

# **City of St. Catharines**

## **Mayor's Advisory Committee on Accessibility (MACOA) MINUTES, Wednesday, January 22, 2014**

A meeting of the Mayor's Advisory Committee on Accessibility was held on  
Wednesday, January 22, 2014 in Committee Room #1  
at City Hall at 1:00 p.m.

Present: Councillor Matthew Harris (via conference call)  
Shelley Stewart, Co-chairperson  
Diane Foster, Co-chairperson  
Bob Asham  
Chantal Barrette  
Steve Byers  
Steve Kurtic-Lentinello  
Julie Morris  
Linda Marie O'Hagan  
David Reed  
Mary Jane Waszynski

Regrets: Ian Crawford

Staff: Diana Lecinski, Accessibility Coordinator, CSS  
Dan Dillon, Assistant Director, TES  
Christine Adams, Mgr of Engineering & Construction, TES  
Steve Bittner, Transportation Technologist, TES  
Henry Colyn, Facilities Manager, TES  
Phil Cristi, Manager of Programs & Cultural Services, RCS  
Cindy Upshall, Corporate Communications Officer, CAO  
Amanda Knutson, Development Agreement Coordinator, PDS  
Linda Robinson, Administrative Manager, FMS  
Bob Cornelius, Human Resources Coordinator, CSS  
Tracey Mammoliti, Application Analyst/Software Coordinator, CSS  
Wayne Racey, Network Telecommunications Administrator, CSS  
Marco Marino, Economic Development Officer, EDCS  
Chris Leonard, Chief Fire Prevention Officer, FEMS  
Graham Morris, Manager of Transportation, St. Catharines Transit  
Jack Foster, Business Administrator, St. Catharines Public Library

### **1. Call to order:**

Diane Foster, co-chairperson called the meeting to order at 1:05 p.m. noting that MACOA was meeting early to provide accessibility input on 2 pedestrian pathways at and close to Carlisle and McGuire Streets.

### **2. Introductions:**

Everyone was welcomed and round table introductions were made. The Chairperson noted that staff representatives were invited for 1:30 and that introductions would be made again prior to staff's Accessibility Plan updates.

### **3. Approval of Previous Minutes:**

The minutes of the Mayor's Advisory Committee on Accessibility for November 27, 2013 were approved.

That the minutes of November 27, 2013 be approved.

Motion by: Linda Marie O'Hagan

Seconded by: Shelley Stewart

CARRIED

### **4. Presentations/Discussions**

#### **a. Accessible pedestrian pathway design review;**

Dan Dillon reviewed details and future plans for the areas of McGuire St., Carlisle St. and St. Paul St. that includes the properties of the Meridian Centre, Performing Arts Centre (PAC) and Brock University's Marilyn I. Walker School For Fine Arts (MIWSFFA). The grade difference between St. Paul Street and McGuire Street is challenging from an accessibility perspective. The designs seek to achieve more accessible and connective pedestrian routes within the existing grades of this area. Dan Dillon reviewed several different options for a functional and accessible pedestrian route close to the McGuire / Carlisle intersection that would connect to the common exterior space between the PAC and Brock's property. MACOA members reviewed and discussed the different design options and supported the in-house design by Stuart Green of RCS, which included a combination of stairs and a pathway at a 5% slope from the intersection of Carlisle St and McGuire St, to the walkway behind the MIWSFPA.

Dan Dillon also reviewed a proposed green-space, public art and pedestrian pathway connecting the previously mentioned common exterior space between the PAC and Brock's property curving down towards the entrance of the Meridian Centre at The Parkway. MACOA members reviewed and discussed the slopes and connectivity of both pedestrian paths, noting that achieving a 5% slope was a design challenge that was achieved. Suggestions also included support for several flat rest areas off to the side of this pathway.

Staff noted that these streets will be serviced by Transit including a future lay-by stop on McGuire between the Meridian and MIWSFFA, there will be 2 skywalk entrances between St. Paul Street and the Meridian Centre during events for access and existing and/or new sidewalks along the streets. Designs attached as Appendix: Item 4.a. to these Minutes.

