



ACCESS AND INCLUSION PLAN

2019-2022



Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners

City of Darwin acknowledges the Larrakia people as the traditional owners of all the land and waters of the Greater Darwin region.

The Larrakia culture and identity is rich and vibrant. In the footsteps of the Larrakia people, City of Darwin will continue to foster this culture and identity by creating a vibrant and inclusive community together.

Other Acknowledgements

Council acknowledges the assistance and advice provided by the Access and Inclusion Advisory Committee and wishes to thank all staff and community members who have contributed to the development of the *Access and Inclusion Plan 2019-2022*.

Alternative Formats

This document is available upon request in alternative formats including:

- Hard copy in standard and large print;
- Electronically by email or on our website at www.darwin.nt.gov.au; and
- Audio format on our website.

Disclaimer

The information contained in this document is based upon the available information at the time of writing. All figures and diagrams are indicative only and have been sourced from various government organisations. The *Access and Inclusion Plan 2019-2022* should be read in the context of 'a living document', which may be amended from time to time.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

Visit www.darwin.nt.gov.au
Contact the Community Development Officer on 08 8930 0645

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Foreword the Lord Mayor

I am pleased to present the *Access and Inclusion Plan 2019-2022* which outlines what will be done over the next four years to create better access and inclusion for all members of our community. The plan is instrumental to facilitate equitable and dignified access to Council services, communications and employment systems and will enhance access in the broader community.

18% of Australia's population has a disability. As our population ages so too will the prevalence of age related disability. Council recognises the need to plan and take action to ensure equal access to its facilities and programs.

I am excited by the actions outlined in this plan and believe they pave the way for a better, equitable future for everyone in Darwin. Through this plan we will:

- Ensure appropriate access standards and Universal Design principles for infrastructure projects
- Improve accessibility of public toilets and parking
- Support the development of fully accessible playgrounds and spaces that cater for all abilities
- Support improved access to parks, beaches and waterways
- Ensure that events, festivals and celebrations support broad community access and inclusion
- Develop initiatives that encourage, support and raise the awareness that access and inclusion is positive for business
- Increase the level of World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) compliance
- Conduct a review of Council recruitment to ensure policies and procedures are inclusive and equitable.

We look forward to working with the community to implement the *Access and Inclusion Plan 2019-2022* to create a city with opportunity and choice for everyone.

KON VATSKALIS

Lord Mayor





Disability defined

The Commonwealth *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* provides protection for everyone in Australia against discrimination based on disability.

The Act defines disability as:

- total or partial loss of the person's bodily or mental functions;
- total or partial loss of a part of the body;
- the presence in the body of organisms causing disease or illness;
- the presence in the body of organisms capable of causing disease or illness;
- the malfunction, malformation or disfigurement of a part of the person's body;
- a disorder or malfunction that results in the person learning differently from a person without the disorder or malfunction; or
- a disorder, illness or disease that affects a person's thought processes, perception of reality, emotions or judgment or that results in disturbed behaviour.

This includes a disability that presently exists, whether from birth, or acquired through illness, accident or ageing; previously existed but no longer exists; or may exist in the future.

Members of the community who experience access issues include:

- People who use manual wheelchairs, power chairs, and mobility scooters;
- People with ambulant disability;
- Seniors;
- People with cognitive impairment, such as a hearing impairment, vision impairment, or dementia;
- Carers with children in strollers or prams;
- Carers with small ambulant children; and
- People with a temporary disability, such as a sporting injury.

Introduction

City of Darwin's *Access and Inclusion Plan 2019-2022* builds on the previous work undertaken with the *Community Access Plan 2012-2017*.

It will provide a framework to continue to support people with disabilities and other access challenges to engage with Council and access all areas of the organisation's operations. The plan will also support Council in meeting its obligations under the Commonwealth *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (DDA) and other relevant legislation. The *Access and Inclusion Plan 2019-2022* reiterates this commitment by Council to ensure that its services and facilities are accessible and inclusive of the whole community.

The plan has been prepared by Council's Community and Regulatory Services Department with assistance from Access Institute, following extensive consultation with Council Aldermen, Council Officers, the Access and Inclusion Advisory Committee (AIAC) and the wider community.

