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## The Regional Municipality of Durham

### MINUTES

#### ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Tuesday, June 25, 2024

A meeting of the Accessibility Advisory Committee was held on Tuesday, June 25, 2024 at Regional Headquarters Building, 605 Rossland Road East, Whitby at 1:02 PM. Electronic participation was permitted for this meeting.

#### 1. Traditional Territory Acknowledgment

R. Purnwasie, Chair, read the following land acknowledgement:

The Region of Durham exists on lands that the Michi Saagiig Anishinaabeg inhabited for thousands of years prior to European colonization. These lands are the traditional and treaty territories of the Nations covered under the Williams Treaties, including the Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation, Alderville First Nation, Hiawatha First Nation, Curve Lake First Nation, and the Chippewa Nations of Georgina Island, Beausoleil and Rama.

We honour, recognize, and respect Indigenous Peoples as rights holders and stewards of the lands and waters on which we have the privilege to live. In our efforts towards reconciliation, we continue to build and strengthen relationships with First Nations, as well as the growing Inuit communities and large Métis communities and here in Durham. We commit to learning from Indigenous values and knowledge, building opportunities for collaboration, and recognizing that we are all connected.

#### 2. Roll Call

Present: D. Campbell, Whitby  
P. Chandwani, Whitby  
W. Henshall\*, Whitby, left the meeting at 1:50 PM  
M. Lloyd, Oshawa  
J. McEwen\*, Clarington, Vice-Chair  
R. Purnwasie, Ajax, Chair  
**\*denotes members of the committee participating electronically**

Absent: Councillor McDougall  
S. Sones, Whitby  
L. Williams, Pickering

#### Staff

Present: N. Dash\*, Accessibility Coordinator, Office of the Chief Administrative Officer  
H. Finlay, Manager, Transit Oriented Development, Planning Department  
A. Hector-Alexander, Director, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion  
P. Hines, Manager, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

L. Lovery, Director, Rapid Transit and Transit Oriented Development,  
Planning Division  
R. Inacio, Systems Support Specialist, Corporate Services – IT  
K. Smith, Committee Clerk, Corporate Services – Legislative Services  
**\*denotes staff participating electronically**

### 3. **Declarations of Pecuniary Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

### 4. **Adoption of Minutes**

Moved by J. McEwen, Seconded by P. Chandwani,  
That the minutes of the Accessibility Advisory Committee meeting held on  
Tuesday, May 28, 2024, be adopted.  
CARRIED

### 5. **Presentations**

#### A) Heather Finlay, Manager, Transit Oriented Development, Planning Division, Region of Durham, re: Lakeshore East GO Train Extension to Bowmanville

Heather Finlay, Manager, Transit Oriented Development, Planning Division,  
Region of Durham, provided a PowerPoint presentation with regards to the  
Region's Station Implementation Strategy and the GO Transit Station Funding  
Act, 2023.

Highlights of the presentation included:

- Background
- Metrolinx Market Driven Strategy (MMDS) vs. Region's Station Implementation Strategy
- Highlights of the GO Transit Station Funding Act, 2024
- Requirement for a "prescribed" Background Study
- Current Status
- Next Steps

H. Finlay responded to questions with regards to the rail corridor and station design completion status; which stations are being designed; which company is designing the rail corridor; whether Durham Region or the lower tier municipalities are contributing to the bridge replacements from Oshawa to Bowmanville; who was awarded the contract to design the station buildings; whether an opening day of service has been identified; and whether the Site Plan subcommittee would have access to the GO Train extension plans to provide feedback.

In response to various questions, H. Finlay advised she would provide a response to which version of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) the

design standards are compliant with; and when a contract will be awarded for the design build.

Discussion ensued with regards to individuals with lived experience and a background in accessibility providing input to Metrolinx to ensure accessibility requirements are met prior and/or during construction and not taken into consideration after construction has been completed; and whether Metrolinx has an Accessibility Advisory Committee to provide input on projects including the GO Train extension to Bowmanville.

## **6. Discussion Items**

### **A) Motion re: Construction at Stations for the Lakeshore East GO Train Extension to Bowmanville**

Discussion ensued with regards to when the new station stops open, whether they will have station buildings for shelter and washrooms; what a modest station would look like; what is included at station stops in order to open to the public; ensuring AODA standards are adhered to; potential interruptions for the accessible components during construction; the types of funding options available to fund the new station stops; how the transit station charge is levied on residential and non-residential development; in which order the station stops will be built; and the possibility of a Committee member appearing as a delegation to support the motion going to the Finance and Administration Committee.