Moved by: Linda Marie O'Hagan  
Seconded by: Bob Asham

That MACOA supports the proposed designs for accessible pedestrian routes with 5% grades at McGuire/Carlisle area and from the Performing Arts Centre/ Brock's MIWSFFA to the Meridian Centre.

#### CARRIED

Further to this discussion, Councillor Harris requested an update from Steve Bittner on the status of nearby accessible parking at the City lot located at Eastchester and St. Paul. MACOA's initial request was for a minimum of 2 more and preferably a row of accessible parking spaces along the abutting building. Steve Bittner confirmed that 2 accessible spaces were added. Councillor Harris noted concern that an industrial waste bin be removed that currently covers existing parking and that more accessible parking be added. The addition of multiple accessible parking spaces was in lieu of constructing on-street accessible parking on this area of St. Paul St. as discussed at MACOA's January 25, 2012 meeting.

b. Accessibility Plan – annual update by departmental staff representatives.

Diane Foster called for another roundtable introduction prior to staff updates. Diane Foster also welcomed and thanked all staff for their attendance, support of accessibility throughout the year and their annual update, noting that the City is required to provide an annual update to the Province on the 2013-2015 Accessibility Plan status. Accessibility staff will compile the updates for MACOA's February meeting where MACOA will review to endorse for presentation at a Council meeting in March.

Each departmental representative provided a detailed update on their department's undertakings, successes, and continuing accessibility actions. Listed are only a few highlights and key points from each.

Cindy Upshall, Corporate Communications:

- On-going staff education to bring the City's website to WCAG 2.0 AA compliance
- Created a web-editors guide to further support overall website accessibility
- Continued participation with staff training for creating accessible information and communication
- City's Accessible Information & Communication Guide shared with municipalities throughout the Province and it has been the basis of many other guides that provide acknowledgement to the City of St. Catharines
- Graphic design and print-room staff continue to promote the requirement for accessible original documents prior to transforming information into brochures, etc.

Amanda Knutson, Planning & Development Services

- City Council recently passed a new zoning by-law that includes consolidation of accessibility elements such as accessible parking ratios and space sizes
- A new Site Plan Manual includes a section specific to accessibility and provides continued references to FADS as excellent guidelines. Its being finalized to ensure document accessibility and ideal graphic design
- Council has requested a review and follow-up for the CIP report of last Fall that did not address accessibility as a component
- Downtown Streetscape guidelines are being developed and will seek MACOA's input in 2014
- Urban Design Guidelines will need to be updated to recognize the AODA Design of Public Spaces Standard

#### Henry Colyn, TES facilities

- Ensures daily operation and maintenance includes accessibility awareness
- Accessible elements such as elevators and PDO's are monitored
- Notice of temporary service disruption is posted if a City facility or service experiences a service disruption
- Ensures improvements and renovations include accessibility analysis (also refer to 2008 access audit)

#### Steve Bittner, TES traffic

- Parking information has been clarified and updated on the City's website to include accessible parking locations
- Involved with downtown streetscape project and will support overall parking and connectivity
- Further review of 2-way traffic downtown will also seek public input
- Accessible parking line repainting within City lots needs to be addressed in tandem by TES and RCS to ensure that all spaces meet the City's current zoning criteria (size, signage, ratio)
- On-street accessible parking spaces on Church St. across from City Hall, in front of the MTO on St. Paul St. and more will be constructed
  - City snow removal is dependably shoveling at these spaces

#### Phil Christi, RCS all

- Noted regrets from Kristen Sullivan who provided an update and offered to attend a future MACOA meeting
- MACOA's park audit findings have been added to future plans for those various areas
- RCS recognizes the on-going parking lot repainting and will connect with TES to achieve current zoning criteria
- Various facility access improvements include, Lock 3 Museum, Dunlop Seniors Centre, Pearson Park and Happy Rolph's, West St. Catharines Seniors Centre
- Developing long-term outdoor pool strategy; e.g. future pool access to include ramps
- Exterior parking lighting schedule will be reviewed with RCS staff

