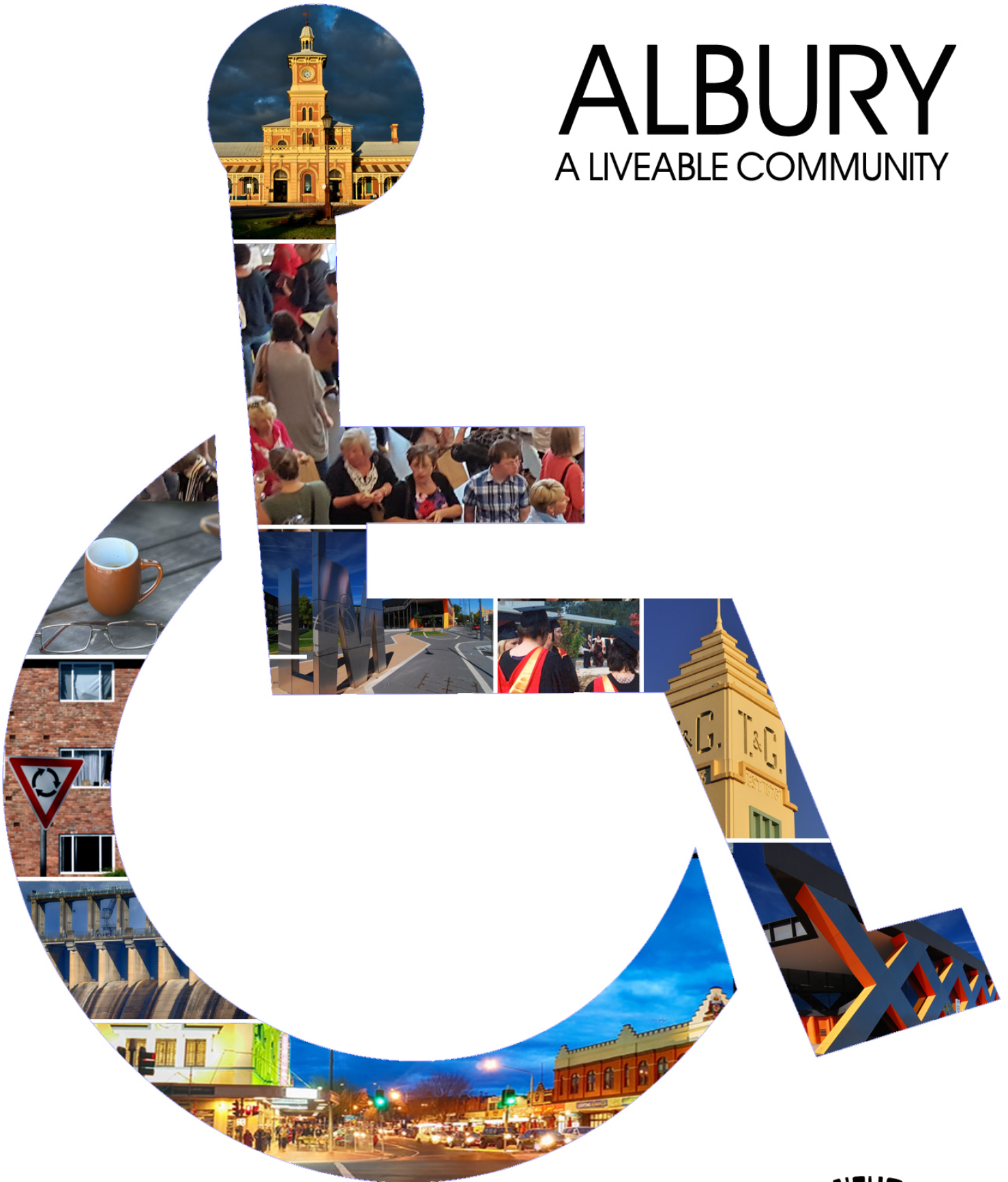
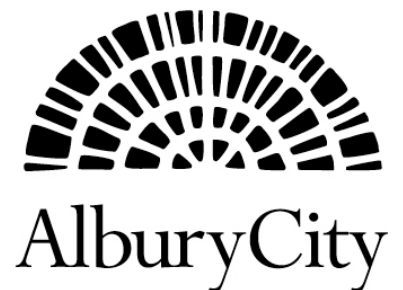


ALBURY

A LIVEABLE COMMUNITY



AlburyCity
Disability Inclusion Action Plan



A large, abstract graphic in shades of green. It consists of several overlapping, wavy horizontal lines. Superimposed on these lines are numerous small green dots, some of which are arranged in circular patterns. There are also a few larger, concentric circles scattered throughout the design.

AlburyCity Disability Inclusion Action Plan

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1. Public statement of commitment to disability inclusion

Introduction

AlburyCity strives to make Albury an accessible and inclusive community providing a place for everyone to be able to live, work, recreate, and visit. If we want to be a destination of choice, where families, seniors and those of work age aspire to live, we need to provide a City that is accessible and inclusive to everyone, not just those without disability. By doing this, Albury is well placed to become a leading local government area (to other LGA's) and more appealing as a preferred place to live. We have a key role in promoting and supporting access and inclusion in all areas of our Council business. This includes how we develop the built environment, provision of information and services, supporting employment opportunities and promoting positive community attitudes and behaviour toward people with disability. In order to achieve this in the built environment, AlburyCity will strive to go beyond the legally mandated access standards and apply the principles of universal design in the planning of new housing, infrastructure and buildings.

For businesses, the provision of appropriate access benefits not only their customers with disability, older people, and parents with prams, but also the business owners themselves by expanding their business reach. The removal of barriers for people with disability supports the inclusion of members of the local community who may otherwise fall outside of identified definitions of disadvantage. Further, many older people and people with disability tend to be brand loyal and the ability to access a welcoming and inclusive shop/eatery/building will result in the economy being boosted as well as a continuation of business for the premises. This in turn contributes to a more robust and thriving community, which in turn attracts more visitors and people moving in to the area/remaining in location.

Further, from a tourism perspective, Albury, with its neighbouring Local Government Areas, is a strong regional force, attracting business events, meetings and conferences. Albury also provides suitable supporting accommodation, food and beverage offerings, plus a range of industry suppliers. It attracts overnight tourists, seniors, families and business tourism. If we are accessible and inclusive, our economy will be boosted as a result as we have a greater ability to attract those with disability and their families, carers and friends.

AlburyCity is working towards creating a city that is accessible and inclusive of everyone and provides equal opportunity for people with disability to enjoy what our city has to offer. Almost 90% of disabilities are 'invisible' disabilities, including chronic pain disorders, diabetes and depression. The invisibility of disability highlights the critical need to ensure that not only access but also inclusion is considered when developing this Plan.

AlburyCity, in response to the *Disability Inclusion Act* (NSW) 2014, has undertaken extensive community and employee engagement to develop a Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP). The DIAP has been developed in recognition of our responsibility to remove barriers and ensure people with disability are able to participate equally in their community. AlburyCity is committed to meeting its legislative responsibilities in regards to disability principles in the preparation of this Plan.

The purpose of the Disability Inclusion Action Plan is to ensure that access and inclusion are recognised as core business and integrated into existing planning systems so that employees at every level consider inclusion of people with disability in their role. The Plan sets out the strategies and actions that Council will deliver to enable people with disability to have greater access to Council information, services and facilities. The Plan will be implemented over four years and includes actions across Council that will assist us to make our services and facilities more inclusive.