Using the information reviewed and feedback provided through an extensive consultation process, this plan identifies what the City of Darwin plans to do to improve access and inclusion across all areas of Council, including buildings, facilities, services, programs and employment. These actions have been grouped into four key areas. These are:



Built and natural environment

WHICH INCLUDES CONSIDERATION OF:

- transport and parking,
- buildings and facilities,
- built and natural environment,
- pedestrian treatments, pathways and connectivity, and
- recreation parks and public realm.



Services and programs

WHICH INCLUDES CONSIDERATION OF:

- community inclusion,
- events and programs,
- support services, and
- celebrating disability and recognising achievements.



Each of the four areas identifies two key outcomes to be achieved, through a list of actions. A budget source and lead team is also listed for each action to identify who will primarily lead or be responsible for the action, and what budget it will come from. An indication of priority is provided, High - Year 1, Medium - Year 1 to 2, Low - Year 2 to 3 or ongoing.

The Access and Inclusion Plan supports Council to achieve its vision for Darwin as a tropical, liveable city that creates opportunity and choice for our community. Access ensures that every member of the community can use the built and natural environment; services and programs; information and communication equally. By providing accessible infrastructure, responsive services, and opportunities for people to meaningfully participate within the community, we can facilitate a stronger, more collaborative, inclusive, and connected community.



Information and communication

WHICH INCLUDES CONSIDERATION OF:

- accessible information and communication (online and offline),
- community consultation and engagement, and
- attitudes and education.



Council operations

WHICH INCLUDES CONSIDERATION OF:

- disability and access awareness,
- raising profile of challenges, issues and opportunities,
- leading by example,
- employment policies and practices, and
- volunteer support, training and opportunities.

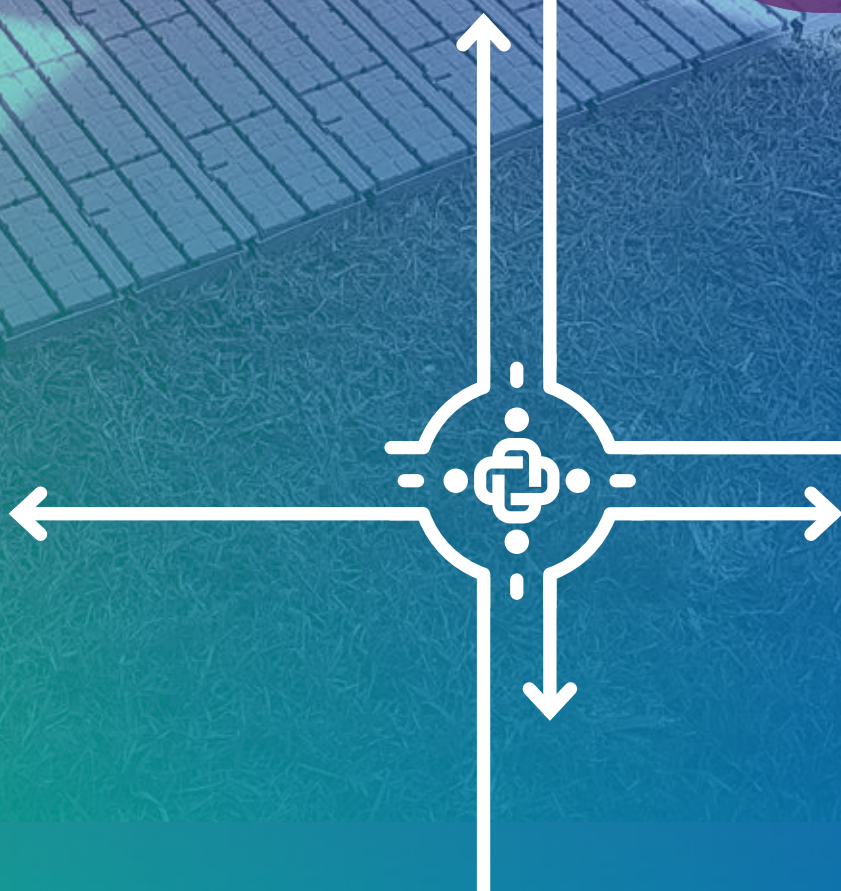
Area

Built and natural environment

1

KEY OUTCOMES

- Accessible community facilities where barriers are addressed systematically.
- A public realm and supporting infrastructure that facilitates access and inclusion for everyone.





