



City of Marion

Access Action Plan

**In response to the Commonwealth Disability
Discrimination Act (1992)**

September 2001

Marion Access Action Plan

OVERVIEW

The City of Marion Access Action Plan is a strategy to comply with the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1992 and specifies Council and staff responsibilities in responding to the Act.

The City of Marion Access Action Plan is a combination of the issues identified by people with disabilities and strategies contributed by Council staff. The Access Action Plan's development has been a result of the work carried out by the Marion Access Advisory Team in consultation with the community.

JUSTIFICATION FOR THE PLAN

The Action Plan develops a strategy for addressing and changing particular Council practices that may result in discrimination against any person with a disability.

As a service provider the City of Marion has used a consultative approach in developing the Access Action Plan. All Departments of Council, some Government Agencies, and stakeholders from the local community have been involved.

The Access Action Plan is an active document that will respond to current knowledge available and therefore be regularly updated. It is intended to be an educative tool for the community and Council Staff.

The Access Action Plan is an empowering document that is expected to change as Council further develops processes, knowledge and skills in the practical implications of the Disability Discrimination Act (1992).

In accordance with DDA requirements (1992) the City of Marion Access Action Plan will be lodged with the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (HREOC).

OVERVIEW OF DISABILITY DISCRIMINATION ACT

The Federal Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (DDA), aims to ensure as far as possible, that people with a disability are not discriminated against by either individuals or organisations and are treated the same as those people who do not have a disability.

THE IMPACT OF THE ACT ON COUNCIL

The Disability Discrimination Act impacts on all local governments and has particular relevance to a number of Local Government operations, namely:

- access to council owned and/or operated facilities used by the community
- the provision of council services
- the purchase, sale and usage of land
- employment
- the provision of facilities for club and sporting organisations
- the provision of information to the community
- the development of Council policies and procedures

The Act makes it incumbent upon the City of Marion to examine all aspects of its operation which are covered under the Act to ensure that discrimination against a person with a disability is eliminated as far as is possible.

ELECTED COUNCIL STRUCTURE

The Council consists of 13 members including the Mayor elected by the total community and 3 councillors elected from each of 4 wards - West, East, Central and South.

The Elected Members meet twice per month to conduct Council business. Members are appointed to serve on a number of Council and community committees.

The Elected Members have a governance and leadership role which sets the broad direction for the Council within the requirements of the Local Government Act.

CORPORATE STRUCTURE

The Chief Executive Officer and administration staff are responsible for implementing the direction set by Council on a day to day basis through the objectives contained in a range of operational documents including the Corporate Plan and Annual Budget.

An outline of the corporate structure is shown in the diagram below.



CORPORATE AND OPERATIONAL PLANS

The City of Marion has a number of documents, which set and monitor the direction of the organisation.

The Corporate Policy Manual sets the broad policies of Council together with those which are required as part of its statutory obligations.

The Corporate Plan sets the direction for the next 3 years and is reviewed annually. It sets the priorities for resource allocation and sets objectives and outcomes for those priorities, taking into account current and emerging issues.

There is also the annual Financial Plan (budget) which incorporates the business plan for each department.

In the departments there are work area plans which relate to the particular responsibilities of each department.

Each of these documents will be reviewed in order to ensure that the DDA provisions are incorporated.

COUNCIL PLANNING PROCESSES

The Marion Access Plan is a tool to be used in conjunction with those documents above to assist Council in addressing the issues that currently affect people with disabilities. The Plan is a commitment by Council to ensure the services, policies, procedures and access are not discriminatory to any member of the community. Council is committed to ensuring these issues are considered in all Council planning processes. The aim is to ensure access for all in the City of Marion.

COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

Consultation has been carried out with the major stakeholders within the City of Marion.

- People with disabilities
- Local disability agencies
- Elected members
- Council Staff
- The general community

Staff and community surveys were conducted, Community Focus groups formed and community opinions gathered.

Examples of key issues raised by the community during consultation process.

- Provide more accessible recreation opportunities
- Improve lighting, footpaths, overhanging branches etc, pot-holes and provide more ramps
- Design new facilities appropriately and facilitate the upgrading of existing facilities
- Provide more services to people with a disability in the community
- Changing attitudes towards disability
- Improving information about employment opportunities for people with a disability.

THE GOALS

POLICY STATEMENT

The City of Marion adopted the following policy in relation to functions and services whether provided directly or through contractors, to ensure that there will be no discrimination on the basis of a person's disability.

