ArtsBuild Ontario Learning Series Webinar Transcription:

Best Practices for Architects, Designers and Creative Spaces on Accessibility

March 26, 2019

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(Reference Slide 1) >> ALEX GLASS: Hi everyone. Just letting you know that we are on standby until the webinar starts in just three minutes. Thanks for your patience, and if you have any questions for the webinar or afterwards, just wanted to let you know we will be taking those towards the end of the presentation but, in the meantime, we appreciate your patience before we get started. Thanks.

>> THEA KURDI: Good afternoon everyone. It is 12 o'clock. We are ready to get started. I would like to welcome everyone to our webinar for the Best

Practices for Architects, Designers and Creative Spaces on Accessibility. This is the fourth webinar in the ArtsBuild Ontario Accessibility Series.

My name is Thea Kurdi, and I'm the vice president of DesignABLE Environments. We are currently working with ArtsBuild Ontario as consultants on both this webinar series and the creation of a new toolkit to support accessibility in creative spaces.

We are delighted today to have Amy Pothier, Accessibility and Building Code Consultant at Gensler, and Corey Timpson, Principal at Corey Timpson Design Inc. as our guests joining us for our feature presentations.

(Reference Slide 2) We'll hand things over to them in just a minute, but there are a few housekeeping items we need to get through before we can get started.

Please be aware that you can hear us, but we can't hear you. Microphones have been disabled for this webinar, but we hope you can hear us through your speakers or headphones. You can adjust the sound by clicking on the speaker icon at the top of the meeting window.

We are offering closed captioning throughout the webinar today. The closed captioning appears at the bottom of our meeting room screen in the area called

"caption stream pod" where you, as a participant, can change both your font type, size, and color to suit whatever your needs may be.

Would a participant please confirm by typing in the chat box in the bottom right corner of the screen that they can see the closed captioning box at the bottom of the meeting room. Thank you so much.

Just so you know, a record of the closed captioning will be sent to participants following the webinar and will also be made available on our website.

So, three last things before we get started. The first being, we will be recording the entire session, and a link will be E-mailed to you and everyone in the webinar following this session. No. 2, also very important, we will be emailing you a quick survey after the webinar. We're going to be asking you to please complete the survey so that ArtsBuild Ontario can continue to improve their Learning Series for Creative Spaces. And, three, lastly, we will provide approximately ten minutes at the end of the session to answer your questions. Please use the chat box in the bottom right to type in your questions, and we will get to as many as possible. Unfortunately, that chat box function on the bottom right of your screen is not accessible to screen readers, so if the chat box is not working for you and you have a question, please email them instead to

erin@artsbuildontario.ca. That is e r i n @ a r t s b u i l d o n t a r i o.ca and we will

ask them during the question and answer period.

(Reference Slide 3) Our agenda today is to do a quick recap of the AODA and

what is covered in the last webinar, which was titled the Design for Public Spaces

Advanced: How can creative spaces go beyond the standard?

The presentation today will be about Best Practices for Architects, Designers

and Creative Spaces on Accessibility from both Amy Pothier and Corey Timpson,

and a presentation question and answer period at the end.

(Reference Slide 4) Okay. So, recapping briefly. We'll start with a recap of

what the AODA legislation is, and what the design of public spaces portion of this.

So, in our first part of the webinar series, you can see that information in

detail where we talked about the question of what exactly is a disability. People

with disabilities are really to the minority of everyone, and everyone either

currently has a disability or knows someone with a disability or will themselves

have a disability as they age. We are all an illness, accident, or aging away from

having our abilities change.

(Reference Slide 5) Also, in the first seminar we reviewed understanding the

Accessibility for Ontarians Disability act, which is also referred to as the AODA,

and how the goals of the legislation was to make Ontario accessible by 2025. The principles of how to achieve this are based on approaching people with equality in mind, dignity, and respect.

The legislation covers under the integrated accessibility standard five different pieces of legislation. The customer service, information and communication, employment, transportation, and the design of public spaces.

(Reference Slide 6) So, as this series is focusing mostly on the design of public spaces, again in our first series we talked a little bit more about this, so if you need more information, please go back and review that, but as we looked at the design of public spaces from an arts perspective, we were focusing mostly on what would the exterior paths of travel need to provide if you were going to be providing outdoor public use eating areas, or outdoor play spaces, to be aware that public consultation is necessary for both of those design elements. Public consultation is not difficult. If you get a good accessibility consultant working with you, it is very simple. That accessible parking has some unique changes in this legislation where there are two different types of parking, a type A, which is van size, and a type B, which is car sized. The only three parts of this legislation that pertain to the inside of the building are service counters, fixed queuing

guides, and wait areas where you might have some fixed seating, in which case

3% of that fixed seating space would have to be left available for people using

mobility assistive devices.