No	Key actions	Lead team/s	Budget source	Priority
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Buildings and facilities

1.1	Major assets and infrastructure projects are designed in line with relevant access standards and incorporate Universal Design principles. Where appropriate, qualified and accredited Access Consultants are engaged to provide advice to ensure improved access outcomes for all users, including those who use manual or bariatric wheelchairs, mobility scooters, and pushchairs.	Various asset owners Community Development	Operational and/or new initiative	Ongoing
1.2	Continue access auditing of Council facilities and buildings allocating priorities collaboratively with staff and community. Includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • prioritising of Council office building works, • continuing to engage with Access and Inclusion Advisory Committee (AIAC) to identify priorities, • liaising with community service and support agencies, and • identifying potential for external funding and government grants. 	Asset owner Community Development AIAC	Capital	Ongoing
1.3	Continue to improve the accessibility of public toilets and promote the location and access features. Includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • undertaking an audit and identifying schedule and budget for priorities, • advocating for an increase in City Centre, • development of additional toilets including changing places and adult change facilities, • mapping accessible toilets and making this information available to the public on the National Toilet Map. 	Engineering and City Services Community Development	Capital	High

No	Key actions	Lead team/s	Budget source	Priority
Pedestrian access and connectivity				
1.4	<p>Explore the development of a Pedestrian Access and Mobility Plan (PAMP) to support accessible paths of travel in key commercial precincts, which meets the needs of all users, including those who use manual or bariatric wheelchairs, mobility scooters, and pushchairs. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use of A frames in the City Centre, • a 'missing links' program to create better connection between pathways kerbs and key infrastructure, • ensuring alternate pedestrian access provision associated with construction and redevelopment works, and • community and business education regarding the importance of footpath access and maintenance of continuous paths of travel. 	<p>Innovation</p> <p>Capital Works</p>	Operational	Medium
1.5	Ensure that trees surrounding footpaths and pathways are kept free from overhanging foliage, which can create barriers and impede access.	<p>Parks and Reserves</p> <p>Infrastructure Maintenance</p>	Operational	Ongoing
1.6	Develop a Council position on the use of tactile ground surface indicators, with advice from the AIAC.	<p>Design Development and Projects</p> <p>Infrastructure Maintenance</p> <p>AIAC</p>	Operational and/or new initiative	Low



No	Key actions	Lead team/s	Budget source	Priority
Accessible parking				
1.7	Undertake an assessment and review of accessible parking in key locations – shopping precincts, sporting clubs and community facilities – to improve number available, function, location, design, monitoring and use.	Innovation Design Development and Projects Capital Works	New initiative	Ongoing
1.8	Promote the availability and location of accessible parking through key online and offline publications and communications.	Marketing and Communications	Operational	Medium
1.9	Explore opportunities to educate community and increase understanding of the use and importance of accessible parking.	Community Development AIAC	Operational	Low
Public transport				
1.10	Work with public transport providers to advocate for improvements to public transport in terms of availability, increasing service level, frequency and duration. This can include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> location of bus stops at all Council facilities, and education of drivers and providers of the availability and use of the Companion Card. 	Community Development AIAC	Operational	High
1.11	Advocate for good access and amenities for public transport. This can include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> bus stops with adequate shade, shelter and access to water, continuous paths of travel suitable for all users, including those who use manual or bariatric wheelchairs, mobility scooters, and pushchairs, with no missing links, and signage and information. 	Community Development AIAC	Operational	Medium