Bob Cornelius, CSS Human Resources

- Noted as reporting on behalf of Chantal Switzer
- HR supports all corporate training including accessibility
- More than 825 employees have completed the Integrated Accessibility Standard training
- HR provides a comprehensive orientation program to all new hires that includes accessible customer service, promotion of the accessible information and communication guide and ensures workplace emergency information and planning
- Ensures that all elements of the Accessible Employment Standard are recognized and achieved.
- Supports manager training in context with accessible employment practices and procedures to ensure accessible employment is clearly interpreted and supported
- All recruitment notices include the following statement: The City of St. Catharines is an equal opportunity employer committed to inclusive, barrier-free recruitment and selection processes and work environments. We will accommodate the needs of applicants under the Ontario Human Rights Code and the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) throughout all stages of the recruitment and selection process. Please advise the Human Resources Division to ensure your accessibility needs are accommodated throughout this process.

Wayne Racey, Tracey Mammoliti, CSS Information Technology (I.T.)

- Help Desk provides technology support to staff throughout the City
- I.T. sets defaults of all new City computers to Arial 12 minimum
- Continued research for best practices and technology that is universally accessible
- Continued participation with staff training for creating accessible information and communication
- Digital signage project on-going, recognizes larger screens, fonts and accessible locations
- Several multi-media door phones installed and mounted at an accessible height

Linda Robinson, FMS

- Departmental staff have completed all accessibility training to-date and continue to provide accessible customer service
- Staff continue to ensure documents are accessible (e.g. budget document is very large and continues to become accessible through staff efforts and review)
- Forms need to become fillable and all departments are awaiting a forms solution application from I.T., alternatively training will support fillable forms creation

- Noted follow-up regarding City bills and documents being larger print and not faint water-marking of important information details
- Continue to ensure that all public meetings (e.g. budget) are held at accessible locations
- Procurement policy is drafted but not yet to Council however all accessibility statements regarding accessible procurement and third party AODA declarations continue to be required
- On-line payment option continues to move forward

#### Graham Morris, Transit

- Transit provided a detailed status update that is included in the agenda package under Information Items
- Currently developing a support person recognition process to ensure supported trips for patrons with a disability, in consultation with the Paratransit Advisory Board
- Continued commitment to ensure winter snow clearing at bus stops, particularly on regular bus routes for patrons who use mobility devices
- Upgraded automated stop announcement technology installed on all conventional buses in 2013
- Continuing upgrades included 15 new benches and 6 new bus shelters with accessible concrete pads with sidewalk connectivity in 2013
- All Transit staff completed the City's Integrated Accessibility Standard training prior to 2013 year-end
- Follow-up will be undertaken on suggestions regarding 2 week period for advanced booking of paratransit trips
- Route details can be provided verbally or using alternative formats, however further alternatives are being drafted and tested

#### Jack Foster, Library

- Accessible renovations to library facilities has been diligently undertaken since the 2008 access audit was made
- Facility access focused mainly on public and highly used areas (e.g. children's section at the Central Library underwent recent renovations that included an accessible family washroom in the children's area)
- Access renovations to Central Library also included meeting rooms (e.g. Mills Room) and washrooms
- Future upgrades to various technical systems (e.g. audio-visual) will include consideration for various disabilities
- Collections continue to include large print, audio and other formats
- Limitations to some e-collection selections are generally determined by availability from suppliers

- Notation was made that TES will be renovating the outdoor plaza area from James Street in 2014
- Review will be undertaken on suggestions to add railings within the wide set of 3 steps in the atrium, noting there is an adjacent ramp as an alternative
- All Library staff completed the City's Integrated Accessibility Standard training prior to 2013 year-end

