

If this information is required in an accessible format, please contact 1-800-372-1102 ext. 2097.

The Regional Municipality of Durham

MINUTES

ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Tuesday, September 24, 2024

A meeting of the Accessibility Advisory Committee was held on Tuesday, September 24, 2024 at Regional Headquarters Building, 605 Rossland Road East, Whitby at 1:00 PM. Electronic participation was permitted for this meeting.

At the request of R. Purnwasie, Chair, J. McEwen, Vice-Chair assumed the Chair.

1. Traditional Territory Acknowledgment

J. McEwen, Vice-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
Councillor McDougall*
J. McEwen, Clarington, Vice-Chair
R. Purnwasie*, Ajax, Chair, left the meeting at 2:02 PM
S. Sones, Whitby
L. Williams*, Pickering

***denotes members of the committee participating electronically**

Absent: M. Lloyd, Oshawa

Staff

Present: N. Dash, Accessibility Coordinator, Office of the Chief Administrative Officer
A. Hector-Alexander, Director, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion
P. Hines, Manager, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

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 D. Campbell, Seconded by Councillor McDougall,
That the minutes of the Accessibility Advisory Committee meeting held on
Tuesday, June 25, 2024, be adopted.
CARRIED

5. Presentations

There were no presentations.

6. Discussion Items

A) AAC Award Update and Nomination Process

P. Hines advised that in years past, the Durham Accessibility Advisory Committee awards process was done by nominating and awarding only one person by each of the local Accessibility Advisory Committees and asked Committee members for their feedback to ensure a more fair, transparent and equitable award process.

Discussion ensued with regards to incorporating guidelines for the eligibility criteria; allowing nominations outside of the electing municipality; accepting nominations from members of the public; reviewing how other advisory committees nominate candidates; providing a broader audience to select from; and developing a formal nomination process.

B) Canadian Accessibility Network

D. Campbell advised that the Canadian Accessibility Network (CAN) is a network that has representation from 117 collaborative organizations and 220 members of the public across Canada. D. Campbell further advised that CAN has communities of practice that provide inclusive, creative opportunities for members to drive accessibility forward in education and training, employment, policy and research, design and innovation. D. Campbell stated they are now a member of CAN and encouraged Committee members to see if they would like to join.

W. Henshall advised of being invited to join CAN because of a background with employment at the Canadian National Institute for the Blind (CNIB).

P. Hines advised of joining CAN and being part of two communities of practice.

C) AAC Workplan

N. Dash asked Committee members to consider what their areas of focus would be moving forward with the priority focus areas being facilities and site plan review, outreach and communications, advice to council, and committee education and development and advised that communication regarding the subcommittees will be coming out shortly. N. Dash further advised that the Accessibility Report will be discussed in the next meeting and asked Committee members to advise how they would like to be involved.

Discussion ensued with regards to how Durham Region is involved or can be involved in site plan reviews for projects happening at the lower tier municipalities; ways for the Accessibility Advisory Committee to collaborate with lower tier municipalities on projects; and collaboration between Durham advisory committees.

In response to a question from D. Campbell, N. Dash advised that there are regular meetings with the Accessibility Coordinators within Durham Region and updates will be provided at future meetings.

N. Dash further advised that a report will be sent out regarding the September 19, 2024 Annual Region of Durham Accessibility Advisory Committee Awards Celebration.

P. Hines advised that the AAC Workplan will be sent to Committee members to identify the projects Committee members would like to work on and an update can be provided at the next Committee meeting.

D) International Day of Persons with Disabilities

N. Dash advised that International Day of Persons with Disabilities is on December 3, 2024 and asked Committee members for input on what they would like to do to showcase the day.

Discussion ensued with regards to making a request to the Regional Chair to provide a proclamation for International Day of Persons with Disabilities; having the day promoted on social media platforms; collaborating with the lower tier municipalities to promote the day; providing a meet and greet for interaction with the disabled community; and providing a presentation or lunch and learn for Regional staff and members of the public.

N. Dash advised there will be a meeting with the Accessibility Coordinators next week and an update will be provided on how the lower tier municipalities are raising awareness for International Day of Persons with Disabilities.

7. Correspondence

A) Correspondence from the City of Stratford, re: Resolution – Call to Action to Meet the Deadline of an Accessible Ontario by 2025

Correspondence from the City of Stratford, re: Resolution – Call to Action to Meet the Deadline of an Accessible Ontario by 2025 was provided as Attachment #2 to the agenda and received.

Discussion ensued with regards to supporting the motion from the City of Stratford; asking the Province to create a municipal accessibility fund to assist municipalities with developing, implementing and enforcing the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) standards; how to put forward a motion before Regional Council for their support; and how the letter from the City of Stratford was brought forward to the agenda.

N. Dash advised they would find out how other Durham Region municipalities are supporting this topic.

8. Information Items

A) Update on the Transit Advisory Committee (TAC)

J. McEwen advised that at the September 17, 2024 meeting, TAC was advised that the Durham-Scarborough Bus Rapid Transit construction phase one will begin in 2025 and the Simcoe Street Rapid Transit study has been narrowed down to two options.

Discussion ensued with regards to accessibility concerns around the accessibility practices being proposed for the aerial cable car option and whether accessibility concerns were being communicated well.

The September 17, 2024 Transit Advisory Committee meeting update from J. McEwen will be emailed to Committee members following the meeting.

Moved by W. Henshall, Seconded by D. Campbell,
That the Accessibility Advisory Committee recommends that accessibility be a heavily weighted factor when selecting a solution for the Simcoe Street Rapid Transit Study.

CARRIED

B) Accessibility Coordinator Update

N. Dash provided the following update:

- The Accessible Taxi Survey launched on September 9, 2024 and Committee members were asked to share it within their communities.
- The 20th Annual Durham Region AAC Awards took place on September 19, 2024 and had 85 people in attendance. The Durham AAC awarded Grandview Kids for this year's winner.
- Durham Region Transit specialized services will begin offering a fleet of buses that have accessibility features to serve those living with

disabilities and will be offering a combination of both conventional and unconventional services.

- The Sunflower Hidden Disabilities Program will be launching once 80% of operators have received training. No specific date has been provided yet.

Discussion ensued with regards to incorporating a separate night from the awards ceremony to allow for networking; difficulties with accessibility at the venue for the awards ceremony; and utilizing more than one person during a final walk through of the venue.

In response to a concern from a Committee member, N. Dash advised they would communicate to Durham Region Transit staff to ensure that education around engaging people with a disability is strongly encouraged.

9. Reports for Information

There were no reports to consider.

10. Other Business

A) Subcommittee Working Groups

P. Chandwani requested an update on how the subcommittee working groups will be meeting and to better understand the scope of each group.

N. Dash advised that an update will be provided on the subcommittees through email shortly and P. Hines further advised that a description of each subcommittee will also be provided to understand the expectations.

11. Date of Next Meeting

The next regularly scheduled Accessibility Advisory Committee meeting will be held on Tuesday, November 26, 2024 at 1:00 PM.

12. Adjournment

Moved by D. Campbell, Seconded by P. Chandwani,
That the meeting be adjourned.

CARRIED

The meeting adjourned at 3:02 PM

Respectfully submitted,

J. McEwen, Vice-Chair, Accessibility Advisory
Committee

K. Smith, Committee Clerk