(Reference Slide 7) So, one of the things about the Ontario Building Code

which is one of the legislations used in the built environments while it does

include some accessibility requirements they are considered by the industry to be

limited in what they ask for. So, is it possible to build a building that fully

complies with both the AODA and the OBC and be fully inclusive? Unfortunately,

not. These pieces of legislation are still focusing mostly on individuals who are

using wheelchairs and they don't solve or find solutions for the full range of

abilities that people have.

(Reference Slide 8) In fact, what is interesting in Ontario is that we have a

hierarchy of laws where the hierarchy rights law has primacy over the legislation

we would normally refer to, that being the Ontario Building Code and the AODA.

When is there is a difference or conflict between the code, and Ontario law, the

human rights code has priority, unless the other code specifically states

otherwise. Such as the planning act, the Ontario Building Code, the AODA, which

must comply with the intent of the Human Rights Code unless otherwise noted.

Organizations are required to meet the human rights code unless this was caused something called undue hardship to the organization, and further information is available through the Ontario Human Rights Code website.

We'll be providing other resources that help you with this, as well.

(Reference Slide 9) So, the resources that we have here on this page refer to the AODA customer service, the AODA information and communication, the AODA employment and the AODA design of public spaces which has an illustrative technical guide which gives you all of the background information you may need. The hyperlinks that you can see on this slide will be available to you through the ArtsBuild website.

(Reference Slide 10) So, before we get started any further, we're going to do a quick recap of what we covered in our third seminar, the beginning of this month. We had, again, two presenters. The first presenter was Loreen Cariza from Human Space. She is the Accessibility and Wellness Practice Lead, and her presentation was about designing creative spaces. She gave us an excellent presentation full of stunning graphics and some really important ideas. We were particularly interested in her comments about consulting with people with

disabilities, as they have the lived experience which is so valuable to good design solutions.

She also emphasized while we know much about what makes good inclusive design, but the definition is evolving and improving all of the time. Loreen also reviewed both the importance of functional programming, which is where the space planning for accessibility happens, and making sure budgets include accessibility requirements.

(Reference Slide 11) Our second presenter for Session 3 was David Holland who was talking about designing for public spaces advanced how can creative spaces go beyond the standard? David Hollands is the head of creative at the Royal Ontario Museum, so his focus was on how the ROM has been working to create inclusive spaces for its visitors. They, again, have been using consultations for people with disabilities to hear, again, about a diverse range of abilities. Ideas for them included designing for the edge, not just the typical, using mock ups and alternative formats with English and French braille, and how to incorporate visual descriptions. David's presentation demonstrated how he and the ROM team have provided leadership on how to help Ontario achieve the AODA to create a fully accessible Ontario for 2025.

So, seminar 3, if you weren't able to watch it live, is certainly worth your time to go back and revisit. And you can access that through [the ArtsBuild Ontario website](#).

(Reference Slide 12) If you have any questions about the AODA or the Design of Public Spaces standard, you're welcome to contact the ministry for seniors and accessibility. We on this slide have a variety of different ways to contact them, [through their website](#), through their telephone number, through their Twitter account, their Facebook account, their YouTube channel, and through email. If you can't see the slide, please contact us and we're happy to share that information with you.

(Reference Slide 13) So, I will now turn to our amazing presenters for our fourth webinar today. I'll start by introducing you to Amy Pothier. Amy is an interior designer by education. She has always been interested in the technical parameters of design. Diving right into the technical side of design and becoming a building code consultant. Recognizing that the building code minimums were not sufficient to create accessible spaces, she became an accessibility consultant working on projects for a more inclusive design approach. She has since combined her love of building codes with her passion of universal design as the Practice

Lead for the health and wellness building at Gensler's Toronto office. In viewing

her passion for code compliance and accessibility advocacy in projects across

Canada.

(Reference Slide 14) Our second presenter today is Corey Timpson. Corey is

an active collaborator and thought leader in the experience of design and digital

media discourses within the museum and cultural industries. As Vice President,

exhibition research and design at the Canadian museum for human rights, Corey

was responsible for the direction and oversight of all exhibition programs,

research and creation, design and production across all media, digital platforms

and collections.

As the project director for the design build of the CMHR, his focus was on

collecting and interpreting difficult knowledge and presenting it through a multi

sensory trans media storytelling approach. Corey also championed the creation

of and directed museum's internationally recognized inclusive design and

accessible practice. Whether working for museums and culture, sports and

entertainment, healthcare or commercial clients, Corey places strict attention on

Rich experience design. Builds upon sustainable and inclusive interaction and

data models informed by efficient and practical process design.

His design leadership has accounted for over 30 international awards in the field of environmental, exhibition, and graphic design, digital and interactive media, digital systems, film, and linear media and universal design.

So, I think we're ready to turn this over, finally, to our first presenter, Amy Pothier. Go ahead, Amy.