#### Marco Marino, Economic Development & Customer Service

- Continued outreach to businesses on the AODA, FADS, etc.
- Continued use of media and text equivalents that recognize the tenets of WCAG requirements being adaptable, distinguishable, predictable and robust all of which build a more detailed framework that ensure accessibility.
- Tourism website is independently audited for WCAG 2.0 AA compliance
- Print promotional materials are highly practical in an economic development environment however recognizing that materials can be provided in alternative formats if requested
- Supported small business planning and again promoted the benefits of becoming accessible; facilities, services, materials, etc.
- Continue to promote a community conversation for patron access as a new normal, however many elements are not enforceable as yet

#### Chris Leonard, Fire

- Noted previous input regarding fillable forms and a need to review various forms currently being provided through Fire Prevention
- Evolving awareness and opportunities to highly recommend universal communication such as visual fire alarms, listening assistive devices in multi-unit buildings
- Noted emergency community safety concern during summer elevator worker strike
- Noted the new Fire Station 4 is FADS accessible, and Station 3 is very accessible as well.
- Promotions for fire prevention and public open houses held at Station 4 draw more community participation
- Ensure that all new City facilities that have fire safety plans will include a public document on emergency evacuation to be available upon request



Christine Adams, TES construction

- Construction projects continue to require FADS for accessibility framework
- Continue to seek MACOA's review and input on various projects
- Working with Niagara Region and area municipalities to develop a standard that addresses tactile surfaces at curb ramps as required in the future by the Design of Public Spaces Standard (DOPSS)
  - Various materials were researched (e.g. Toronto's test intersection using plastic truncated domes, pavers, cast iron, etc.)
  - Cast iron demonstrates best longevity and resilience against snow plow damage, although it is the most expensive choice initially
- Future sidewalk replacement will require 1.5m minimum width
- Various TES staff will attend accessibility DOPSS training this February
- Downtown streetscape research will continue and be brought to MACOA in 2014
- Project highlights that MACOA has provided input on lately include; Dunlop Seniors Centre, washroom renovations at Pearson Park and Happy Rolph's, Chetwood Seniors parking lot and future interior renovations of washrooms, sidewalks have been placed (as advocated by MACOA) to connect several locations along Vansickle Road, significant sidewalk replacement was made along Lake Street, Glendale near the Canal and the Burgoyne Bridge plans continue to seek a 2.4 m wide sidewalk as supported at MACOA's September 26, 2012 meeting.
- Future accessible on-street parking locations will seek MACOA's endorsement and well as future outdoor pool renovations

Diane Foster thanked each staff individually and noted that the scope of accessible advocacy by departments and staff increases annually.

Also noting the time being 3:30 p.m. the remaining staff input from the Accessibility Coordinator, and several updates provided on behalf staff who were not able to attend, were requested to be recorded as information updates with the Minutes.

Moved by: Chantal Barrette  
Seconded by: Steve Byers

That the remainder of the agenda be deferred to February's meeting.

CARRIED

Information updates (recorded to Minutes as requested):

Diana Lecinski, CSS Accessibility

- Focus on addressing corporate-wide objectives of the 2013-2015 Accessibility Plan
- Review all accessibility policies with each long-term accessibility plan or whenever a new AODA addition requires a policy amendment
- Corporate-wide training in 2013 (including Library and Transit) focused on meeting and exceeding the requirements of the Integrated Accessibility Standard Regulations by developing and providing training in various formats (E-module, hardcopy booklets, and group session training options) and further developed similar training packages to ensure awareness and compliance of City volunteers
- Renew the training program for the Accessible Information & Communication as a bi-annual program to support new staff as well as providing refresher opportunities to existing staff
- Develop and provide Design of Public Spaces training support to staff associated with this area (approx. 40 staff)
- Develop and provide Employment Standard Policy training to all managers including practices and procedures that promote understanding and protocol relating to staff/applicants with a disability
- Outreach continues with promotion of information or materials to support the community (e.g. FADS to churches, doctor offices and AODA materials to the Downtown Association)
- Continue to review facility designs and site plans for accessibility with input from MACOA
- Continue to support public feedback and MACOA input and ensure this expertise is heard
- Updated FADS (hardcopy and website) to the latest 2007 version and promote consideration for a consolidated type FADS in the future that includes associated AODA elements and OBC updates.
- Continue to ensure emergency information upon request for City facilities and support the orientation and bi-annual reminder to employees with a disability for emergency planning
- Continue to ensure accessible customer service throughout the corporation and procured an UbiDuo (demonstrated to MACOA November 27, 2013 for the City's customer service initiative as discussed with Victor Paola, Manager of Customer Service)
- Promote awareness of accessibility elements at various City facilities
- Continue to advocate for accessibility as a key component of guiding City documents (e.g. Site Plan Manual, CIP, etc.)

