform and educate Council and the general public about access issues.
8. To advocate for better and appropriate access at all levels.

The Access Committee is comprised of people with disability, carers, people concerned about access issues, community members, service providers, government departments and Council representatives.

ACTION PLAN 2013 – 2017

No.	Action	KPI	Responsibility
1	Develop strategies to increase the participation of people with a disability within Council's workforce.	Changes incorporated into Recruitment & Selection Policy and practices by December 2013. Number of strategies implemented. Number of people with disability employed or undertaking work experience placements within Council.	Human Resources
2	Provide advice and support to managers when reviewing and assessing requirements for new or existing staff with disability to implement workplace modifications.	Number of workplace modifications implemented.	Human Resources
3	Provide opportunities for people with disability to participate in volunteer programs within Council.	Number of volunteers with disability.	Community Development
4	Provide Disability Awareness Training for front line Council staff to promote accessible Council services and programs and access to Council facilities.	Program in place by December 2013.	Community Development
5	Ensure that information about physical disability access, availability of accessible facilities (e.g. toilets, parking, liberty swing, wheelchair lift) and provision of technology and communication access is included on the Council website and all publications relating to venues for events and community consultations.	Review and update of website by June 2013. Guidelines for publications developed.	Community Development

No.	Action	KPI	Responsibility
6	Review and implement changes to make Council's provision of information more accessible and compliant with current accessibility standards and provide news items and information in a range of accessible formats.	Review completed by July 2013. Number and types of publications provided in accessible formats.	Public Relations
7	Provide a range of assistive technology facilities and online resources through Auburn City library services.	Number of loans. Number of downloads.	Library Services
8	Promote accessible library services, resources and technology to improve awareness and use, including library tours with disability and carers groups.	Number of promotion strategies implemented. A minimum of 2 tours per annum.	Library Services
9	Include access and mobility considerations in plans for the development and upgrade of all major Council community facilities.	Number of access improvements made in existing facilities where feasible. All new facilities comply with Australian Standards.	Properties
10	Provide assistive hearing devices and spot lighting at customer service desks for the benefit of people with impaired hearing or speech.	Customer Service Centre redeveloped by June 2014. No. of accessibility considerations implemented.	Properties
11	Undertake an audit to identify obstacles to a continuous accessible path of travel within all of Council's premises.	Audit and recommendations completed and reported to Access Committee by December 2013.	Community Development
12	Develop an Action Plan to overcome obstacles for a continuous accessible path of travel within all of Council's premises, where possible.	Action Plan developed by June 2015. Number of actions implemented.	Properties

No.	Action	KPI	Responsibility
13	Undertake an audit of town/village centres and commercial precincts to identify accessibility issues and obstacles to a continuous accessible path of travel.	A minimum of 2 audits undertaken per year and reported to Access Committee.	Strategy
14	Develop an Action Plan to address accessibility issues identified in town centre audits.	Action Plan developed within 3 months of completed audit. Number of actions implemented.	Engineering
15	Undertake a review of Local Centre Mobility Maps and develop guidelines, standardised iconography, and a template for the development of new mobility maps.	Review of mobility maps to be completed by December 2013. Development of guidelines, standardised iconography and template for new maps completed by June 2014.	Community Development
16	Develop Mobility Maps for Town Centres to provide information on accessibility throughout the LGA to help the aged, people with disability, parents with prams and people with temporary mobility difficulties.	Auburn Town Centre Mobility Map completed by June 2014. Mobility maps updated by December 2016.	Community Development
17	Prepare a new Pedestrian Access and Mobility Plan (PAMP).	Funding submission to Roads and Maritime Services completed by December 2013. New PAMP reported to Council by June 2016.	Engineering
18	Implement the Pedestrian Access and Mobility Plan (PAMP).	Number of actions implemented.	Engineering
19	Review Council's standards to ensure that features such as traffic control facilities do not create hazards for people with disability.	Reviewed completed by June 2014.	Engineering

No.	Action	KPI	Responsibility
20	Review Council's Development Control Plan (DCP) to ensure that sufficient provision is made for an increasing need for Accessible and Adaptable Housing.	DCP review completed by June 2015.	Strategy
21	Carry out an audit of parks, gardens and outdoor recreation facilities to identify access and mobility improvements required to comply with Australian Standards. Develop a priority works schedule to improve these facilities in consultation with Council's Access Committee.	Audit checklist developed. Audits to be completed and a works schedule developed by June 2014. Number of access improvements made.	Parks & Recreation
22	Develop an Access and Equity Policy to formalise Council's commitment to providing accessible and inclusive services, facilities and resources to the community.	Policy adopted by Council by September 2013.	Community Development
23	Update Events Checklist for Council and community events to consider disability access and inclusion considerations.	Checklist updated by June 2013.	Events
24	Develop Community Consultation Checklist to ensure that all public consultation opportunities provided by Council are inclusive and accessible, including consideration of venue accessibility, promotion and delivery of activities and a commitment to responding appropriately to accessibility requests.	Checklist developed by March 2014.	Community Development
25	Annually review and invite Expressions of Interest for membership of the Auburn Community Access Committee to provide opportunities for people with disability in Council decision making processes.	EOI process undertaken each year.	Community Development

No.	Action	KPI	Responsibility
26	Provide information and training to parents of children with disability.	A minimum of 1 training program delivered per annum.	Children's Services
27	Provide information and training to children's services on working with children with disability.	A minimum of 1 training program delivered per annum.	Children's Services
28	Undertake and evaluate the trial of an accessible community bus route for seniors and people with disability across the Auburn City area.	Bus route operational by March 2013. Number of people accessing the service.	Community Development
29	Implement new initiatives in partnership with local services, people with disability and/or carers in response to identified community needs.	A minimum of 2 initiatives implemented per annum.	Community Development
30	Undertake advocacy initiatives through the Auburn Community Access Committee to address issues for people with disability.	Number of advocacy initiatives undertaken.	Community Development
31	Implement annual activities/events to celebrate Carer's Week and International Day of People with Disability.	Number of events. Number of participants.	Community Development
32	Implement the Auburn Community Access Awards to promote access achievements undertaken by local businesses and community organisations.	Annual Awards program implemented.	Community Development
33	Develop a directory to provide information on local Disability Services in a range of formats.	Directory developed by June 2014. Number and type of publication formats.	Community Development
34	Review and promote Council's affiliation of the NSW 'Companion Card' program which enables free (transport and) entry into all Council venues for an attendant carer accompanying a person with profound disability.	Review completed by December 2013. Number of promotional strategies implemented.	Community Development

No.	Action	KPI	Responsibility
35	Promote and distribute resources which provide information and guidance on access considerations for buildings and services for people with a disability, particularly related to the construction or renovation of commercial buildings.	Resources available by July 2013. Number of promotional strategies implemented.	Development Assessment

Prepared by the Community Development Unit, Auburn City Council, 2013

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