



VISIONARY Design Development Pty Ltd

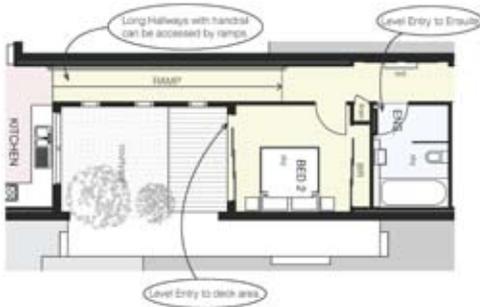
..... for an equitably accessible world

Autumn Greetings from all of us at Visionary Design Development Pty Ltd. In this issue, we focus on why Universal Design matters, as well as sharing project, VDD Studio and other news updates with you. We look forward to receiving your reports on Calendar (or other interesting) events. And, as always, we look forward to continuing working together with you for an equitable accessible world.

PROJECT UPDATES

Alterations and Additions

Our Inner-City Terrace project, about to receive planning permission, inches closer to reality. Ground floor height differences have been resolved via a ramped hallway ensuring full accessibility of the entry level. Several other 'Alterations and Additions' projects are currently in progress. Internally, Universal Design considerations include accessible circulation routes throughout, level entry showers and potential for future grabrails. Additionally, indoor-outdoor connectivity at all entry/exit points is an imperative.



Inner City Terrace

Accessible carparking

Our Accessible carparking project for the City of Port Phillip is drawing to a close. We are currently finalising the 'GIS component' whereby salient information, for example, Existing Conditions image, Complexity Categorisation and rectification requirements, applicable Best Practice Diagram, and Prioritisation tagged to each location will be instantly available electronically.

Social Housing

A very successful tender process has recently been concluded on one of our Social Housing projects. Visionary Design Development advocates that increasing the provision of Social/Community/ Public Housing is essential. We therefore look forward to continuing collaborations with the Dept of Health & Human Services, Housing Organisations and Local Government

WHY UNIVERSAL DESIGN MATTERS

"Universal design is the design of products and environments to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design." Ron Mace (1941-1998), Founder and program director of **The Centre for Universal Design (North Carolina State University, USA)**.

SHUT OUT: The Experience of People with Disabilities and their Families in Australia, a Report prepared in 2012 by the National People with Disabilities and Carer Council (NPDC), states that the famous 'fair go' ideal does not extend to people with disabilities. Compounding social and systemic disadvantages, the report highlights that the lack of inclusive and accessible public transport, parks, schools, housing and buildings plays a crucial role in creating barriers. Denial of access to services and community infrastructure creates isolation and loneliness. NPDC's Report concludes that a Universal Design approach could create accessible, safe and inclusive environments for people with disabilities and their carers.

Association of Consultants in Access Australia (ACAA) ACAA Conference 2015: Universal Design - a better way, 7-9 October 2015, Melbourne (Aust). Spread the word!!

Universal Design's primary focus, originally, was the removal of barriers for people with disabilities. However, the concept stretches well beyond that to benefit everyone, for example: elderly people,

parents with strollers, people with obesity or other chronic health issues, those who are very tall or very short, carers of people with disability, people with various functional limitations etc, most of whom are ignored by designers unless the particular brief demands it. Removing physical barriers to create more inclusive built environments that can accommodate the diversity of human capacity and needs will allow everyone to access more opportunities. Increased social inclusion will result.

In the twenty first century, Universal Design is not a new design approach. Nonetheless accessibility requirements continue to be treated as regulatory compliance 'thorns' in Australia. Considering accessibility as a compliance issue towards the end of the documentation process rather than as an essential human right defining the entire design process is a mis-conception and will not lead to exemplary outcomes. A major contributing factor to designers' lack of Universal Design awareness is the absence of systematic teaching in design curricula.

Another misconception is that Universal Design is only about accessibility for people with disabilities and therefore has a high construction cost. Although it is acknowledged that retro-fitting accessibility into existing environments can be expensive, the social and economic costs of inaccessible environments are far-reaching. For this reason, it is important that Universal Design is embedded from the outset and considered throughout all phases of the design process. Increasing the number of people whose needs are addressed in a single design solution also encourages an integrative approach rather than multiple separate solutions resulting in the inclusive involvement of more people in society's activities. It is this integrated approach that makes Universal Design cost effective.