(Reference Slide 16) >> AMY POTHIER: Thank you, Thea. Hello everybody. Just making sure that everyone can hear me okay. If you have any problem hearing me. I'm a little but muffled. Okay. I see. I'll try my best to speak clearly. The sound is hard to hear. Okay. Let's try one other thing here. Does that make it easier to hear me? Okay. Okay. Thank you everybody.

My name is Amy Pothier. As Thea mentioned, I'm an accessibility and building code consultant working with Gensler. My work consists of providing consultation and recommendation to adhere to code requirements, but also to identify opportunities for improving access that are outside of legislative requirements. To support our design teams across Canada at Gensler, I work with building owners, building users, accessibility advisors, committees, and multiple representatives to create more inclusive environment that still meet fire and safety requirements within our building code framework.

(Reference Slide 17) First of all, I really want to recognize that an organization with accessibility advisory committee, or one who has access to a local accessibility advisory committee was always going to be one step ahead of an organization that doesn't. Having an accessiblility advisory community gives direct feedback in connection with the people we are hoping to attract to organization, so also provide you with important information on what works and what does not work if you have an existing facility. As an interior designer, I am always very glad to connect with an accessibility advisor committee that can help me deliver the best project to a community.

So, this presentation I would like to address some ways to empower and have the accessibility advisory committee, I'm going to call them AAC from now on, collaborate with the design team.

(Reference Slide 18) There are four important components of any design project, and in each component, there is great value in integration with the AAC. I will be walking through how an AAC role can be included in each stage from creating the proposal to going through the design process and even in construction. Finally, I always advocate for lessons learned in every and any project.

(Reference Slide 19) To request the proposal or RFP is traditionally the first document that a design team will see from the client. It will outline the project and what kind of design services are anticipated. The RFP sets the tone in the framework foreign gauge meant with the client and provides requirements on how the design team is to respond to the requirement.

Note that it is not the responsibility of the accessibility advisory committee to know the legislative requirements relating to design construction for accessibility, but it is a value for the AAC to become familiar with the requirements that the design team will have to comply with.

(Reference Slide 20) An arts organization with access to advisory committee should be identifying this in their RFP to the design team. Use the RFP as an opportunity to share any missions or commitments to accessibility and inclusion that are important to the organization, provide in writing the intent of collaboration between the successful design team and the AAC, along with itemizing requirements and meetings and workshops with the AAC throughout the process.

(Reference Slide 21) The next piece is documentation. Provide references gathered from the AAC or from organizations such as ArtsBuild to use in the

design of the project. Architects and designers appreciate strong guidelines that can be used to ensure a high level of accessibility achieved. A great example of an organization that does this well is the University of Toronto Scarborough campus. They not only share guidelines that they want to be used in the delivery of projects, but they also list products that they once utilized in particular solutions and they itemize what has been done successfully in other projects on the campus. It's great when an organization can tell you, "this is the power door operator we want to use because it's on the main entrance door and it works well, and then all our power door operators will match throughout the building to provide continuity for occupants."

Itemizing elements like this in the RFP stage will help you to get the message to the design teams at the earliest stage possible.

Now, I recognize that you might not all have this information at the start. You could note in the RFP that you want to first meet with the design team to discuss the strategy on what guidelines and design solutions for accessibility will be integrated into the project in advance as part of a visioning session.

(Reference Slide 22) It's not uncommon for organizations looking for proposals from design teams to have a mandatory site visit especially if there is an existing room that will be undergoing renovation as part of the scope of work.

Take the site tour as an opportunity to reiterate your organization's commitment to accessibility by either having individuals from the AAC tour the site with the design teams and pointing out elements that do not currently work, or that you would like addressed as part of the renovation. Organizations that take this approach will be demonstrating to design team that the AAC is a key player in the design project and are to be considered as important as the client themselves.

(Reference Slide 23) Design teams typically want to start with the design process with a series of workshops and visioning sessions with the client to understand the need for the project in the main project goals.

(Reference Slide 24)You could include an accessibility workshop right in the schematic design. As soon as the design team has started blocking uses before they go too far in the design process, have the AAC present to the design team and then vice versa to share perspectives. Ask the design team to identify any conflicts between what arose in other workshops in visioning sessions in the

organization. For example, a facility manager may feel that an existing raised

ticket booth should remain raised because it gives the ticket agent an opportunity

to see the line of people waiting for tickets, however, this would limit the

organization's ability to have ticket agents that aren't able to navigate a stepped

entry to the booth .If a ramp to the ticket booth cannot be provided due to space

constraints, the client contact should be made aware and the decision on how to

proceed should be tracked with the client and shared with the AAC. Identifying

items like this to the AAC during the beginning design stages will encourage all

people to find solutions that work best for the particular organization and will

help to maintain communication.

(Reference Slide 25) AACs may not always be able to identify dimensional

requirements and should be provided within a project. Providing dimensions to

design teams is really critical in the development of the project. Documents like

the London Facility Accessibility Design Standard and updates to the City of

Mississauga's Accessibility Design Standard are useful tools to help in the

development of dimensional criteria for a particular organization.

