



University of Toronto

OFFICE OF THE VICE- PROVOST, SPACE AND FACILITIES PLANNING

TO: University Affairs Board

SPONSOR: Ron Venter, Vice-Provost, Space and Facilities Planning
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DATE: September 2nd, 2003 for September 23th, 2003.

AGENDA ITEM: #9

ITEM IDENTIFICATION:

Accommodation & Facilities Directorate [AFD]: Accessibility Interim Report, July 1st, 2002 to June 30th, 2003.

JURISDICTIONAL INFORMATION:

The University Administration, through the Accommodation and Facilities Directorate [AFD], submits for information to the University Affairs Board the report of the Standing Committee on Barrier Free Accessibility.

PREVIOUS ACTION TAKEN:

The Standing Committee on Barrier Free Accessibility is Chaired by Ms. Susan Addario, Director of Student Affairs. The membership of the Standing Committee is outlined in an administrative response to the Planning & Budget Committee dated June 20th, 2001. The membership includes the Disability Coordinators from the St. George, UTM and UTSC campuses, representative(s) from Facilities & Services, the Student Councils, AFD, and the academic community.

The report is required to be submitted each year for information.

FINANCIAL AND/OR PLANNING IMPLICATIONS:

The Report of the Standing Committee on Barrier Free Accessibility prepared by Ms. Susan Addario is attached.

In submitting this report to Planning and Budget it is important to recognize the extensive commitment from students, administrators, faculty, planners and implementers across the University to improve accessibility on all fronts. The University is certainly committed to develop the long range plan that will make as much of the University accessible as is possible. Of particular and current significance is the on-going commitment by SAC-WAC to identify and work progressively and systematically in creative partnership with the University to advance accessibility on all fronts, project by project. The availability of greater funding to do more is always an issue; there are competing demands for all funds to expand our space inventory to

address the double cohort, student study space, safety issues notably asbestos abatement and PCB removal, the greening of the campus and many others.

Nevertheless significant progress, as partially indicated in the Report of the Standing Committee on Barrier Free Accessibility is being made. Accessibility specific projects are being identified and funded. Below a number of benchmarks are identified that can be collectively used to confirm that effective progress is being made.

- The current Capital Plan of the University [1990-2006] will add some \$750-850 million of new construction to the three campuses. There are some 33 new capital projects and in every one of these projects accessibility issues are being corrected and addressed. The Bahen Centre for Information Technology [BCIT] alone adds 400,000 square feet of accessible space, and represents some 4% of the University space inventory. As each Building is completed, the overall accessibility measure is improved. Nevertheless, we still need to address and develop a realistic plan to improve our many beautiful, but regrettably inaccessible, heritage buildings.
- Each year a University of Toronto St. George Campus map is produced. The map provides a macro indicator of which buildings are accessible. While we certainly need to refine what precisely is meant by a building being accessible [to what floor] it is significant that the new map currently being printed will add the following buildings to the growing list of accessible U of T buildings. These are: the Birge-Carnegie Library, Medical Sciences Building, Munk Centre for International Studies, North Borden Building, Sussex Court, and the Transitional Year Programme.
- There are still too many of our buildings that are not accessible, most notably the Awards & Admissions Building and a good many others that need to be changed. A plan to address these buildings, the cost and the priority will be developed with input from the AFD. Such plans must consider the global condition of each building, the timing and when both renovation/ demolition and accessibility can be simultaneously addressed. Current projects within the Capital Plan also work to advantage so that renovation can simultaneously address accessibility, i.e. the School of Continuing Studies Building, the Economics Building etc.
- At this time the Report of the Standing Committee on Barrier Free Accessibility is being tabled for information. A number of recommendations are contained in the report and these will be fully discussed within the AFD, specifically
 - a.) the auditing of new buildings to ensure true accessibility, the resources to undertake the audit and the broad acceptance of accessibility needs, and
 - b.) the integration of accessibility information into user friendly aids to enhance movement around all parts of the campus.

RECOMMENDATION:

Report is for information only.



University of Toronto

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AUGUST 29, 2003

MEMORANDUM

TO: PROFESSOR RON VENTER, CHAIR
ACCOMMODATIONS AND FACILITIES DIRECTORATE

FROM: SUSAN ADDARIO, STANDING COMMITTEE ON BARRIER FREE ACCESSIBILITY

SUBJECT: INTERIM REPORT – AUGUST 2003

Ron, attached is the interim report of the Standing Committee, noting the projects completed during the last year which have improved physical accessibility on campus. The report also notes the need for improved on-line information from Space Management and other campus facilities offices with regards to barrier-free features of all campus buildings.

Members of the Committee have also asked that I make the following recommendations:

1. The current focus on wheelchair access should be broadened to include other barrier free features such as lighting, signage, auditory clues, braille instruction in elevators, and so on.
2. A comprehensive study of campus signage should be undertaken, to produce a new standard for campus signs, information and way-finding.
3. There must be compliance with the section of the University's Design Standard that addresses barrier-free design. All capital projects should include barrier-free design consultation, and the University should follow best practices in the design of all new buildings and major retrofits.