Further, AlburyCity seeks to be an employer of choice. We are committed to the attraction, recruitment and retention of people with disability. Through the DIAP, we will aim to provide universal access, remove barriers and provide opportunities for learning and career advancement equality.

From the Mayor



It is my pleasure to present AlburyCity's Disability Inclusion Action Plan. Council is working towards creating a city that is accessible and inclusive of everyone and provides equal opportunity for people with disability to enjoy our City and what it has to offer – recreation, employment, lifestyle and relaxation and the chance to enjoy the public spaces on offer in our City.

We have a key role in promoting and supporting access and inclusion in all areas of our Council business. This includes how we develop the built environment, provision of information and services, supporting employment opportunities and promoting positive community attitudes and behaviour toward people with disability.

The purpose of the Disability Inclusion Action Plan is to ensure that access and inclusion are recognised as core business and integrated into existing planning systems so that employees at every level consider inclusion of people with disability in their role. The Plan sets out the strategies and actions that Council will deliver to enable people with disability to have greater access to Council information, services and facilities. The Plan will be implemented over four years and includes actions across Council that will assist us to make our services and facilities more inclusive.

Engagement is a keen component of the Plan and I would like to acknowledge the input of the community members who took the time to contribute their ideas to assist Council to develop a Plan that focuses on improving access and ensuring inclusion for all.

General Manager's acknowledgement



During April 2017, Council undertook community consultation including feedback sessions and a survey to identify how accessible and inclusive Council's services are. The information collected from the consultation process has informed much of the objectives and actions of the Plan.

AlburyCity is committed to maintaining dialogue and conversations with people with disability, their families, carers and support networks as the Plan is implemented. I believe that inclusion and access are important for all employees of Council and we can do our best to ensure that Albury is a more welcoming location for all people, including those with disability.

I would like to thank everyone involved in providing feedback to develop this Plan and look forward to hearing about the difference to people's lives that we can and will make with the delivery of the actions in the Plan.

2. Overview and Vision for the Document

Under the *Disability Inclusion Act* (NSW) 2014, all NSW Local Government Areas (LGAs) are required to develop a Disability Inclusion Action Plan by July 1, 2017. This Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) demonstrates AlburyCity's commitment to people with disability to improve access to services, facilities and jobs. It is also designed to change perceptions about people with disability and create a more inclusive community for everyone.

The DIAP sets out the strategies and actions that Council will deliver across the next four years to enable people with disability to have greater access to Council information, services, jobs and facilities.

AlburyCity is committed to ensuring that our city is accessible and inclusive for our residents, employees and visitors.

Our vision for inclusion is a sustainable, inclusive and accessible community.

Current and near-future infrastructure development creates a legacy for the present and future. It is our choice whether this legacy will be regarded by the next generation as an asset or a liability. When planning the social and built environment today, we aim to be inclusive and accessible. Ideally, we will not marginalise people with disability and the increasingly ageing sector of society. AlburyCity believes that it is the responsibility of the present generation to create an inclusive and accessible environment that will not only benefit those currently in need, but which also will ultimately benefit ourselves as we age.

Early planning and intervention presents an opportunity for long-term savings to the community, reducing the need for retrospective action such as retrofits, and possible litigation. This is a particularly important consideration given that Australia's population is ageing and therefore the number of people with disability or special access needs is likely to increase in the community.

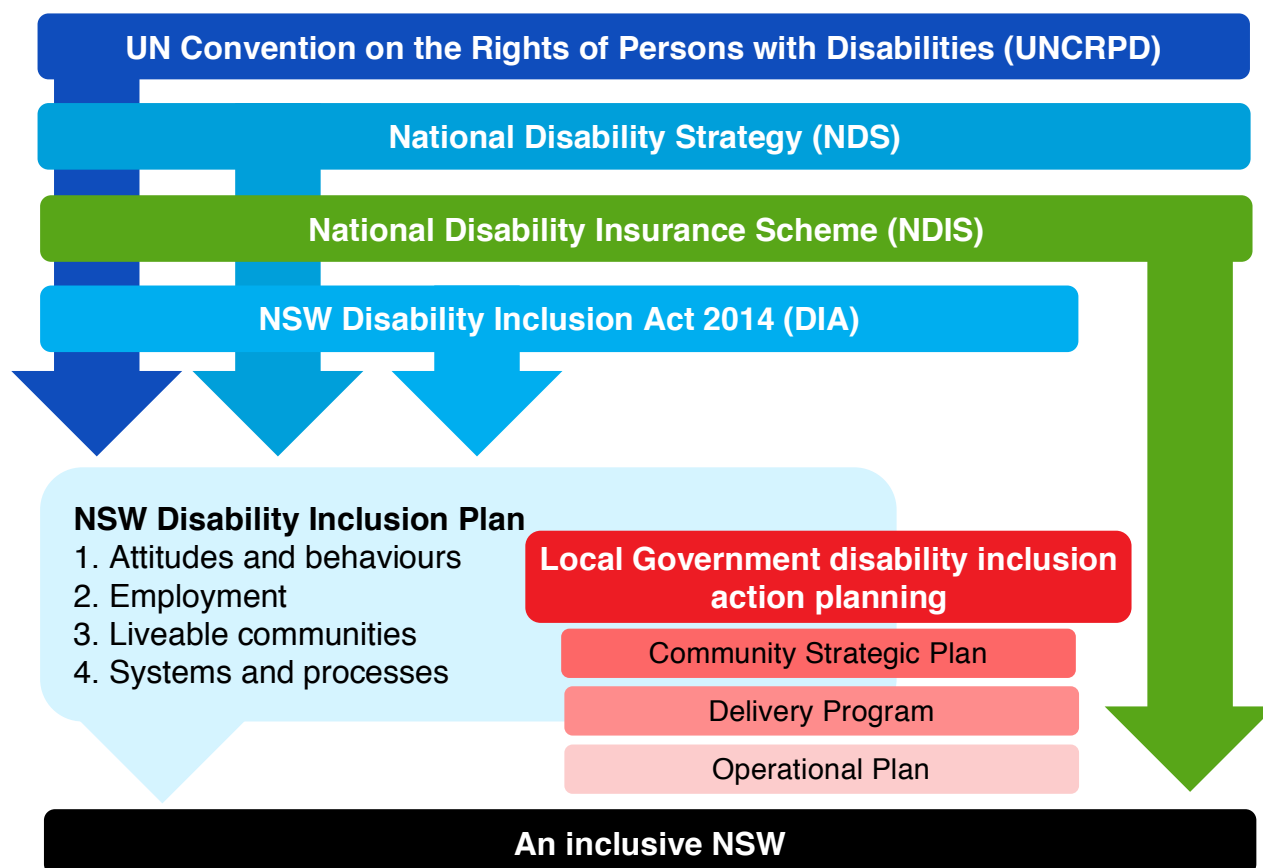
By doing this, we will not only ensure that our community is welcoming, inclusive and accessible, but we will be better placed to attract others to live in and visit our city. If we do not address these issues, AlburyCity may face the risk that not only may people avoid relocating to Albury, but also that some residents will move away to areas that are more accessible and inclusive and thus better suited to cater for their needs.

As a major regional centre, it is recognised that Albury is currently a city of choice in relation to available services and facilities. With the introduction of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), the demand on city infrastructure and services will only increase in coming years.