Universal Design is a 'meta-disciplinary' concern. Universal Design Mattersto everyone.



If you would like to discuss collaboration possibilities across the areas of accessibility, research or architecture for any of your projects, please contact our office.

Left: Accessible Social Housing



VDD STUDIO ACTIVITIES

Visionary Design Development welcomes new VDD Studio members, Davis Clarke and Soledad Maldonado.

Davis is a 2nd year architecture student at Monash University. Davis is interested in sustainable architecture in the developing world and has raised funds for a Cambodian village. Soledad is a Graduate Architect and has collaborated with Visionary Design Development on past projects, particularly the Emergency Shelter project undertaken in conjunction with Here Studio.

Forthcoming VDD Studio activities include submissions for Dencity and Sponge House competitions.

In February 2015, VDD Studio provided input to the Parliament of Australia's Senate Inquiry into 'Young People in Nursing Homes', outlining the lack of Universal Design teaching in Design School Curricula in Australia and consequent impact on living environments for young people at risk of Aged Care residency. [Read full submission.](#) We thank Saumya Kaushik for her hard work in putting together this submission.

TEAM NEWS

We are very pleased to announce that Saumya Kaushik is now on staff at Visionary Design Development. Well done, Saumya.

Nick Shearman is currently on secondment working on a 'major bid' project. More details coming!!

CALENDAR

April 2015

- 18-21 Environments for Aging Conference, Baltimore, Maryland, USA
- 22-24 National Council on Rehabilitation Education, Spring 2015 conference, Newport Beach, California, USA
- 30 Understanding Access Legislation and Universal Design in Buildings, IATA, Brisbane Australia

May 2015

- 18-19 Pacific Rim International Conference on Disability and Diversity, Honolulu, Hawaii
- 19 Enabling Change, Creating Impact, Australian Network on Disability Conference, UTS, Sydney Australia
- 21-22 'Let's revolutionise caring: inclusion, innovation, diversity', Carers NSW Biennial Conference, Sydney, Australia

June 2015

- 9-10 Promoting Health & Safety for Workers with Disabilities, Chicago USA
- 9 & 23 Write-ability Writer's Group supporting writers with disability, The Wheeler Centre, Melbourne, Australia
- 20-11 Universal Design of ICT, Summer Schools in Europe, Oslo, Norway

July 2015

- 6-7 8th Making Cities Liveable Conference 2015, Liveable Cities for the Future, Melbourne, Australia
- 28-31 14th International Conference on Mobility and Transport for Elderly and Disabled Persons Lisbon, Portugal
- 31-2 The Inclusive Education Summit 2015: Making sense of everyday practice, Victoria University, Melbourne, Australia

Selected Universal Design Resources

[Seven Principles of Universal Design](#)

[The Centre for Excellence in Universal Design \(CEUD\) Ireland](#)

[Universal Design - Barrier Free Environments](#)

[Australian Network for Universal Housing Design](#)

[Accessibility Design Guide](#)

[Universal Design: University of Washington](#)

OTHER NEWS

In January Visionary Design Development hosted Building Trust International Directors David and Louise Cole at a BBQ/ late lunch. Following on from this auspicious event, I am very pleased to report that Susan (Ang, 2nd from left in photo) Senior Lecturer School of Arch and Blt Env Deakin Uni & David & Louise (Cole, right of photo) Directors of Building Trust International have begun discussions on how Deakin Uni arch/ blt env students might engage 'with ideas for sustainable design solutions within developing countries and emerging markets', through in-country, hands-on workshops etc. Also, Saumya (Kaushik, 3rd from right) is now Editor of Building Trust India's facebook page.



THROUGHOUT THIS YEAR

...AND BEYOND

Visionary Design Development Pty Ltd looks forward to collaborating with you to make the world a more equitably accessible place. Come and visit us in our office, or at a location of your choice.

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