There are two fantastic research documents completed through the inclusive

design and environmental access center in Buffalo, New York in collaboration with

Toronto Rehab Institute that are very valuable in establishing clearances that meet the needs for people using mobility devices in North America The Turning Spaces for Wheeled Mobility study confirms that to accommodate people using 95% of mobility devices in North America, the appropriate turning circle would be 2500 mm or 8'-3" diameter. This is significant due to the fact that most current building codes only require a 1500 mm or 5'-0" turning circle. The second research document is regarding the clear floor space required for the majority of wheeled mobility devices in North America, proving that a clear floor space of 890 mm x 1500 mm, 3'-0" x 5'-0" should be utilized.

Having reliable research completed in North America will help inform a dimension for AAC recognized building code is insufficient, but I'm not sure which numbers exactly should be utilized. Falling back on reputable research and accessibility guidelines is always a good approach.

(Reference Slide 26) Accessibility should be integrated into the finishes and material selection The AAC should share with the design team the required reference to achieve compliance for the project. There should be a meeting between the design team and the AAC to present the finishes and demonstrate that tonal contrast has been achieved for the materials. Wayfinding and signage

should also be presented in this meeting. References such as the Canadian

National Institute for the Blind's Clearing Our Path document are good resources

for this type of work, alongside other recommended guidelines noted previously.

The client has the opportunity to note that if the AAC does not approve the

finishes, then the client will not approve the finishes. This is a typical place where

personal preference will vary, and the organization should be aware that the

accessibility of a material finish palette should be just as critical as the aesthetic.

(Reference Slide 27) Before design sign off the AAC should be presented to

the client to confirm that the design team has addressed all questions. The AAC

should be as integral in the design sign off as the organization's team

representatives. Keep in mind that the clearer the organization is in the role that

the AAC plays as part of the project, the more likely that the design team will be

able to raise conflicting information that comes from different parties and will

have the greatest opportunity to ultimately maintain the accessibility of the

project.

(Reference Slide 28) Which leads us into the next and most critical phase,

construction.

(Reference Slide 29) A lot of people feel that once the design has been signed off, the AAC's work should be complete. In a perfect world, this might be true, but the reality is that a lot of things come up on site that can impact the accessibility of a project. Contractors need to make daily decision to keep the project moving forward given timelines and the budget. One item on this I find particularly valuable in the past is walking the contractor team through the accessibility initiative integrated into the design and talking about the critical dimensions that need to be maintained. This way, the contracts should come up against an existing condition that restricts critical dimension, they can advise the design team to come up with solutions. Sometimes the height of an element makes all the difference, but the contractor may just be used to meeting minimum codes and does not locate them at the appropriate height. Telling the contractor that heights have been specified and that they're all integral in the design solution will help to ensure that accessibility is maintained.

(Reference Slide 30) A scheduled site visit during construction can be an opportunity to assist in the accessibility. For example, a lot of other projects will put up paper signage for rooms in advance of permanent install signs. The AAC can provide feedback on the proposed locations to ensure they make sense given the context of the space, which is easy to identify within the space itself.

(Reference Slide 31) Ultimately, there are always lessons learned at the end of the project, things that can be done differently or interpretations that were used in the decision making process. Taking the time at the end of the project to share lessons learn wed the design team, the AAC, the organization, and the contractors will help to share these lessons with the larger team.

(Reference Slide 32) I also suggest writing down strategies that worked well, things that the AAC would like to be integrated into other renovations and new projects, and other decisions that were made along the way. Include reference documentation used and even use mark up plans to demonstrate how accessibility was integrated into the work. This will assist in future work and also enable the organization to see how accessibility and design into the built environment.

(Reference Slide 33) Perhaps this could be something that was shared with other art institutions so that from an accessibility perspective there is more connection between institutions. Connecting with other institutions will allow for information hearing and support along with providing a network and resource for more inclusive design of arts organization.

(Reference Slide 34) When a new project is delivered, there's typically a lot of press of the beautiful new space and when accessibility and inclusive it tee is done right, it should blend in and be part of the beauty. However, that doesn't mean we shouldn't identify how the project addresses accessibility. Everybody should be part of the discussion that promotes inclusion and accessibility, this is beautiful, if not more beautiful than other projects where it might not have been the focus.

(Reference Slide 35) Recognizing our ability to leverage the power of design to be powerful for all people is a key deliverable that will continue to be more effective than meeting minimum legislation requirements, and accessibility advisory committees are a key part of the solution. Thank you!

>> Thank you very much, Amy. That was another excellent presentation. Full of stunning images and some really important ideas, including addressing some of the ways to empower and have the access (Audio pause)

>> It looks like we just lost the audio, unfortunately, everyone. Picking up where she left off, thank you Amy, so much, and I think it's really important to focus on the design elements of a creative space project and accessibility, and then really your presentation will complement well with Corey Timpson, who I'm

excited to have present next, and then together we'll see a real holistic approach

to design and architecture in a space.

