

Question

TO: Senate

FROM: Question by Senator Chloe Rourke
Response by Senator Michael Di Grappa

SUBJECT: Question and Response Regarding Physical Accessibility on Campus

MEETING DATE: September 24, 2015

PREAMBLE: Whereas, McGill University made the decision to borrow \$400 million in order to address deferred maintenance projects on campus in Winter 2015, upon the recommendation of the Board of Governors Finance Committee;

Whereas, McGill's physical infrastructure on campus has been identified as a barrier for the implementation of universal design on campus at the 2012 Joint Board-Senate Meeting¹;

QUESTION: What current processes and evaluation procedures are in place within McGill's decision making structures to ensure the prioritization of physical accessibility on campus?

What steps are being taken to ensure that the Office for Students with Disabilities plays a role in any decision making about space use and renovations made by Campus Space and Planning?

Is McGill willing to open all renovation project or design teams to a representative with expertise in physical accessibility to ensure that the physical development of campus meets accessibility standards and the needs of its community members with disabilities?

RESPONSE: With respect to all new major construction and renovation projects, McGill's Universal Design standards form a mandatory component of each new project to ensure that all future projects provide for physical accessibility.

**[provided by
Senator
Di Grappa, VP
Administration
and Finance]**

The Office for Students with Disabilities recognizes that it does not have expertise in this area, and has therefore agreed to have the Design Office in Facilities Management and Ancillary Services ensure that these standards are met. Where necessary, the Design Office engages external

¹ Report of the Joint Board-Senate Meeting https://www.mcgill.ca/senate/files/senate/d12-35_joint_board-senate_report_0.pdf

consultants who are experts in this field. The costs of meeting these standards are built into the funding of each project.

For the purposes of retrofitting existing facilities and establishing priorities, in 2013, the Provost created the Universal Access Capital Projects Working Group. Chaired by the Associate Provost (Policies, Procedures and Equity), the Working Group includes representatives of all major stakeholders, including the Social Equity and Diversity Education (SEDE) Office, the Office for Students with Disabilities, and students. The Working Group annually solicits proposals from the community for priority projects which promote accessibility. The group has an annual capital budget of \$400,000 and makes recommendations to the Provost on an annual basis on physical accessibility priorities and where these funds should be allocated.