3. Policy and legislative context

People with disability, their families and carers have the same rights as all people to access services and facilities. These rights are part of State and Commonwealth policy and legislation that makes it unlawful to discriminate against a person with disability.

The AlburyCity Disability Inclusion Action Plan relates to international, national and state legislation, as outlined in the diagram below.



*Figure 1. The relationships between the relevant policy and legislative instruments
(Source: NSW Disability Inclusion Action Planning Guidelines Local Government)*

The *Disability Inclusion Act* (NSW) 2014 provides the legislative framework to guide State and local government disability inclusion and access planning. The Act supports people with disabilities to access:

- The same human rights as other members of the community and that governments and communities have a responsibility to facilitate the exercise of those rights;
- Independence and social and economic inclusion within the community; and
- Choice and control in the pursuit of their goals and the planning and delivery of their supports and services.

Legislation and Standards that inform AlburyCity's work

- United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2006
- Disability Discrimination Act (Commonwealth) 1992

- National Disability Strategy (Commonwealth) 2010 – 2020 (Agreed by all levels of Australian Government)
- Australian standard (AS 1428) – Design for Access and Mobility
- Disability (Access to Premises–Buildings) Standards 2010
- Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0 2008

AlburyCity policies and practices that inform this Plan

AlburyCity has policies and practices in place that are relevant to the Plan and which identify measures to promote disability inclusion. These include:

- Community Strategic Plan (*Albury 2030*)
- Equal Employment Opportunity Policy
- Social Plan
- Operational Plan
- Pedestrian Access Mobility Plans (PAMPs)
- Street Activities Policy

AlburyCity's Planning Process

The Community Strategic Plan (*Albury 2030*) identifies the community's main priorities and aspirations for the future. The Disability Inclusion Action Plan is a supporting document that will inform the actions in AlburyCity's Operational Plan and 4 year Delivery Program.

In meeting the requirements under the Act for disability inclusion and access planning, AlburyCity will:

- Incorporate the UN human rights disability principles into its dealings with matters relating to people with disabilities by promoting, protecting and ensuring the full enjoyment of human rights by persons with disabilities and ensuring that they enjoy full equality under the law

There are eight guiding principles that underlie the Convention and each one of its specific articles:

- *Respect for inherent dignity, individual autonomy including the freedom to make one's own choices, and independence of persons*
- *Non-discrimination*
- *Full and effective participation and inclusion in society*
- *Respect for difference and acceptance of persons with disabilities as part of human diversity and humanity*
- *Equality of opportunity*
- *Accessibility*
- *Equality between men and women*
- *Respect for the evolving capacities of children with disabilities and respect for the right of children with disabilities to preserve their identities*
- Improve awareness and education for employees
- Provide and improve access to buildings, events and facilities
- Provide access to information via an array of formats, including the AlburyCity Access Committee and the local Albury Wodonga Disability Network
- Where possible, accommodate the specific needs of people with disabilities

- Support employment of people with disabilities and
- Encourage and create opportunities for people with disabilities to access services and activities.

Consultation process and stakeholder engagement

To develop the Plan, an extensive consultation process took place.

Internal and external stakeholder engagement with community members, seniors, people with disability, workers in the disability sector and employees occurred in order to gain an understanding of issues relating to access and inclusion.

Community Feedback sessions were held with seniors groups, the AlburyCity Access committee, people with disability, community members and disability sector representatives. Participants were asked to identify access issues that they have encountered or are aware of.

In addition to the Feedback sessions, a formal community survey was distributed to community members, seniors, people with disability and disability sector representatives. AlburyCity employees were asked to complete a survey focusing on their perceptions of disability in the workplace. Managers across Council were also interviewed to gauge their perceptions and feedback about how they consider their teams cater for people with disability.

The AlburyCity Disability Inclusion Action Plan supports the goals of the NSW Disability Inclusion Plan. The key strategies that support the four key DIAP areas are outlined in Section 6.

4. Community profile

This section provides a snapshot of people with disability in Australia and the Albury community, including population groups, housing, education and an explanation of the AlburyCity Access Committee and its purpose.

Ageing population:

In 2012 people aged 65 years and over made up 14% of Australia's population. This is projected to increase to 22% in 2061. In 2012, 2% of Australia's population was aged 85 years and over, which is projected to more than double by 2061.

Between 2011 and 2021, the age structure forecasts for AlburyCity indicate a 34.9% increase in population of retirement age. The largest increase in persons between 2011 and 2021 is forecast to be in the 70 to 74 year age group, which is expected to increase by 794 and account for 4.5% of the total persons (IDprofile).

This forecast will have a significant impact on AlburyCity in terms of lifestyle and accessibility. This Plan is our opportunity to address issues that have been identified and to proactively cater for our changing population. With an ageing population there is a growing need to not merely create places for older people but to ensure that all places are designed to support people regardless of age or ability.

The Number of people with disability in Australia

- 18% of Australians (4.3 million people) have disability
- 78.5% of people with disability have a physical condition, such as back problems, as their main long-term health condition
- 21.5% of Australians have disability relating to mental and behavioural disorders

The Number of people with disability in Albury

- 18% of residents (9,068 people) have disability
- 5% of residents (2,712 people) have a profound and severe disability
- 11% of residents (5,279 people) have a moderate and mild disability
- 2% of residents (1,077 people) have other restrictions
- 34.2% of those with disability are aged 80 and over

Employment and income

- 148 people who needed assistance were employed, of which 18.2% were working full time and 61.5% part time. 37.6% are in low income households (earning less than \$600 per week).

Housing

- 12.4% of people with disability live in Social Housing compared to 5% of the total population of Albury.

Education

- 17.1% of people with disability have a TAFE or higher qualification compared to 43.6% of people in Albury City.

Access Committee

AlburyCity has a Disability Access Committee (Figure 2) which meets on a monthly basis. Committee members comprise people with disability, those who care for someone with disability, disability sector employees, community members with a vested interest and AlburyCity employees.

The committee has been active for more than twenty years. It is proud of the many changes it has managed to implement and advocate for over this time, including assisting with the creation of two publications 'Open for Business' and 'Getting about in Albury'.

The role of the Access Committee is to:

- Advise Council on the barriers that prevent people with disabilities participating in programs, services and facilities across the city
- Provide input into decisions relating to alterations to Council buildings and the streetscape, and the development of programs that improve the quality of life of people with a disability
- Raise awareness of the positive contributions of people with a disability and the importance of accessibility for all people
- Advocate for important accessibility issues, including pedestrian safety and improved access to buildings.



Figure 2. The Disability Access Committee

5. Community Consultation outcomes

This section summarises the results of the employee and community consultation that was undertaken. The Actions within the Plan have been developed based on the information gathered from the consultation process (including community and employee surveys) (Figure 3), the feedback sessions and employee discussions with key managers across Council. Refer to Section 6 for the detailed list of Actions.

It is important to note that the surveys were designed to identify issues that community members and AlburyCity employees have in relation to Council infrastructure and workplace procedures. AlburyCity is doing well in many areas, but areas for improvement are also highlighted (Table 3). In order to ensure that Council is aware of the specific disability unfriendly issues that community members have and face, comments made by the respondents have been provided to highlight these issues. AlburyCity has developed the Action Plan based on much of the feedback provided and it has enabled us to produce a Plan that is transparent and reflective of the community's feedback and individual needs.