The City of Marion values the contribution which people with disabilities make to the life, vitality and diversity of the City. Council resolves to involve, or where appropriate, advocate on behalf of people with disabilities, their families, carers and disability organisations as part of an ongoing consultative process to ensure that their access needs are dealt with appropriately.

THE AIM OF THE MARION ACCESS ACTION PLAN

In accordance with Council Policy the aim of the Plan is to acknowledge that all people need to be involved and integrated into their local community.

To achieve this Aim the following objectives have been identified.

OBJECTIVE 1.

Provide Council buildings and facilities which are accessible to all and promote equal access in future development.

This includes Council owned buildings used by the community, Council owned building leased by community groups and buildings used by Council.

This would involve alterations to many existing buildings and ensuring compliance with Building Standards for future develop within the City of Marion.

OBJECTIVE 2.

Accessible Council services for all members of the community.

This includes services provided through libraries, recreation programs and facilities, and Council community service function.

OBJECTIVE 3.

The provision of Council information in a form accessible to all members of the community.

This includes providing information in alternative formats.

OBJECTIVE 4.

Providing equal access to Council employment

Recruitment or selection will be fair and equitable and made on the basis of merit.

City of Marion is an equal opportunity employer and encourages applications from suitably qualified people with disabilities.

OBJECTIVE 5.

To be committed to access and equity issues affecting all citizens of Marion.

Council is aware of the diversity within the community and has made a commitment to the DDA by the introduction of a staff person taking on the role of an Access and Equity Liaison Officer.

OBJECTIVE 6.

Provide equal access to footpaths, and all open spaces and public areas with in the City of Marion.

Council plans to provide –

- 1) open space reserves and recreation opportunities for all
- 2) safe and accessible paths with easy to use ramps throughout the City.

CONCLUSION

Through the implementation of the Marion Access Plan, the use of coherent policies and strategies and consultation with its community, the City of Marion will over time facilitate the development of a community which is accessible to all its residents.

CITY OF MARION ACCESS ACTION PLAN – IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE

AREA	STRATEGIES	TIME FRAME
FACILITIES Buildings - Council Operated	All identified buildings will be made accessible in conjunction with the building maintenance plan of the Property Unit.	31 December 2010
FACILITIES Buildings - Council owned and subject to leases.	All identified buildings will be made accessible in conjunction with the building maintenance plan of the Property Unit and consultation with boards and management committees.	Time frame depends on facility management responsibility for modification under lease conditions (not yet finalised) and their financial capacity to contribute. Estimate 31 December 2010.
POLICIES	In conjunction with the Policy Unit, review completed policies and develop a process to ensure new polices contain DDA provisions where appropriate.	30 June 2002.

AREA	STRATEGIES	TIME FRAME
OPEN SPACE	<p>In conjunction with the Environment Department, identify and prioritise modification of council reserves.</p> <p>Two reserves, one at each end of the city to be made accessible.</p> <p>Other prioritised reserves to be made accessible.</p>	<p>31 December 2001.</p> <p>30 June 2003</p> <p>31 December 2010</p>
PHYSICAL SERVICES	<p>In conjunction with the Infrastructure Department, have input into the pavement management programme according to priorities identified from data locating people with disabilities within the city.</p> <p>To construct, repair or replace footpaths according to a standard that provides a continuous access path around the city's streets for people with disabilities.</p> <p>Ensure that street furniture is suitable for use by people with a disability and does not restrict free movement on footpaths.</p>	<p>The time frame will coincide with that of the pavement management plan.</p> <p>31 December 2010.</p>
COMMUNICATION	<p>Provision of portable hearing loops for use in Council buildings.</p>	<p>Completed.</p>

AREA	STRATEGIES	TIME FRAME
INFORMATION	In conjunction with the Customer Service Department, investigate and consult regarding alternative formats for information provision and implement findings.	30 June 2002.
BUILDING & PLANNING	<p>Process to ensure where appropriate that developers are provided with accurate information about the act and its impact on this area.</p> <p>Process to ensure that all Council development projects comply with the provisions of the act.</p>	<p>On going</p> <p>30 June 2002</p>
TRAINING	<p>Provide general awareness training for all staff and elected members.</p> <p>Provide specialised training for those areas which have specific responsibilities which are impacted by the provisions of the act.</p> <p>Provide general awareness training to all new staff as part of the induction process.</p>	30 June 2003