Sam Carrera, TES building (via report)

- Continue to require full OBC 3.8 compliance of plan submissions
- Advocate the benefits of accessible buildings to designers, builders, developers and the general public
- Recent amendment to the OBC (effective January 2015) for improved accessibility are recognized and required. Further details attached as Appendix 4.b. Building.

Leah LaPlante, EDCS Clerk's (via report)

- Accessibility renovations to Council Chambers continue to be beneficial to the community
- City Clerk is researching opportunities to have Council meetings with closed captioning (CC).
- Clerk's related services such as Council, licensing, marriages and general inquiries continue to provide accessible customer service and accessible formats as requested
- 2014 municipal election planning is underway
  - MACOA input on accessible voting locations
  - Accessible voting options will be reviewed
  - Comprehensive accessibility training planned for election personnel

## **5. New Business:**

- a. MACOA annual election was deferred until next meeting

## **6. Business Arising from Minutes:**

- a. Meridian Centre; update deferred
- b. City Facility Access Audit review;  
Sourced information from previous Accessibility Plan updates, minutes and previous budgets to provide a comprehensive overview of City facility accessibility renovations since the 2008 facility accessibility audit (see agenda package for details).

## **7. Updates:**

- a. Site plan review;  
As requested by MACOA this discussion will be deferred until weather improves, later spring or as Planning & Development Services staff can be rescheduled

- b. DDRC, Bob Asham  
Deferred
- c. Niagara ACC, Linda Marie O'Hagan  
Deferred

**8. Next Meeting:**

Wednesday, February 26, 2014 at **1:30pm** in Committee Room #1.

- MACOA elections
- MACOA review and endorsement of the annual Accessibility Plan update and future presentation to Council
- Meridian Centre update

**9. Adjournment:**

The meeting of the Mayor's Advisory Committee on Accessibility adjourned.

Moved by: Julie Morris  
Seconded by: Steve Kurtic-Lentinello

That this meeting do now adjourn.