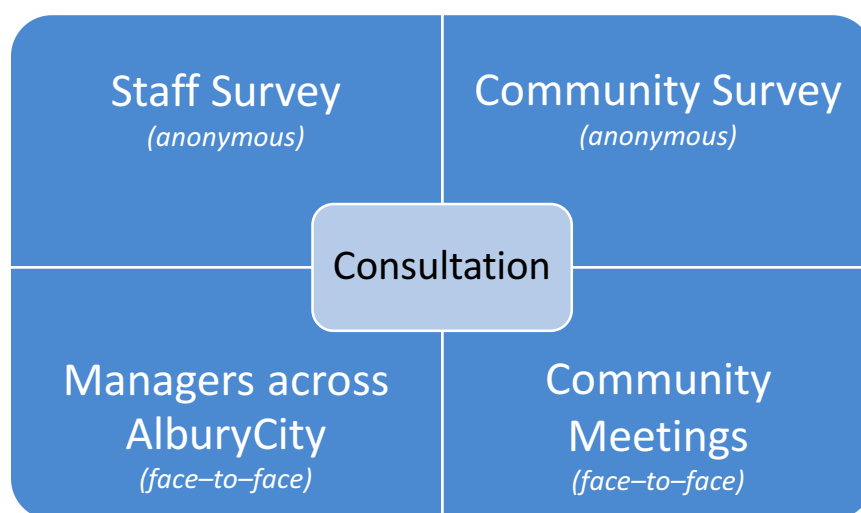


Figure 3. Consultation

Employee perceptions

30% (144) of the AlburyCity employees completed the Staff survey.

The table below shows employee perceptions of disability within the workplace. Interestingly, the respondents gave themselves, on average, a mark of 78% for their own awareness, while they rated their colleagues only at 70%. The score for staff displaying a positive attitude towards people with disabilities was 68%.

The respondents gave AlburyCity scores of less than 60% for being accepting and inclusive of employees with disabilities; valuing the diversity of a workplace with employees with disabilities; and being good at catering for employees with disabilities. This indicates that more can be done to raise awareness of disability among Albury City staff and to improve the way in which people with disability are treated and catered for.

Table 1 – Perceptions of AlburyCity's performance (scored out of 100%)

All Respondents	Average level of agreement
I consider that I myself have good disability awareness	78%
My colleagues have good disability awareness	70%

AlburyCity staff display a positive attitude towards people with disabilities	59%
AlburyCity is accepting and inclusive of employees with disabilities	58%
AlburyCity values the diversity of a workplace with employees with disabilities	56%
AlburyCity is good at catering for employees with disabilities	69%

Employees were asked how frequently they encountered difficulties relating to access and workplace adjustments at some stage of their time working at AlburyCity. The percentages ranged from 24% to 31% (Table 2). Although not high percentages, it is of concern that such issues have been encountered and again it shows that need to increase awareness and the way that issues are dealt with once identified.

Table 2 Experiences of AlburyCity's staff

All Respondents	Average percentage of encounter
Encountered barriers during emergency evacuation	29%
Encountered misunderstandings about disability	24%
Encountered difficulties re work adjustments	27%
Encountered difficulty accessing Council facilities	28%
Encountered difficulty accessing employee workplace information	27%
Encountered career development disadvantage	31%
Encountered negative attitudes towards disability	28%

Employee responses to the open ended questions were much the same and all indicated that by becoming an inclusive workplace, AlburyCity will become more diverse and appealing to people with disability. Staff members were asked to describe what the areas of concern are. Some examples of feedback provided are as follows:

"We do not tend to employ anyone with a disability so some of these questions are difficult to respond to. I would like to see a more inclusive workforce and a commitment to employ more people with disabilities (we should lead the way). General awareness of accessibility issues would be good and the value of an inclusive workforce needs to be better promoted."

"Adjust hiring policies to indicate that AlburyCity welcomes staff of all abilities. Currently indicating that a medical and/or functional assessment is necessary may have the effect of dissuading people of differing abilities from accessing AlburyCity jobs."

"Greater diversity of gender, culture and ability makes for a council that truly represents the community perspective and results in creating a healthy & resilient LGA."

"Have a disability workplace advocate visit the work spaces and look at them from a different perspective. Undertake some education and awareness."

Employee discussions

Managers across Council were interviewed to gauge their perceptions and feedback about how they consider their teams cater for people with disability. A need for disability awareness training was identified. Whilst some training has been undertaken in a limited way, currently AlburyCity does not offer organisation wide training for employees. Further, many sections have informal processes and procedures in place when it comes to considering access issues and no formal guidelines or policies exist.

Many of the issues that were identified during these discussions have been identified as Actions within the Plan and they are outlined in Section 6.

Community perceptions

281 people completed the Community survey. The survey was distributed to a targeted audience of those with disability, seniors and people working in the disability sector.

Table 3 shows how the respondents rated the disability friendliness of a range of AlburyCity facilities. The lower the number, the less disability friendly that facility is considered to be. The percentages represent a Disability Friendliness Score (DFS) of each facility. That more could be done across Albury to improve the disability friendliness of facilities found 78% agreement among the respondents. This demonstrates that although much occurs to ensure access and inclusion across Albury, much more needs to be done.

Table 3. Perceptions of disability friendliness of AlburyCity-owned and - operated facilities (in percent of positive perception). Total Sample

	Average
Albury LibraryMuseum	79%
Murray Art Museum Albury	75%
Albury Airport	74%
Lavington Library	74%
Council's administration building	72%
Botanic Gardens	70%
Community Centres	69%
Lauren Jackson Sports Centre	68%
Albury Entertainment Centre	65%
Parks	63%
Visitor Information Centre	62%
Bus shelters	59%
Swimming pools	59%
Disability car parking	58%
Public toilets	58%
Playgrounds	56%
Sporting ovals	50%
Footpaths	46%

Areas where Council is performing well/current projects

Some of the newer facilities, such as the Albury LibraryMuseum, the Murray Art Museum Albury and Albury Airport rated well, while older infrastructure, such as public toilets, playgrounds, sporting ovals rated more poorly. This suggests that current planning processes are more in tune with the demands of disability and access.

"Great assistance received when flying."

"The toilets at MAMA are wonderful. Everyone over 65 loves to go there."

"I enjoy the library, and they seem to understand that I may show my excitement with a little noise, to express myself."

There are many strategies and plans that Council is currently working on which relate to the Actions within the Plan. These include but are not limited to the following:

- Playspace strategy
- Pedestrian Access Mobility Plan (PAMP)
- Riverside Precinct Concept Designs
- Lavington Sports Ground Masterplan
- Street Activities Policy – under review
- Aquatics Strategy – in development

- Botanic Gardens Perimeter fence and gateways
- Airport upgrade
- Public Toilet Strategy – in development
- Charles Sturt University (CSU) Better Parks for People project

Priority areas for improvement/areas of low community satisfaction with council's performance

The facilities that respondents rated as not being particularly disability friendly include public toilets, footpaths, sporting ovals, swimming pools, playgrounds and bus shelters. Many actions within the Plan relate to the issues that have been identified for the various facilities and will be addressed accordingly. It is also worth noting that there are some significant developments and Masterplan proposals in place which will enable some of the issues to be addressed when the works are carried out.

Access to the Murray River is also something that was raised as an issue. There are currently no access points for people with physical disability to enter the river in a safe and easy manner. AlburyCity is currently working on its Riverside Precinct Concept Design as well as continued implementation of the Murray River Experience Masterplan and Wagirra Trail. Design proposals need to be compliant with the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) which makes it against the law for public places to be inaccessible to people with a disability.