So, without further ado, Corey, I would like to hand things over to you.

(Reference Slide 36) >> COREY TIMPSON: Great. Thanks very much. Just

ensuring that everyone can hear me. Pause there for a second. Bunch of people

are typing. Yay. Great.

Thanks for having me, and it is nice to be speaking with everyone. It is

obviously a subject we're all super passionate about and working together is

where we can really move the needle on things. So, I'm always thankful for the

opportunity to hear the ideas and the work of everybody else, and to put my

ideas out there, as well, for vetting and criticism, constructive, of course, and so

let's get to it.

(Reference Slide 37) So, I like to talk about the ecosystem of inclusion, and

that's really what I'm going to focus on today. And, ethos being rather than

designing and developing something and figuring out how to make it accessible

and inclusive it is the consideration at the outset. And, this is a really nice

sentiment, but I think in terms of really practical project terms, when we're

dealing with the constraints and the reality of day to day project life, this really is

important, because we can start to take this ethos and make it relevant to a very

high level decision makers who control things like budget. Who control things like

resources, like human resources. So, rather than spending human and financial

resources in an inefficient way to develop a less holistically solid outcome, this

ethos is important and can be used to help sort of drive home that point that not

only do we want to build the most inclusive outcome, but we want to do it in the

most effective and efficient project way possible.

(Reference Slide 38) So, I like to say that inclusive design is the methodology

that myself and my teams apply. That's our practice, and accessibility is one of

the outputs of this practice. And, you can say scalability, sustainability, you know,

budget, fiscal responsibility, all of these things are other outputs, but this is my

sort of delineation between inclusive design and accessibility is the methodology

versus one of the outcomes.

(Reference Slide 39) And, the design principle that we apply to our projects,

the ecosystem.

(Reference Slide 40) And what I mean by that is that there is a bunch of

elements take come together to create the ecosystem of personal or group

experience, and you know we talk about the architecture and the building and

building code, but we also need to consider the environmental design within those spaces, and that environmental design will have graphics and information. It can be anything from directional signage and wave finding through to IN a museum setting, it can be the purpose of the museum or the organization is, so the architecture in the building within that way of the environmental design, one aspect of the environment design would be the graphic design.

We have interface and interaction design scenarios. And, that doesn't necessarily mean digital, but that means how people are interfacing and interacting with services with any of the functionality of the environment within one another within the space. So, consideration of interface and interaction design within the setting.

We do increasingly live in blended environments with digital media, with personal devices, so software design and development is extremely important within that context, as well. The use cases of being a remote visitor, a virtual visitor, or being a physical visitor and still interfacing with digital media is important. The media production itself. If we're thinking specifically in a museum environment, you can imagine architecture. Earlier we saw picture of the ROM of the museum and it is non 90 degree angled, you know, abnormal building, a lot of

museums are going that way, certainly the Canadian museum for human rights is like that. There is not a 90 degree angle in the building naturally unless we build it as part of the exhibition design. So, navigating these spaces, considering the media that will be in those spaces, either in the kiosk or in some kind of mixed media installation.

You know, fabrication and installation is very similar to the point that Amy just made about doing the design work and then tracking that through construction, it's the same way with the new space that have pieces fabricated installed with within them, again mixed media, they can be furniture, installations and this can be anything that is taking place in that space.

Finally, people. All of these spaces have people in them, whether as visitors, as clients or customers, or whether people are working within those spaces. There is a lot of these vectors that have to come together to create the entire ecosystem, and we need to consider all of those pieces together, because it's not just the architecture, and it's not just the graphic design, but it is all of these pieces that are coming together and how they're being used.

And then in a lot of projects we know we have a lot of different design teams. We might have the architecture the architects, we may have exhibition

designers in the case of museums, media producers. They may not be the same

people. They're likely not the same company. They all have their specialization,

and in order to ensure proper inclusion and, you know, therefore accessibility, we

really need to think about all of these variables, how they come together, how we

consider one in relation to the other, and know that there is going to be a bunch

of different people working on this stuff, and how do we ensure that the sum of

all of those parts equals something that is accessible.

(Reference Slide 41) This is a photo of the largest gallery at the Canadian

Museum for Human Rights. So, it is about 700 square meters. It is about, that's

like under 8,000 square feet, and it's about four stories tall, and basically what

you have in this space is a couple of ramps that crisscross through the galleries

above, but you have two stories worth of eight foot by eight foot graphics, and

then around the perimeter of this gallery, you have 19 story Alcoves. So, these

are little mixed media installations, eight feet by eight feet by eight feet and they

each presents a different story. In the center of the gallery you have a full motion

sort of motion tracking game so you can roll into the space or walk into the space

and it's a game with motion tracking and light projection and audio cues. But

basically what I want to highlight in this gallery is that you have a real multiplicity

of stories, so looking at the left, we have an installation on Japanese force

relocation during World War II, and then we have a story on the history of

women's rights in Canada, and then a story on immigration and then followed by

a story on murdered and missing indigenous women, and a story on labour rights

and the history of the vote in Canada, et cetera, et cetera, so on. So, a lot of

diversity in terms of the stories that are being told.