Moved by J. McEwen, Seconded by D. Campbell,

That we recommend to the Finance and Administration Committee for approval and subsequent recommendation to Regional Council:

Whereas the Durham Accessibility Advisory Committee takes the position that station buildings and associated infrastructure at all stops for the Lakeshore East GO train Extension to Bowmanville must be completed before the extension opens and for the following reasons:

- i) To protect Durham Region's ridership from nature's harsh elements;
- ii) To house properly designed accessible washrooms; and
- iii) To ensure the safety of individuals utilizing transit connections, especially for our disabled community;

Now therefore be it resolved, that if Metrolinx fails to achieve Agreements with the private sector for new GO train Stations, the Durham Accessibility Advisory Committee supports Durham's possible decisions to help fund/build the Lakeshore East GO train Extension to Bowmanville, including all Station buildings and associated infrastructure such as entrances and parking lots.

CARRIED

It was the consensus of the Committee to recess at this time. The Committee recessed at 2:13 PM and reconvened at 2:20 PM.

Following the recess, the Committee Clerk conducted a roll call, and all members of the Committee were present with the exception of W. Henshall, Councillor McDougall, S. Sones, and L. Williams.

B) Funding Opportunities

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N. Dash advised that a brief summary of current opportunities for grant funding was provided to Committee members prior to the meeting.

N. Dash stated that one of the programs is the Enabling Accessibility Fund – Small Project Component which focuses on new construction projects, or renovations or retrofits that will improve accessibility and safety for persons with a disability, and create more opportunities for persons with disabilities to take part in community activities, programs and services, and access employment. N. Dash advised that there is funding of approximately \$175,000 available per project and asked Committee members if they had any suggestions for a project that could be considered for a grant through this program. Discussion ensued regarding how to make the Project Search program better by providing an area for Project Search interns to sit down for lunch breaks or implementing a sensory room at the buildings where the interns work.

N. Dash also advised that Accessible Canada is looking to increase awareness through National AccessAbility Week in 2025 and 2026 by offering funding of up to \$50,000 to increase public awareness and education on accessibility. They are looking for programs that intersect with all the different diverse parts of the community and will give priority to projects that they feel meets those levels of diversity, for example taking into consideration a person with a disability who is also Indigenous. She stated that the application deadline is July 17, 2024.

Discussion ensued and Committee members suggested collaborating with organizations such as Ontario Shores, Abilities Centre, Grandview Kids, and Durham College to hold an educational workshop or conference to bring a number of service oriented organizations together to brainstorm accessibility. This could also provide for multi-sectoral partnerships and allow for conversations to begin. Discussion also ensued with regards to locations such as Ontario Tech University or Ontario Shores for larger gatherings; and various community partners to host a collaborative event with.

P. Hines requested that Committee members provide ideas for other organizations that would be interested in partnering with Durham Region for an event.

## 7. Correspondence

There were no items of correspondence to consider.

## 8. Information Items

### A) Accessibility Coordinator Update

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N. Dash advised that the Joint Forum of the Accessibility Advisory Committees is being held on September 18, 2024 at the Abilities Centre and the new name moving forward is Accessibility Advisory Committee Awards. She stated that the lower tier municipalities have been requested to submit their nominations for the awards by mid-July. This year's event will be less formal to allow for networking at the event and each of the Accessibility Advisory Committees are being asked to provide a short presentation providing an update on the past year. D. Campbell advised that Carlton University released a resource guide called Planning Accessible Events and suggested reviewing the guide to assist with planning the Joint Forum.

Discussion ensued with regards to the length of presentation from each advisory committee and having the presentations pre-recorded.

N. Dash also advised that the Accessibility Coordinators and By-law officers of most lower tiers of municipalities continue to meet bi-monthly to discuss possible solutions to the lack of availability of accessible taxis within the Region and will keep the Committee posted on any further discussions.

N. Dash further advised that there are currently two vacancies on the Committee, one for an individual who has a family member with a disability and one for a person with a disability. Based on conversations at the last meeting, she will be looking for a youth individual to fill the vacancy for a person with a disability.

N. Dash provided an update with regards to the Design of Public Spaces Standards Development Committee review of the Province's accessible built environment standards. She noted that municipalities require a comprehensive accessibility report when submitting a site plan for approval; that a well-defined process for site plan reviews by an accessibility advisory committee is to be done and should include training and development of materials to assist the committees; and that training be provided for officials and inspectors to ensure they are able to recognize the need for appropriate accessibility requirements. She stated that feedback on the review is due mid-August if any Committee members wish to provide feedback.

Discussion ensued with regards to the application form to apply for advisory committee vacancies and ways to improve the accessibility of the form and to simplify the process when applying.

**9. Reports for Information**

There were no reports to consider.

**10. Other Business**

There was no other business to be considered.

**11. Date of Next Meeting**

The next regularly scheduled Accessibility Advisory Committee meeting will be held on Tuesday, September 24, 2024 at 1:00 PM.

**12. Adjournment**

Moved by M. Lloyd, Seconded by D. Campbell,  
That the meeting be adjourned.  
CARRIED

The meeting adjourned at 2:57 PM

Respectfully submitted,

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R. Purnwasie, Chair, Accessibility Advisory Committee

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K. Smith, Committee Clerk