Swimming pools

Swimming pools rated at a low DFS (59%). Many of the issues relate to no hoists being available and generally non-accessible. AlburyCity is currently considering options for public swimming pools in the LGA and many of the issues that have been identified within the community surveys can be addressed through the decision making process. It should be noted that ramps rather than hoists provide the appropriate level of accessibility to swimming pools.

"Albury pool and Lavington pool aren't wheelchair accessible."

"No access to pool, no change table or hoist in change rooms, no ramp to go into pool (or chair able to go down ramp) - see Wodonga Waves pool access & facilities."

"No hoist chair to access pool, or wheelchair accessible private change rooms or wheelchair accessible toilet available at Lavington pool."

"Wheelchair unfriendly at counter."

Parks

Parks rated at a DFS of 63%. The majority of comments relate to access (limited) and pathways within the parks, many of which are considered to have a lack of well-planned and maintained paths. Parks were also considered to have inadequate signage and seating.

AlburyCity is looking to enhance the wellbeing of older Australians by improving urban parks by working with Charles Sturt University (CSU) on the 'Better Parks for People' project.

"Could use some better paths in all parks."

"Lack of well-planned and maintained paths is the biggest issue."

"More seating with tables, as often when we go - all seats with tables in the shade are gone"

"More signage."

"Need paths to the bench and table at parks so people in wheelchair can access them easier."

Bus Shelters

Bus shelters rated at a low DFS (59%) and were identified as having insufficient shelter and timetables that are difficult to read for those with vision impairment.

"Can't get on the bus!"

"The one near the hospital on Keene Street has no seat, no shelter and no access for someone to get over the gutter if they are using a w/c or walking frame."

"Not many have shelters for rain or hot days and the signs are very small and hard to read time table."

"Some do not allow room for wheelchairs. More cover required."

"The gap between the shelter and gutter can often be so minimal that it is dangerous for a wheel chair to go inside the shelter. The lack of shelters at most bus stops is also an issue."

Public Toilets

The open-ended section of the community survey also had many comments in relation to public toilets (58% DFS). Many respondents indicated a need for an adult change room with a hoist and the need for toilets that enable a person in an electric wheelchair the ability to enter, turn their chair around and exit rather than having to drive in and reverse out. This often leaves the person unable to lock the door which results in an inability to ensure that their privacy and dignity are maintained whilst they are using the toilet.

"Need toilets with hoist and adult change table facilities."

"The ones in town centre are not really roomy enough to take a wheel chair in & leave it there while person is in the toilet. Would not know how they manage on their own."

"Some are great others are not. The space needed to turn a wheel chair or to change an adult with continence issues is usually lacking from most facilities."

Playgrounds

Many comments were made regarding a lack of wheelchair swings/disability equipment and access issues were also identified. Playgrounds rated at a relatively low DFS (53%).

In recent years, playgrounds which cater for all abilities have been established at Patricia Gould Reserve, the Oddies Creek Play space and the Botanic Gardens Children's Garden. Further work through the implementation of the Playspace Strategy is required to bring the remaining AlburyCity playgrounds up to an acceptable standard.

"More play equipment for all abilities would be fantastic Equipment for children with disabilities to enjoy with other children would be amazing."

"Need more swings for people in a wheelchair and easy access to them."

"No playgrounds in Thurgoona with disability friendly equipment."

"The playground in Springdale Heights near the preschool is not easily accessible for children with mobility challenges. There are a large number of young families with children living close by and the park is perfectly situated however could be updated to make it an inviting play area for all children and families."

Sporting ovals

Sporting ovals were rated quite low (50% DFS) and many issues were identified in the comments section. There is a Masterplan concept in place for the Lavington Sports Ground and many of the identified issues will be addressed at this major facility when the Masterplan works take place.

"Albury athletics centre track is not disability friendly despite providing a disabled toilet people in wheelchairs or otherwise do not have a clear concrete path to access these services. They either have to walk on the track or across the

middle grassed area which is an OH&S issue if athletics is happening and in winter becomes quite boggy when wet. This issue needs to be rectified as there are disabled athletes that use these facilities."

"Athletic Track is very unfriendly. Not footpath around track or to toilets. Toilets need updating. Not seating. Slippery areas when wet."

"AusKick in Albury has poor access for people with walking assistance."

"Most sporting grounds have steps or are sloped that make it unsafe for wheel chair accessibility."

"Most sporting ovals have a hill up to the fence and makes it difficult to push wheelchairs up to actually watch the game."

"No access pathways, lack of disabled parking."

"The Alexandra Park athletics track is very disability unfriendly. There needs to be a concrete path to allow the disabled & elderly to access the toilets. Currently, you can only access the toilets via sloped grass - after rain, it is near impossible to get a wheelchair/walking frame across."

In relation to the Alexander Park Athletics Track, it should be noted that \$20K has been allocated for a pathway around the track to the toilets in the 17/18 draft budget. Further, \$300K is in the four year delivery program for terraced seating and further path access on the western side of the facility. \$1m (all council funding) was recently spent on the upgrade of the track surface and included more hard surface areas for disability access.

Footpaths and Street Crossing issues

Whilst Pedestrian Access Mobility Plans have recently been undertaken by AlburyCity, footpaths were included in the community survey as it was felt that many people would not have the opportunity or possibly the knowledge of how to report an issue relating to footpaths. Footpaths rated as being the least disability friendly of Council facilities in the Albury area (46% DFS). This section also resulted in the greatest number of comments being made. Given that many parents pushing prams also use footpaths, a relatively large number of people are exposed to these issues on a day-to-day basis, not just those with mobility issues.

Footpaths have also been a primary area of interest for the Access Committee over the years.

"A lot of footpaths are uneven, raised or lowered."

"Albury desperately needs a footpath all the way around the Mercy Health facility."

"Footpaths exist only on one side of the street in new and housing areas of Thurgoona. Really hard to access other side of road over curb to get onto footpath. No safe crossings across Thurgoona Drive out of school hours. Can't get across to shops safely as no foot path along southern roadside to get up to underpass. A nightmare. Insufficient seats along footpath for carer to rest."

"I live in Olive Street South Albury and it breaks my heart watching people in wheelchairs and baby pushers using the road because there are no footpaths. I fear the situation is a disaster waiting to happen with all of the young P plate drivers booning down our street which is shared with babies in pushers and people in wheelchairs."

"Some curbs are too steep some paths have raised sections. Not enough tactile indicators Too many tables and stands placed in the path of travel out the front of shops."

Current development requirements stipulate the provision of footpaths on one side of the road, not both. Council can consider the provision of footpaths on both sides of the road but it needs to be noted this would come at a higher cost to the developer/s and Council in terms of ongoing maintenance.

The Botanic Gardens

The Botanic Gardens was rated as being quite disability friendly (70% DFS) yet many negative comments regarding parking, access and path surfaces were made.

"Gate to children's garden is disability unfriendly."

"Limited disability parking at major events."

"Not enough paths with smooth surfaces to push a wheel chair is very difficult therefore this becomes exclusive."

"Obstructive entry gates not disable friendly. Wheelchair not accessible in some areas within the park."

"Parking to get into gardens is a nightmare. There are not enough disability spots, I have to stop somewhere fairly safe, drop my friend off, tell them to wait while I go & park some where else. Often not very close."

"Smaller entry gates don't allow for wheel chair access."

It should be noted that the new perimeter fence currently under construction at the Botanic Gardens will alleviate some of the access issues at the Gardens.