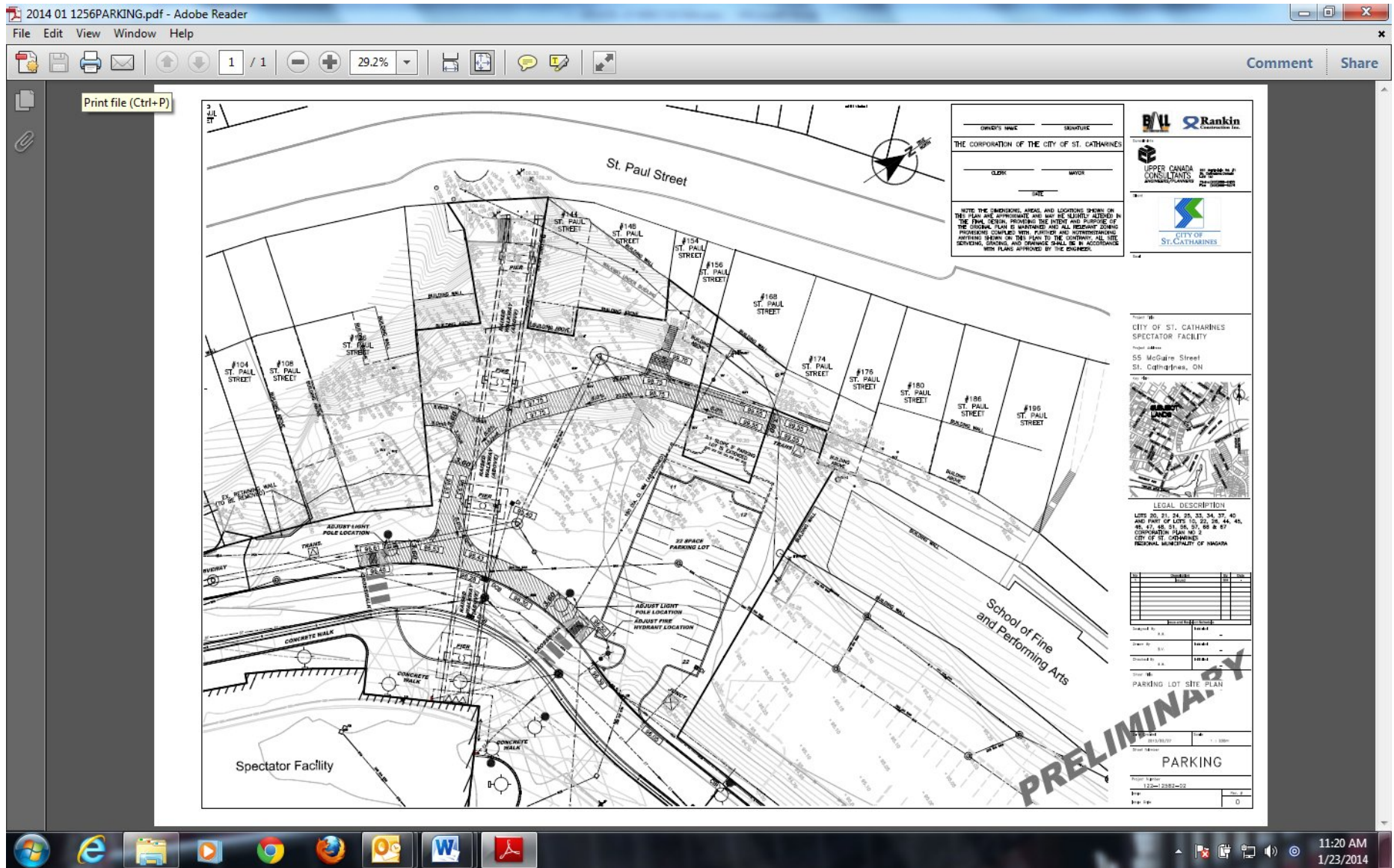
The meeting adjourned at 3:35 p.m.