No	Key actions	Lead team/s	Budget source	Priority
Public realm				
1.12	<p>Advocate to, and work with relevant authorities, developers and commercial operators to support and improve accessible places where community and visitors frequent and gather. This can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • beaches, waterfronts, wharfs and jetties, • shopping centres and private businesses, and • tourist destinations and places of interest. 	<p>Innovation</p> <p>Community Development</p> <p>AIAC</p>	Operational and/or new initiative	Medium
1.13	<p>Support initiatives that maintain and develop the greening of public spaces as a crucial element to achieve accessible environments that create shade and shelter.</p>	<p>Infrastructure Maintenance</p>	Operational	Ongoing
Parks and recreation				
1.14	<p>Support the development of fully accessible playgrounds and spaces that cater for all abilities. This can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the upgrading of regional playgrounds, and • investigating temporary or 'pop up' options to support events and celebrations. 	<p>Capital Works</p> <p>Community Development</p>	Capital and/or new initiative	High
1.15	<p>Identify initiatives to support improved access to parks, beaches and waterways. This can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • further development of accessible fishing platforms, • increasing beach access supports e.g. matting and aquatic wheelchairs and promotion of what is available, • provision of accessible pathways for all users, • assessment of signage to incorporate audio and tactile elements where required, and • facilities for assistance animals e.g. water stops. 	<p>Engineering and City Services</p> <p>Community Development</p>	Operational and/or new initiative	Medium



Area

*Services and
programs*

2

KEY OUTCOMES

- Accessible and inclusive services and programs that create opportunities for everyone to actively engage in community life.
- Connected community that works collaboratively with Council and stakeholders to develop access and inclusion opportunities.



No	Key actions	Lead team/s	Budget source	Priority
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Access and Inclusion Advisory Committee (AIAC)

2.1	Continue to support, profile and build capacity of the Access Inclusion Advisory Committee. Focus on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • providing opportunity to input and review all major projects, • identification of projects and outcomes for the AIAC, • providing advice for the implementation and review of the Access and Inclusion Plan, • developing partnerships with community and stakeholders to support improved access and inclusion, • ensuring regular contact and feedback between Council and AIAC, and • promoting and celebrating the achievements and success of the AIAC. 	Community Development AIAC	Operational	High
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Events and festivals

2.2	Continue to celebrate access and inclusion through disability awareness events and activities. Support and focus on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increasing community and stakeholder involvement, • investigating funding and sponsorship opportunities to further develop programming, • pursuing options to extend the programming through the DiversAbility Collective group, and • collaborations and partnerships with other disability support and service organisations. 	Community Development AIAC	Operational	High
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No	Key actions	Lead team/s	Budget source	Priority
2.3	<p>Ensure that events, festivals and celebrations are supported by access tools, guides, training and information that can assist staff and community in delivering proactive approaches to access and inclusion. This can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • review of events planning guide to ensure that access considerations are adequately supported and considered, • development of an access checklist to assist community groups in planning and conducting events, • access awareness training and information for staff, volunteers, and community event organisers, • effective marketing and communication of events and festivals with relevant and timely access information, • access assessment of venues, spaces and facilities where events are being conducted, and • investigation of additional access supports, equipment and information to enable greater participation. 	<p>Community Development</p> <p>Community Events Producer</p> <p>HR and Safety</p>	Operational and/or new initiative	Medium

Programs

2.4	<p>Develop opportunities for the provision of leisure, recreation and cultural programs that support people with a disability. This can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • supporting existing community programs to be more inclusive or expand offers, • advocating to sporting bodies, • investigating options to link with existing private providers or community groups, • increasing understanding about the opportunities and use of Companion Card at Council facilities, • investigating seasonal or travelling programs that can potentially reach isolated individuals, and • investigating options for accessible community transport to facilitate attendance and greater participation. 	<p>Recreation and Leisure</p> <p>Community Development</p>	Operational and/or new initiative	Medium
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No	Key actions	Lead team/s	Budget source	Priority
2.5	<p>Develop initiatives that encourage, support and raise the awareness that access and inclusion is positive for business. Options can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • delivery of workshops/ training seminars on strategies and approaches to achieving accessible and inclusive businesses, • working with local businesses, industry groups and Chambers of Commerce to identify opportunities, • local recognition of specific initiatives that support access and inclusion, • inclusion of access information in business directories or tourist guides, and • provision of access checklists to key industry groups, e.g. retail, tourism and hospitality. 	<p>Office of City Performance</p> <p>Community Development</p> <p>Marketing and Communications</p> <p>AIAC</p>	Operational and/or new initiative	Medium
2.6	Ensure that planning and providing for older adults participation and engagement is a focus of programming for access and inclusion.	Community Development	Operational	Ongoing
Community development and education				
2.7	<p>Encourage and support community groups to be inclusive and provide good access. Consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • access and inclusion criteria in community grants and sponsorships, • provision of training and education, templates and checklists, and • encouraging interaction and networking with AIAC. 	<p>Community Development</p> <p>AIAC</p>	Operational	Medium
2.8	<p>Increase community awareness about the diverse types of disabilities and access issues to reduce stigma and increase understanding. This can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • utilising Council newsletters, publications and website to promote programs and events, • highlighting good news access stories, and • profiling opportunities that address access and inclusion. 	<p>Community Development</p> <p>Marketing and Communications</p> <p>AIAC</p>	Operational	Medium