Disability Parking

Disability parking has a 58% DFS. Although it is considered to be relatively disability friendly, many comments were made regarding issues that people have when trying to access car parks, and in particular, the lack of parking in and around the Cultural precinct of the Albury CBD. Many comments were made in relation to parking when accessing the Cultural precinct, including the LibraryMuseum, MAMA, the Albury Entertainment Centre and QEII square itself when events are held there.

Albury, as a regional location, has a higher number of disabled carpark spaces than major cities. This is due to less public transport availability and a greater reliance on private vehicles to get around.

"Parking again is the biggest nightmare."

"Need closer disability parking so that people don't have to walk as far to come into MAMA."

"No disability parking near MAMA/QEII."

Barriers when accessing Local Businesses

Barriers experienced by people with disability and all respondents when accessing local businesses are summarised in Table 4. The main barriers experienced are non-accessible toilets, lack of staff awareness and poor attitudes of staff and buildings not being physically accessible.

Table 4. Barriers experienced when accessing local businesses.

	All Respondents	Respondents with stated disability only
Lack of staff awareness	29%	28%
No accessible toilets	28%	28%
Not physically accessible	26%	31%
Poor attitude of staff	21%	23%
No clear signage	20%	19%
Information not available in accessible formats	16%	27%
Other	10%	16%

Many comments indicated issues relating to physical barriers as well as insufficient space inside shops in order to move around easily.

“As an abled person I get very frustrated with the crowded footpaths in Dean St - shop owners have signs and racks of purchase on the footpath that are in the middle. I can only imagine how frustrating it is for people with disabilities to manoeuvre around such obstacles and obstructions.”

“Insufficient space inside some shops to manoeuvre wheelchairs meaning w-chair bound people are unable to enter or to access easily.”

“Items and stands on footpaths are very dangerous for the vision impaired.”

“Not all businesses have doors that are easily opened, or whose toilets are not wheelchair accessible.”

“Not all businesses have handrails where there are steps. Just putting hand on wall not really safe.”

Please note that there have been recent initial discussions between the Access Committee and the Albury Northside Chamber of Commerce in regards to initiatives to improve the accessibility of local businesses. The Plan will address as many of the issues as feasible and focus on improving access to businesses across Albury.

Priority Areas

Many priority areas have been identified and specific Actions are outlined in Section 6. The key priorities are:

- Disability Awareness Training for AlburyCity employees
- Recognition of Business efforts (accessibility and inclusion)
- Adoption and implementation Universal Design Standards for the built environment
- CAPT – continuous accessible paths of travel (CAPT)
- Provision of adult change facilities
- Improve parking/ensure special event parking is provided for those with disability
- Actively demonstrate a culture that is inclusive and disability conscious

Key Findings

AlburyCity strives to be a Liveable Community, with inclusive facilities, inclusive attitudes and inclusive systems (Figure 4). This extends across all aspects of the four key DIAP areas and provides the basis for which the Plan has been developed and the Actions have been decided.

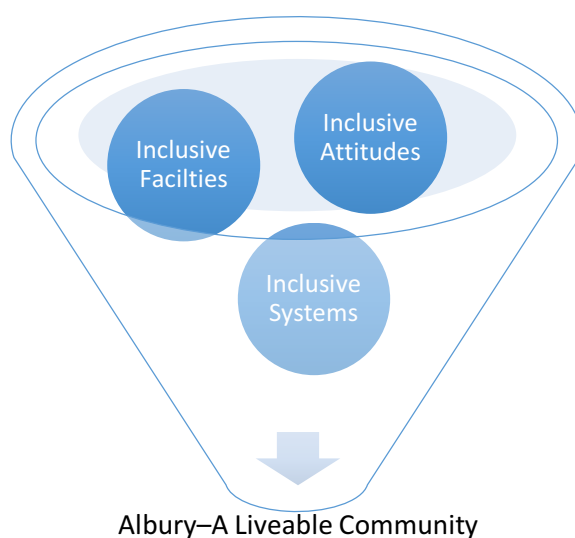


Figure 4. The right mix

Attitudes and Behaviour

The key findings in this section pertain to the need to improve and raise staff awareness of disability and recognise business efforts to be accessible.

Liveable Communities

For liveable communities, we need to ensure that planning processes are reflective of Universal Design standards and to improve our Auditing systems so that they are more frequent and targeted.

Employment

AlburyCity needs to strive to become an employee of choice and to actively demonstrate a culture that is inclusive and disability conscious.

Systems and Processes

We need to improve communication and information processes and develop policies and guidelines to ensure that employees with disability are appropriately catered for and potential employees with disability see AlburyCity as being inclusive and accessible. This includes the need for sections across Council to formalize their day-to-day work functions in relation to disability so that key requirements are considered as standard workplace practice and not on an ad hoc/person specific basis. Many staff reported that formal systems are not in place and they are either unsure where to look to find information or they are aware of what needs to be done but if they are not present when the work is carried out, the correct/agreed procedures are not necessarily followed. This occurs because a formal system has not been adopted at any stage.

6. Strategies and Actions

Attitudes and Behaviour

	Aim	Who	Role	Frequency	Start Year	Evidence of Achievement / Completion
1	Raise awareness among AlburyCity staff regarding disability, what it entails and how it may impact on people via an informal and formal education campaign	AlburyCity	Driver	Bi-Annual	1	Definition written, photographic evidence of dissemination
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide a definition/overview of disability and disseminate 	AlburyCity	Driver	As required	1	Definition written, photographic evidence of dissemination
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide relevant staff with an understanding of legislation regarding <i>access to premises and services for people who use assistance animals</i> 	AlburyCity	Driver	As required	1	FAQ page, e-mails
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide face to face disability awareness training to relevant existing employees (with web based annual refresher) 	AlburyCity External provider	Driver Partner	Ongoing Annual	2	Training reports, Certificates of completion
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide web based disability awareness training to all existing employees and subsequent web based annual refresher 	AlburyCity External provider	Driver Partner	Annual	2	Training reports, Certificates of completion
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide face to face disability awareness training for relevant new employees as part of the induction process 	AlburyCity External provider	Driver Partner	Ongoing	2	Training reports, Certificates of completion
2	Raise awareness among the Albury community regarding disability, what it entails and how it may impact on people via a structured education campaign	AlburyCity	Driver	Ongoing	2	Definition written, photographic evidence of dissemination
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide a definition/overview of disability and disseminate 	AlburyCity	Driver	Ongoing	2	Definition written, photographic evidence of dissemination
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to advocate and lobby through the AlburyCity Access committee 	AlburyCity	Driver	Ongoing	Already ongoing	Meeting minutes