Graphically when we look at this space, just visually, it looks quite creative.

There is no sort of consistency or conformity. Each installation has a different

look and feel. There is a bunch of sound in this place, so just as diverse as the

graphic design is, so too is the audio design, and that landscape. And, maybe I'll

skip to the next slide because this is another view of the same space.

(Reference Slide 42) So, you know, I'm using this space, I use this space a lot

when I think about the ecosystem of design and all of those pieces coming

together. We'll come back to this image in a second, and I'm going to just kind of

cruise through some of the things that I mean when I'm talking about the

ecosystem of design. Normally this is a three to five day workshop but in succinct

terms think of typography within the space, within the environmental design,

within the building.

(Reference Slide 43) This is an illustration of an anatomy of type. Think about which typefaces we're using, how are the glyphs of each letter, how do they read, both tactilely, both in print, and digital media, as well. So, considering that type, how it's going to render, how it's going to play out, whether it is tactile, digital or print, is really important in order to understanding how readable and how accessible, you know, any of the graphic design is going to be.

(Reference Slide 44) Thinking about word shapes, the next illustration just basically shows the difference between doing something in all caps and doing something in mixed case and how word shapes are important to cognition and recognition.

(Reference Slide 45) You know, people get hung up on their preferences, aesthetic preferences, and I always find it irritating when people think that accessibility is somehow the antithesis of beautiful design, when I believe it to be just the opposite. And, so, irrespective of color preferences, what is important is focusing on color contrast.

(Reference Slide 46) So, there are some ideas of graphic design, feeding into the ecosystem in terms of applying graphic design into an environmental design, this is an illustration of an elevation drawing through the center of the illustration

you can see a blue zone, and that basically is what we determined for the

Canadian museum for human rights to be the most accessible region. What that

means is that we have a set defined characteristic for content that we would

present within that zone. If you're looking at this illustration, you can see that the

title of content is a larger, it's above the blue zone. Within the blue zone you see

the body type, which is at a set font size, and opacity, and if we were to go further

on you might see a caption that would be at a smaller site. So, we're creating

clear visual hierarchies of information that allow people to scan across a space

and see the title and determine whether they want to dive deeper, but if they do

want to dive deeper, we're going to make that heaviest piece of the content be as

predictably accessible as it can be, from both standing and seated positions. So,

defining a zone like this within the 3D space within the environmental design

allows us to apply that graphic design in a way that we're looking for consistent

outcomes.

(Reference Slide 47) Same with reading distances. So, size of type to

distance of visitor, and that is what this next illustration shows from standing and

seated position, as well. So, maybe I'll go back a bit.

If you're imagining in an exhibition in a museum or art gallery some of the content can be pretty high up the wall. Well, that means that it should probably be larger and larger if we expect people to be able to read it. So, that is kind of not just for horizontal, but vertical application as well.

(Reference Slide 48) Thinking about digital media, there is a lot that is done these days in terms of interface design and layout of digital screens, but these screens often exist in a physical location, in a physical environment. So, this is an illustration that shows prerequisites to designing a digital interface within a physical place. So, in a kiosk, we won't know that from a seated position or from a shorter position. We want people to be able to reach the functions within that digital interface. So, before we start designing the digital interface, we want to considered, like, where that interface is going to exist in 3 D space, and set out some prerequisites.

(Reference Slide 49) If I go to the next screen, you will see the mock up of a digital interface, and here we know that all of the functions that control that interface are beneath a dotted blue line, and that dotted blue line is letting us know that that is the reachable zone that we've defined for digital interfaces on horizontal and vertical orientations of screens so that they're reachable. So, that

this is the sweet spot that we've established for being able to tap functions within a digital interface.

(Reference Slide 50) Same things goes for linear media. This is an illustration where we have a theater and we want to know how big is the picture to the distance of people sitting in the theater or standing. What is the size of the ASL or LSQ interpreter, and what is the size and contrast of the subtitles or captions that are going to be not subtitles, but captions that are going to be on screen. (Reference Slide 51) So, this is all laid in mock up and then same thing on a personal kiosk.

(Reference Slide 52) And, if we continue scrolling forward, we can start to see the ecosystem coming together in this photo. So, we have a built environment, we have furniture that is at our height and angle that we've determined to reduce reflection and glare from the lighting overhead. A visitor is in a chair at the kiosk about to play a video and you can see there is captions. His arm is obscuring the fact that there is an ASL interpreter on the right hand side. But, all of these pieces come together. It would be pretty frustrating to be able to come up to this kiosk, know that it is an accessible height, navigate through an

accessible digital interface only to get a piece of media that doesn't have captions

or ASL or describe tracks on it. So, all of those things have to work together.

