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## City Council

### Notice of Motion

MM55.50	ACTION			Ward:All
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### Enhancing Accessibility on Sidewalks in the City of Toronto - by Councillor Frances Nunziata, seconded by Councillor Peter Leon

*\* Notice of this Motion has been given.*

*\* This Motion is subject to referral to the Public Works and Infrastructure Committee. A two-thirds vote is required to waive referral.*

#### Recommendations

Councillor Frances Nunziata, seconded by Councillor Peter Leon, recommends that:

1. City Council request the Executive Director, Engineering and Construction Services, in consultation with the Director, Equity, Diversity and Human Rights and the General Manager, Transportation Services, to review current standards as they relate to sidewalk cross-slopes and to report to the Public Works and Infrastructure Committee on whether current standards should be amended to reduce the maximum allowable cross-slope on sidewalks constructed in the City of Toronto to enhance accessibility for all.

#### Summary

In August 2009, Toronto City Council adopted a Statement of Commitment to Creating an Accessible City which states "The City of Toronto is committed to building an inclusive society and providing an accessible environment in which all individuals have access to the City's services and programs in a way that respects the dignity and independence of people with disabilities." The statement goes on to read "the City of Toronto will continue to prevent barriers by designing inclusively and supporting positive attitudes that address "ableism" - attitudes which devalue and limit the potential of persons with disabilities." A key component of ensuring accessibility is ensuring the built form of our City is created in such a way that it can be used by all, regardless of age or physical abilities. In this respect, there is currently room for improvement with the City's sidewalks.

Sidewalks are purposely constructed with a slant in certain sections; for example, at curb ramps or where sidewalks meet driveway aprons. The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) requires that the cross-slope (i.e. the slope of a surface that is perpendicular to the direction of travel) of a sidewalk not exceed 1:20, or 5 percent. The City of Toronto's Accessibility Design Guidelines do not address the cross-slope of a sidewalk, however, the City's construction standards require that a sidewalk cross-slope fall within the range of 2

percent to 4 percent. While a preliminary review of regulations across the Provinces revealed that many are comparable to those of Ontario and specifically, the City of Toronto, our neighbours to the south, through the Americans with Disabilities Act, set the maximum cross-slope at 2 percent.

Sloped sidewalks make it difficult for those with walkers, canes, wheelchairs or other mobility assistive devices to traverse these sections while maintaining balance. Even a child on a tricycle would have difficulty crossing certain sections of sidewalk due to the extent of the slant. While cross-slopes are necessary, consideration should be given to whether we should change our standards by reducing the maximum cross-slope permitted for sidewalks within the City, resulting in more passable sidewalks for all.

(Submitted to City Council on August 25 and 26, 2014 as MM55.50)

### **Background Information (City Council)**

Member Motion MM55.50

<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2014/mm/bgrd/backgroundfile-72992.pdf>