	Aim	Who	Role	Frequency	Start Year	Evidence of Achievement / Completion
3	<p>Raise awareness among the Albury business community regarding disability, what it entails and how it may impact on people via a structured education campaign</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organise externally-funded disability awareness training for business operators and their employees. Update current available resources as needed. Develop and update new resources as needed Provide information material regarding legislated <i>access to premises and services for people who use assistance animals</i> Implement and promote a self-assessment tool for Albury businesses to evaluate their own performance in relation to disability access 	<p>AlburyCity Chamber of Commerce / Businesses</p> <p>AlburyCity Chamber of Commerce/ Businesses</p> <p>AlburyCity</p> <p>AlburyCity Chamber of Commerce Businesses Access Committee</p>	<p>Driver Promoter/s</p> <p>Driver</p> <p>Driver</p> <p>Driver Promoter</p> <p>Partner Partner/Advocate</p>	<p>As required</p> <p>As required</p> <p>As required</p> <p>As required</p>	<p>3</p> <p>2</p> <p>2</p> <p>2</p>	<p>Training reports, certificates of completion</p> <p>Documents produced</p> <p>FAQ page, e-mails</p> <p>Webpage, screenshots</p>
4	<p>Recognise business efforts with regards to awareness through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate the introduction of an 'Access and Inclusion' award as part of the annual Albury North side Chamber of Commerce awards In conjunction with Albury Northside Chamber of Commerce develop an accreditation scheme to independently assess the disability and access compliance of local businesses 	<p>AlburyCity Chamber of Commerce/ Business Wodonga</p> <p>AlburyCity Chamber of Commerce</p>	<p>Driver or Partner</p> <p>Driver Promoter</p>	<p>Annual</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>2</p> <p>3</p>	<p>Applications, meeting minutes, award ceremonies</p> <p>Guidelines for scheme, applications, meeting minutes, awards</p>
5	<p>Maintain general awareness by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Including pictures of people with disability in mainstream Council publications and in promotion of mainstream events, not just for disability specific areas Encouraging AlburyCity staff to proactively identify issues related to access and inclusion <i>within</i> the workplace and notify the relevant supervisor Encouraging AlburyCity staff to proactively identify issues related to access and inclusion <i>outside</i> of the workplace and notify the relevant AlburyCity section or file a Customer Request through the Customer Request Management (CRM) system (as applicable) 	<p>AlburyCity</p> <p>AlburyCity</p>	<p>Driver</p> <p>Driver</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>2 onwards</p> <p>2 onwards</p> <p>2 onwards</p>	<p>Examples of council publications</p> <p>FAQ page, e-mails, examples</p> <p>FAQ page, e-mails, documented examples</p>

Liveable Communities

	Aim	Who	Role	Frequency	Start Year	Evidence of Achievement / Completion
	New developments (refer to Figure 2, page 25)					
1	For new construction of Council-owned assets, AlburyCity will go beyond the legally mandated minimum access standards to consider the principles of Universal Design Standards. Where buildings are valued at greater than *\$2 million and have significant community access, Council will engage an accredited disability access consultant. In addition the Access committee will be consulted where necessary. *This does not preclude other major facilities valued at less than \$2 million being given some level of scrutiny.	AlburyCity Access Committee	Driver Partner	As required	4	Correspondence & advice to developers Accredited disability access consultant engaged
2	For new construction of assets to be leased by Council, AlburyCity will request, where possible, that the developer(s) go beyond the legally mandated minimum access standards to apply the principles of Universal Design Standards. To assist and inform developers' understanding of the design principles of the Universal Design Standards, Council will develop and disseminate educational material and case examples.	AlburyCity Developers AlburyCity	Driver Partner Driver	As required As required	4 4	Correspondence & advice to developers Education material to be developed
	Existing infrastructure					
3	Conduct Audits to assess compliance with Australian standards for access and mobility for <ul style="list-style-type: none"> buildings owned or leased by Council Albury CBD footpaths (Audited by Council) footpaths (Audited externally) business use of footpaths (advertising A-frames / sales tables / seating) (Audited by Council) 	AlburyCity	Driver	Bi-Annually Quarterly Tri-annually Quarterly	2 already ongoing already ongoing 2	Audit reports Audit reports Audit reports Audit reports
4	Improve existing facilities to meet the demand of those with disability: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> provide change tables (including adult change tables and hoists in appropriate locations) include the improvement of disability access at both the Albury and Lavington Swim Centres in the AlburyCity Aquatics Strategy for both the short and longer term 	AlburyCity	Driver	As required Ongoing	2 4	Design plans, photographic evidence of installation Design plans, Evidence of installation
5	Provide continuous accessible paths of travel (CAPT) between facilities and services in the Albury, Lavington and Thurgoona Central Business District (CBD)	AlburyCity	Driver	Ongoing	2	Design plans, photographic evidence of installation

	Aim	Who	Role	Frequency	Start Year	Evidence of Achievement / Completion
6	For large scale development (eg Masterplans/subdivisions/new housing estates), where Council infrastructure* is included in the design: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> consider and promote the adoption of Universal Design Principles in the design and planning stages (through future reviews of the Engineering Development Guidelines) of the new infrastructure which will become the property of AlburyCity, in order to support truly accessible and inclusive assets. (*Infrastructure includes roads, street lighting, footpaths, trails, signage, road crossings and parks). 	AlburyCity Developers	Driver Partner	As required	4	Review of guidelines by an accredited disability access consultant. Guidelines implemented
7	Improve signage for businesses and community facilities	AlburyCity Chamber of Commerce	Driver Promoter	As required	2	Best practice evidence, easy read signage, strategy implemented
8	Review, endorse and implement the following strategies/policies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Playspace Strategy Public Toilet Strategy Pedestrian Access Mobility Plan (PAMP) Street Activities Policy 	AlburyCity	Driver	As required As required As required As required	1 1 1 1	Strategy implemented Strategy implemented Plan implemented Policy implemented
	Facilities					
9	Botanic Gardens – look to improve access by hardening some surfaces/paths to enable wheelchair access to more areas within the park	AlburyCity	Driver	Ongoing	2	Assessment report, implementation report
10	Parking - Review and address limited parking options and look to change designated spots <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Botanic Gardens</i>: consider having designated parking for the Botanic Gardens (not just general parking as currently) to enable people the opportunity to park close by to the gardens. Consider adding more disabled parking spots or a drop off zone <i>Smollett St</i> – consider changing some of the 15 minute car park times to more time or have more disabled spots in this location (between Olive St and Kiewa St) <i>Cultural precinct</i> – Investigate more disabled parking in this location/surround For larger/major events, consider changing the parking options to designate more disabled parking for the event time (casual /event parking arrangement) Footpaths – Ensure the provision of at least one footpath in each urban road reserve (with a particular focus on the suburb of Thurgoona)	AlburyCity	Driver	Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing As required Ongoing	2 2 2 2 Already ongoing	Assessment report, implementation report Assessment report, implementation report Assessment report, implementation report Guidelines, documentation for each event Assets Completion Plans

	Aim	Who	Role	Frequency	Start Year	Evidence of Achievement / Completion
	Programs and events					
11	Ensure all community recreation, cultural and social programs and events are inclusive and accessible	AlburyCity Businesses/ Sporting Organisations (where relevant)	Driver Partner/s	Ongoing	2	Guidelines, checklists, documentation for each event
12	Encourage new programs and events for people with disability – Eg National Deaf Games	AlburyCity	Driver	Ongoing	3	Guidelines, documentation for each event



*) where structurally feasible

Figure 5. Enforce–Encourage–Educate: The integration of the Universal Design Standards into AlburyCity’s urban environment