(Reference Slide 53 and 54) This is what it looks like in a theater when we

have the media, the captions, and subtitles. Next And, again on a kiosk.

(Reference Slide 55) So, when we come back to this image of the largest

gallery at the Canadian Museum for Human Rights, it is quite diverse in terms of

its soundscape, and its graphics and its aesthetics are very rich. Yet all of these

standards are applied to it. You can see around the perimeter you can see these

white and black context panels. Well white and black it is high contrast text. It is

consistently applied through that accessible region, and basically what is

happening now in this space when visitors go through is they're spending their

cognitive and physical energy on the content and on the stories that the space is

trying to deliver, and they're not spending that physical and cognitive energy on

trying to access the content and the stories. And, this is an inclusive environment

that is made more usable for everybody because we applied a really strict

inclusive design methodology to it.

(Reference Slides 56 & 57)I'm going to skip really quickly, because I'm

running out of time. I just want to say that in terms of the approach, we heard

about the advisory council from Amy. I don't need to really go into that, but I will

just say in terms of holding authority, I think it's really important to have terms

and conditions, roles and responsibilities, really clearly laid out so that

expectations are managed on the part of the advisory council, on the part of staff,

on the part of the design team, on the part of the project sponsors or authorities,

as well. Having all of that stuff laid out will just, as you go down the process of

creating the project, just be a lot more efficient.

Project structures are important as well when you're setting out the project

schedule and budget, make sure to allow space for interactive design and

production cycles. (Reference Slide 58) You want to be able to prototype and test

as much as you can throughout the work breakdown structure of a project, and

that should be laid out at the beginning.

Amy touched on contracting, so I won't even mention it prototyping and

testing is my key to success. You don't know what you don't know, and you just

need to make time for prototyping and testing and involving the right user groups

as you can, and redundancy. Make deliberate decisions but be redundant.

(Reference Slide 59 & 60)This is a photo of prototyping a 360-degree film, and this

is what the 360 degree film looks like in space. The benches have armrests and

backs. There are audio jacks for plugging in your headphones for the descriptive

tracking and you get headphones from the museum. You can see the captions

and ASL interpreter on screen, and so we never would have been able to pull off a

fully inclusive and accessible 360-degree film had we not prototyped it first.

(Reference Slide 61 - 64) Mixed media installation and schematic drawing,

the prototyping doesn't have to be sexy. These are some monitors on the ground

and some text on the wall in different sizes, and here is the final installation in the

gallery. But again, prototyping and testing is critical. Size doesn't really matter all

the time, as well. (Reference Slide 65) This is a prototype of one third of this

presentation, it's a 27 meter wide mixed media installation, but prototyping one

third of it, we were able to receive a ton of feedback that we wouldn't otherwise

have.

(Reference Slide 66) In terms of redundancy, here we have the gallery title is

white embossed letters on a white background. Technically, it meets our

accessibility standards because of the way it is lit creating such a heavy drop

shadow. That kind of left me uncomfortable that so many variables had to

combine to make something really accessible, so we repeat the title right above

the body text. Below you see breaking the silence, breaking the silence again

below it, and that redundancy was deliberate. It looks nice. If we had not done

that and tried to do it later, probably the titles would have been a bit lower in the

body copy a bit higher and it would have looked like we crammed something in

there, because we would have crammed something in there. So, you know,

thinking about this at the outset allowed to us just have that redundancy, be

deliberate.

(Reference Slide 67) Same with the double rails. You know, a lot of people

think the bottom rail is for people in a chair. Here is a little girl using the bottom

rail while her father uses the top rail on the other side. It's just a better system

for everyone.

(Reference Slide 68-78) And, you know, I'm going to leave these slides here.

I talk a little bit about innovation, and not that these two innovation points are

the most innovative things in the world, but the idea is it's all existing technology

that we're able to apply to our use cases to create a tactile key pad and a

Bluetooth enabled hot spot that can readout content that otherwise can't be

seen, such as the artifact in a case that could be described if it can't be seen. And,

based on the location. And, this, is all technology that exists.

(Reference Slide 79) So, I feel like my last point I want to make is there are guidelines and standards, but, you know, the idea of an advisory group prototyping and testing, of thinking of the entire ecosystem really leads us to a point of the standards are important, the applications of the standards are just as important. Yeah.

(Reference Slide 80) I'll leave one final comment between reinforcing the accessibility versus inclusion. This is the Greensboro counter installation at the national African Museum of History and Culture Smithsonian Washington, D.C. This is an installation on segregation, the four boys who sat at the Greensboro counter during the civil rights movement and wouldn't leave. It is an amazing installation. It's a super powerful story. This is an installation on segregation. It is totally accessible, but if you're in a wheelchair use that lower section down at the right hand side. Left hand side of the image.