Area

*Information and
communication*

3

KEY OUTCOMES

- Informed and engaged community with choices about how they interact and communicate with Council.
- Positive communication about access and inclusion that supports improved attitudes and increased understanding of access and inclusion.



No	Key actions	Lead team/s	Budget source	Priority
Digital and online communication				
3.1	<p>Increase the level of World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) compliance, using the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG), and develop an action plan for improvement where required. Priorities to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • all internally generated PDF documents on websites are also provided in a read-only text alternative, suitable for access by people using screen reading software, • easily located statement on website encouraging people to contact Council if they require information in alternative formats, and • reviewing access information available. 	<p>Marketing and Communications</p> <p>Community Development</p>	Operational and/or new initiative	High
3.2	<p>Ensure all access information is centrally and easily located on Council website to support people's decision making in visiting or utilising Council's facilities and programs. This can include information on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • policies and strategies, • access maps and guides with parking and amenities, • access equipment, • accessibility of Council's halls and facilities, • programs and events, • templates and resources, • key council contacts, and • key community and service contacts. 	<p>Marketing and Communications</p> <p>Community Development</p>	Operational	Ongoing
3.3	<p>Develop a communications plan to ensure social media strategies support information exchange and the communication and promotion of positive access and inclusion messages. Consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use of local role models, • profiling of AIAC and projects, • promoting disability events, and • highlighting Council achievements. 	<p>Marketing and Communications</p> <p>Community Development</p>	Operational	Medium

No	Key actions	Lead team/s	Budget source	Priority
Communication mechanisms- access supports and services				
3.4	Increase awareness about what programs and services are available from Council and in the community through a variety of accessible communication channels.	Marketing and Communications Community Development	Operational	Ongoing
3.5	Explore options to develop a Darwin City access and mobility map that assists community and tourists with key access and inclusion information. Includes location of scooter and wheelchair Recharge Points and accessible toilet and adult change facilities.	Community Development	Operational and/or new initiative	Low
3.6	Provide advice and information on preparation and delivery of accessible communications for staff and community, including the use of Plain English. Can include style guides, basic tools and checklists to guide staff, as well as options for alternate accessible formats.	Community Development	Operational	Medium
3.7	Consider inclusion of a standard 'access' clause in Council publications that promotes access information, accessible features and contact points, including access to information in alternative formats.	Community Development	Operational	Medium
3.8	Ensure information relating to a range of access challenges (to assist staff in communicating with people with a disability) is provided and made available to all staff. Key elements include how to improve access for people with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • physical and mobility disabilities, • intellectual disability, • psychiatric disability, • vision and hearing loss, and • Acquired Brain Injury (ABI). 	Community Development AIAC	Operational	Low
3.9	Develop audible and visible information systems in relation to emergency management procedures for key Council sites and buildings.	HR and Safety Community Development	Operational and/or new initiative	High



No	Key actions	Lead team/s	Budget source	Priority
Consultation and engagement				
3.10	<p>Ensure consultations and Council meetings are conducted in accessible venues, and organising staff are aware of specific access considerations in their planning. This can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use of language in advertising, • promoting positive images of people with disabilities, • dissemination of information (availability of other formats), • accessible printed material, • accessible signage, • information in alternative formats, • alternative communication systems, and • timing and format of consultations. 	<p>Governance</p> <p>Community Development</p>	Operational and/or new initiative	Ongoing
3.11	<p>Ensure that the community has access to a range of options to communicate, engage and interact with Council both formally and informally for service and support. Includes alternate options for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • paying rates and bills, • making enquiries and seeking information, • lodging forms and applications, • reporting a complaint or issue, and • applying for a grant or funding. 	<p>Marketing and Communications</p> <p>Community Development</p>	Operational and/or new initiative	Medium
3.12	<p>Ensure that supports and systems are available to facilitate equitable access to Council meetings and information dissemination. This can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • availability of communication supports such as live captions at Council, hearing loops, tactile and Braille signage, AUSLAN interpreters etc., • displaying the communication access symbol at customer service centres, • continuing with the video recording of Council meetings, and • options for provision of meeting outcomes and information in alternative formats. 	<p>Governance</p> <p>Community Development</p>	Operational and/or new initiative	Medium