Employment

	Aim	Responsibility	Role	Frequency	Year	Evidence of Achievement / Completion
	For existing employees					
1	Actively develop a respectful and welcoming work culture including flexibility and accountability for all staff in the way that they work as well as specific attraction and retention strategies	AlburyCity	Driver	Ongoing	1	FAQ page, e-mails improvement in satisfaction score
2	Incorporate strategies and plans into learning and development opportunities as well as career planning	AlburyCity	Driver	Ongoing	1	FAQ page, training course offerings
3	Keep inclusion front of mind when designing workforce management processes and practices	AlburyCity	Driver	Ongoing	1	Workforce management documentation
4	Provide reasonable adjustment to the workplace to change work process, practice, procedure or environment to support an employee with disability to perform their job	AlburyCity	Driver	Ongoing	Already ongoing	FAQ page, e-mails improvement in satisfaction score
5	Actively demonstrate a culture that is inclusive and disability conscious	AlburyCity	Driver	Ongoing	1	Improvement in satisfaction score
	For new employees/applicants/work experience/volunteers					
6	Develop a recruitment process/policy to ensure inclusion and accessibility are part of the employment process, e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Actively soliciting applications from people with disability Ensuring that the selection process is not biased Being respectful and aware during interviews (including choice of interview room) 	AlburyCity	Driver	Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing	2 Already ongoing 2	Text of job advertisements Guidelines for selection process, documentation Guidelines for interview process, documentation
7	Provide reasonable adjustment to the workplace to change work process, practice, procedure or environment to support an employee with disability to perform their job. This is incorporated into the AlburyCity Personal Injury Management Plan.	AlburyCity	Driver	Ongoing	Already ongoing	FAQ page, e-mails, improvement in satisfaction score
8	Actively demonstrate a culture that is inclusive and disability conscious	AlburyCity	Driver	Ongoing	2	Improvement in satisfaction score

Systems and Processes

	Aim	Responsibility	Role	Frequency	Year	Evidence of Achievement / Completion
1	<p>Improve communication and information processes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create an Easy Read version of the DIAP Ensure all service information is available in a range of formats to support different needs and capabilities Ensure service users have access to communications supports such as hearing loops, touch screens etc Ensure feedback and complaint mechanisms can be accessed by people with a range of disabilities Ensure web content is compliant with level AA or above in the W3Cs Web Content Accessibility Guidelines and written in an easy read format. (Redesign the current accessibility section of the website to reflect Easy Read English and information) Ensure internal systems and processes are designed to allow for inclusion of staff with a range of disabilities Where possible, use non technology reliant communication methods such as local newspapers, mail outs and library/community centre information boards Update the Access map and make available online and in hard copy format 	<p>AlburyCity</p> <p>AlburyCity Access Committee</p>	<p>Driver</p> <p>Driver Partner</p>	<p>One off</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>As required</p>	<p>1</p> <p>1</p> <p>2</p> <p>2</p> <p>2</p> <p>2</p> <p>1</p> <p>2</p>	<p>Easy Read DIAP</p> <p>FAQ, guidelines with checksheet, completed check sheets</p> <p>installation reports, Audit reports</p> <p>FAQ, guidelines with checksheet, completed check sheets</p> <p>FAQ, guidelines</p> <p>Correspondence, flyers/notices, photographic documentation of placement</p>
2	Ensure Council led community consultation events are held in accessible venues and a range of formats are used that considers the needs of people with hearing or vision impairments	AlburyCity	Driver	Ongoing	1	FAQ, guidelines with check sheet, completed check sheets
3	In consultation with the Access Committee, review the committee's charter and processes	AlburyCity Access Committee	Driver Partner	As required	1	
4	Council staff to continue to actively participate in the access committee and its activities	AlburyCity	Driver	Ongoing	1	Committee minutes
5	Formally collaborate with the City of Wodonga disability access committee	AlburyCity City of Wodonga	Driver Partner	One off/maintain	2	Committee minutes
6	Benchmark the performance of AlburyCity with councils of similar size/location	AlburyCity	Driver	Every 4 years	4	Review documents/reports

	Aim	Responsibility	Role	Frequency	Year	Evidence of Achievement / Completion
7	Develop a protocol for large-scale development applications/Masterplans to ensure that the most qualified/appropriate people are engaged in the consultation process. This should include a Disability Access Consultant with planning and development knowledge	AlburyCity	Driver	Ongoing	4	FAQ, protocol document
8	Ensure all areas of disability are considered, including mental health within the annual AlburyCity Health and Wellbeing Program	AlburyCity	Driver	Ongoing	2	Information sessions, Awareness programs
9	Ensure that disability is considered on all design checklists used in the creation of Council infrastructure	AlburyCity	Driver	Ongoing	2	Check sheet

7. Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation procedures

Monitoring and evaluation of strategies is to occur within stated time frames. The Plan is designed to complement the Community Strategic Plan (*Albury 2030*). Incorporation of relevant DIAP strategies will occur within Council's annual planning and management program.

Regular monitoring and annual evaluation of the DIAP will include:

- Assessment of the quality and success of implementation to date
- Modification of strategies as required to achieve specific DIAP goals
- Results of the review process presented to Council and relevant committees and Executive meetings for progressive evaluation and endorsement of achievements and strategies
- Annual report provided to Management, Council and the Access Committee
- Annual reports will be made available to via AlburyCity Administrative Buildings, libraries and website.

Overall effectiveness of the AlburyCity DIAP will be measured through increased contact and improved communication with Albury residents via surveys and e-newsletters and measurable change in attitudes of employees will be measured through improved accessibility of AlburyCity assets.

The Review Process

This will occur annually and in four-year increments:

Annual Reviews

Annual reviews should include but not be limited to

- Verification of completion of scheduled plan implementation components
- Relevance and usefulness of the DIAP as perceived by internal and external stakeholders through an effective consultation process
- Ensure continuing public awareness raising and promotion of the DIAP
- Review and upgrade relevant staff training
- Updating of available technologies and assistive technologies
- Updating of resources and references

Four Yearly Reviews

The DIAP is a four-year plan. In addition to the annual review process, a four yearly review should include

- Review and evaluation of the complete DIAP
- Adoption and publication of an updated DIAP

8. Conclusion

AlburyCity will commit to implementing and monitoring the Actions within the Plan over the next four years. We aim to address the four areas of Attitudes and Behaviour, Liveable Communities, Employment and Strategies and Processes so that our approach and awareness improve and we can show that we truly are a liveable, inclusive and accessible destination for our community to live and people to visit.

We will address internal employment and recruitment processes to better place us as an employer of choice. Further, we look forward to working with local businesses, community members, disability sector workers and people with disability to ensure that the Actions within the Plan are implemented to a high standard and to the benefit of all.

9. Appendices

References

Legislation and International Conventions

- Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (United Nations) 2006
- Disability Discrimination Act (Commonwealth) 1992
- Disability Inclusion Act (NSW) 2014

Standards

- Australian Standard (AS 1428) – Design for Access and Mobility
- Disability (Access to Premises–Buildings) Standards 2010
- Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0 2008
- National Disability Strategy (Commonwealth) 2010 - 2020

AlburyCity Planning Documents and Publications

- Community Strategic Plan (*Albury 2030*)
- Equal Employment Opportunity Policy
- Social Plan
- Operational Plan
- Pedestrian Access Mobility Plans
- Street Activities Policy
- Surveys – Community/Staff

Other Sources

- IDprofile
- *AlburyCity Disability Inclusion Action Plan Community and Staff Surveys. Descriptive Statistics.* Albury NSW: AlburyCity.

Acronyms

Provides a quick reference guide to commonly used acronyms in the document.

ABS - Australian Bureau of Statistics

CAPT - Continuous Accessible Paths of Travel

DDA - Disability Discrimination Act

DFS - Disability Friendliness Score

DIAP - Disability Inclusion Action Plan

LGA - Local Government Area

MAMA - Murray Art Museum Albury

PAMP - Pedestrian Access Mobility Plan