So, you know, you learn a great story by visiting this installation about how powerful the civil rights movement was, the bravery of these four boys, and you also learn that if you're in a wheelchair you can go use the piece at the end. It is totally accessible. It is not inclusive, and yet it is an installation on segregation.

So, maybe I'll just kind of leave that there and say thank you.

(Reference Slide 81) >> THEA KURDI: Thank you very much, Corey. That was another amazing presentation. It's fantastic to hear how many facilities, including the ones that you have mentioned here in this presentation, are making spaces more accessible for people with disabilities.

I really loved that you talked about the ethos and ecosystem of design and how that relates to the whole process, how we're ensuring the sum of all parts equal something that actually is exclusive and accessible. Looking at the largest gallery at the Canadian museum for human rights and visiting that again and again and showing us different ways that you considered accessibility I think was very informative. Redundancy I thought was also particularly important, as well as allowing the time for prototyping and testing. I don't think enough projects are taking advantage of that, so I think those are very valuable take away messages.

(Reference Slide 82) Okay. So, now we're going to have a little bit of time to get some questions from the attendants for the session. If you have any questions, please type them now into the chat window in the bottom right corner or please email them to erin@artsbuildontario.ca. So, just waiting for people to type in some messages.

While we are waiting, I might just ask Amy a quick question, if we can get her

back on the call. Amy, what do you think are some of the lessons that you've

learned in trying to create spaces that are more accessible? I know you sort of

covered a lot of that here, but was there anything else that you wanted to add

quickly to that?

>> AMY POTHIER: I think that the most important aspect from my

knowledge really has to relate back to, you know, people or organizations that

have fully supported their AAC, their advisory committee, because when you

understand that the designer, that you must meet the needs as presented by the

AAC that they will be at the forefront of the design rather than at the added, you

know, requirement on to the project. So, it's really always great to see inclusive

design embedded from the beginning and then kind of championed by the client

so that the design team can do what they're trained to do and make the most

innovative and inclusive environment. It really does come back to the client.

>> THEA KURDI: Yeah, I couldn't agree more

Corey, we have one question here for you. How did the process of

prototyping roll out and how many phases were involved? Who was consulted in

that testing process?

>> COREY TIMPSON: Yeah. So, in every design project that we undertake, like the first thing we do is layout a project schedule, and it is based on a work breakdown structure that really lists out all the tasks that are involved in creating like a design project and executing it. And, within the milestone phases, so if it is an environmental design, the schematic design development 1, development 2, detailed design, and throughout the fabrication schedule if it is digital media, same thing through design development, schematic design, Beta testing, et cetera, or linear media rough cut, rough cut two, fine cuts, et cetera. So, we always have built in the point for prototyping and testing, whatever that design project is at each of these milestones, and depending on what that is, we look to prototype it in different ways. So, normally I work with an evaluator who constructs basically constructs activities around that design, and we do a call for participation.

When I've worked at a specific museum like the Canadian Museum for Human Rights and we had the inclusive design advisory council that we created I was able to tap that council to be able to bring in different people from different communities in order to test. When there are other ways of going about it, as well. I've worked with a number of companies across, well, across the globe, but mostly across North America, and if, for say for example, I'm doing a project in

Toronto but working with the design team in New York, we've done the

prototyping and testing in New York. I can work it into the contracts often where

I'm looking for the production team to be able to grab a group of people together,

ensure the group is diverse, and then run the prototyping session that way the

key thing is really identifying it in the schedule and ensuring that you have enough

time for iterations. So, not just that you're doing the testing and prototyping the

check boxes, but that you have enough time to basically interpret the results of

those scenarios and work them back into the design.

>> THEA KURDI: Thank you very much. We have some amazing questions

coming in. Unfortunately, we're out of time for them now, so I hope people will

follow up with our amazing presenters. There is a question here about the CSA

B651 which is an important guideline of national. But we're going to

unfortunately have to move on to wrap up the seminar and get everybody back

on their way for today.

(Reference Slide 83) We wanted to cover with you our next amazing

webinars. Seminar or webinar No. 5 is about safety, fire codes, and accessibility

for creative spaces, which will be hosted by Martin Day from Safety Media, and

Marnie Peters from Accessibility Simplified.

The last of our series, which will be held in May is about invisible disabilities and creative spaces with a presenters Alex Bulmer and Andrew Gurza. So, we hope you will have the time to either sign up or participate in the April 23rd and the May 14th sessions coming up.

(Reference Slide 84) We would very much like to thank ArtsBuild Ontario accessibility advisory committee for all of their fantastic work in helping us to inform what the webinars should include in this six part series.

(Reference Slide 85) We would also like to thank the government of Ontario and the accessibility director to help us with supporting this project.

We will be sending you, as mentioned at the beginning of the session, that we'll be sending you a survey. This is very important for us to get feedback from you. What did we do well, and should we continue to do, and what could we improve? What would be better for improved webinars for the future?

We would like to thank you very much for your time as the people attending and hope that you have a great day. Thank you very much.

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