CARRIED

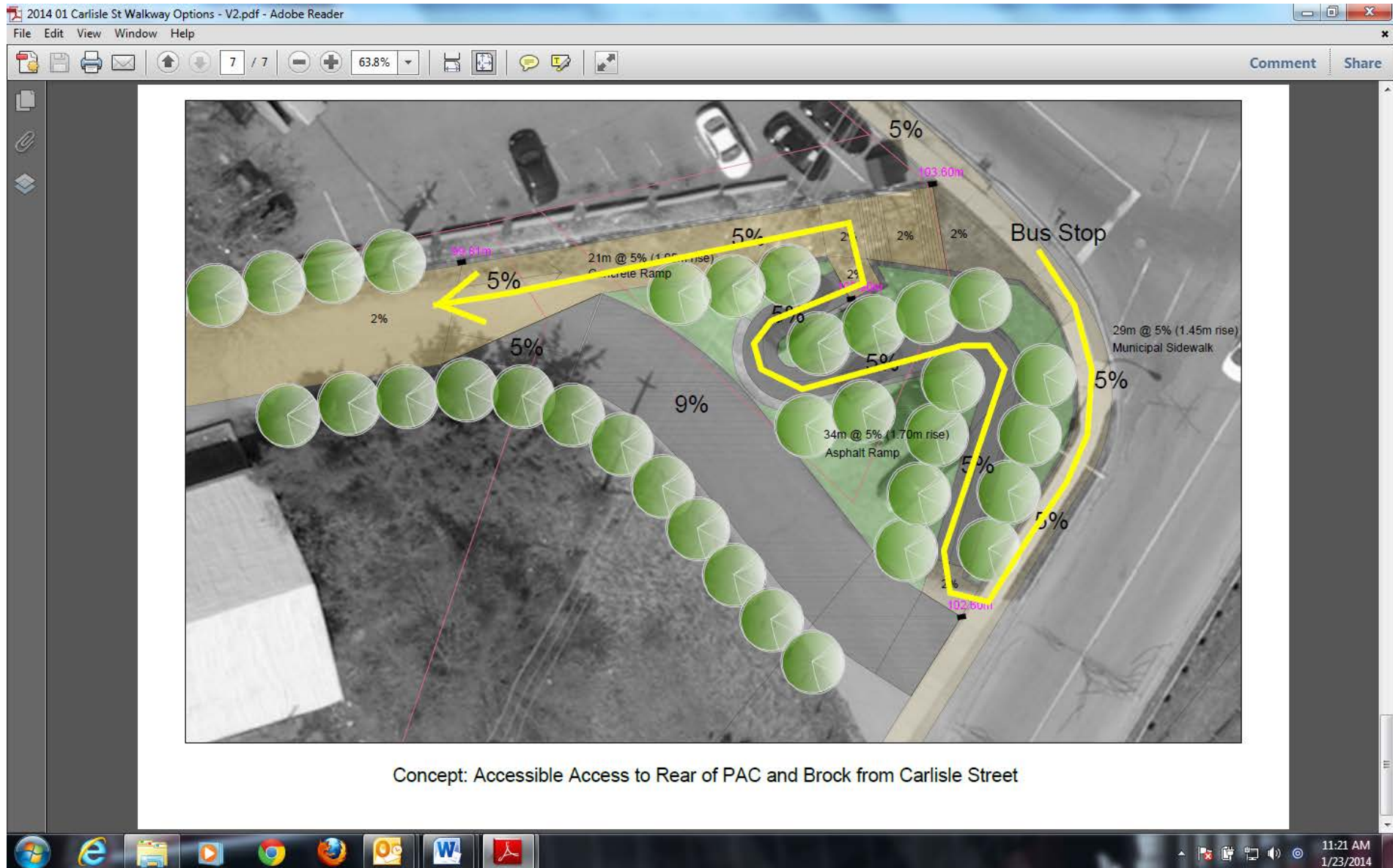
**Facility Accessibility Design Standards (FADS):**

The FADS guideline was approved by the Region of Niagara in September 2005 and adopted by the City of St. Catharines Council on April 24, 2006 for use in municipal facilities.

## Appendix, Item 4.a.







## **New Accessibility Amendments to Ontario's Building Code**

(Appendix Item 4.b. Building)

On December 27, 2013, **Ontario Regulation 368/13** was filed to amend the new 2012 Building Code, O. Reg. 332/12. The effective date of the amendment is January 1, 2015.

The amended requirements will substantially enhance accessibility in newly constructed buildings and existing buildings that are to be extensively renovated. They maintain Ontario's leadership role in requirements for barrier-free design.

In 2005, the government committed to the development of five accessibility standards under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act. These amendments to the Building Code work together with the Design of Public Spaces standard, introduced in 2012, to finalize the government's commitment to an accessibility standard for the built environment. The new requirements apply to most new construction and extensive renovations. Existing buildings, where no work is planned, are not affected by these new requirements.

Amended requirements cover a range of areas, including:

- Requirements for visual fire alarms to be installed in all public corridors of multi-unit residential buildings and in all multi-unit residential suites
- Requirements for all smoke alarms in all buildings, including houses, to include a visual component
- Requirements for an elevator or other barrier-free access to be provided between storeys in most buildings, with some exemptions for small residential and business occupancy buildings
- Requirements for power door operators to be provided at entrances to a wider range of buildings, and at entrances to barrier-free washrooms and common rooms in multi-unit residential buildings
- Updated requirements for barrier-free washrooms and universal washrooms
- Requirements for barrier-free access to public pools and spas
- Updated requirements for accessible and adaptable seating spaces in public assembly buildings such as theatres, lecture halls and places of worship