Area

*Council
operations*

4

KEY OUTCOMES

- Staff have the skills and knowledge to confidently achieve better outcomes for everyone in all areas of Council operations.
- Policies and procedures to support inclusive and equitable employment, training and volunteer practices.



No	Key actions	Lead team/s	Budget source	Priority
Staff development and training				
4.1	<p>A program of disability access awareness training and support is implemented across the Council. Key focus includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • generic disability awareness training for all employees and elected members, • targeted training for staff in high customer interfacing roles, • targeted access awareness training for particular departments where specific access expertise is required, • opportunities for online training and support through intranet and other resources, and • other resources can include staff checklists, templates, Council and service provider contacts. 	<p>HR and Safety</p> <p>Community Development</p>	Operational and/or new initiative	High
4.2	Support staff to develop their ability to produce accessible website and social media content.	<p>Marketing and Communications</p> <p>Community Development</p>	Operational	Medium

No	Key actions	Lead team/s	Budget source	Priority
Employment and volunteering, student placement				
4.3	<p>Conduct a review of employment policies, practices and procedures to ensure consistent organisational approaches and incorporation of appropriate disability access requirements. Key considerations include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • employment advertising and position application processes using a variety of accessible mediums, • ensuring staff involved in recruitment and selection of employees are trained in disability access and awareness issues, • position descriptions provided in accessible formats on request, and • procedures and tools in relation to employing and supporting staff with disabilities, e.g. advertising, recruitment, training, workplace modifications, reasonable adjustment and performance management. 	<p>HR and Safety</p> <p>Community Development</p> <p>AIAC</p>	Operational	High
4.4	Explore potential partnerships with disability employment training and workplace agencies, and identification of suitable work and volunteer opportunities.	<p>HR and Safety</p> <p>Community Development</p>	Operational	Medium
4.5	<p>Develop volunteer policies and practices to ensure access and inclusion principles are incorporated and address key elements such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • recruitment and induction, • training, • advertising, and • benefits. 	<p>HR and Safety</p> <p>Community Development</p>	Operational	Medium



No	Key actions	Lead team/s	Budget source	Priority
Integration of AIP				
4.6	<p>Adopt a whole of Council approach to the <i>Access and Inclusion Plan 2019-2022</i> and ensure that the plan is successfully integrated within all teams. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • linking with existing key Council planning documents, • supporting the AIAC and their relationship with staff and areas of Council, • ensuring that key actions and responsibilities are shared, and • promoting strategies that each department is undertaking in the area of access and inclusion. 	All of Council	Operational	High
4.7	<p>Ensure that the plan is considered as part of Council's budget process to enable successful implementation of priorities.</p>	Community Development	Operational	High
4.8	<p>Investigate any external funding opportunities and partnerships to improve access and assist in implementing actions identified in the plan. This can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Northern Territory Government, • sponsorship, and • local services and organisations. 	Community Development	Operational	Medium
4.9	<p>Monitor and evaluate the implementation of the plan and provide an annual report to Council in relation to the progress of implementation of actions identified, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • achievements to date, • areas still requiring action, and • new areas requiring action. 	Community Development	Operational	Ongoing

Monitoring and review

The Access and Inclusion Plan 2019-2022 will be monitored, evaluated and updated as follows:

- Responsible teams to provide a status report to the General Manager Community and Regulatory Services on an annual basis.
- Annual report will be provided to Council regarding the status of all actions identified within the plan and include:
 - achievements to date,
 - areas still requiring action, and
 - new areas requiring action.
- Consultation with people with disabilities to gain feedback in relation to progress of the plan through the AIAC will be undertaken.
- Audit, evaluation and update of the plan will be undertaken in 2022.





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