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The Regional Municipality of Durham

MINUTES

ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Tuesday, March 25, 2025

A meeting of the Accessibility Advisory Committee was held on Tuesday, March 25, 2025, in Meeting Room 1-A, Regional Headquarters Building, 605 Rossland Road East, Whitby at 1:00 PM. Electronic participation was permitted for this meeting.

1. Traditional Territory Acknowledgment

K. Smith 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
M. Lloyd*, Oshawa
Councillor McDougall
J. McEwen, Clarington, Vice-Chair
S. Sones, Whitby
L. Williams*, Pickering, attended the meeting at 1:07 PM
***denotes members of the committee participating electronically**

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 pecuniary interest made.

4. Adoption of Minutes

Moved by D. Campbell, Seconded by P. Chandwani,
That the minutes of the Accessibility Advisory Committee meeting held on
Tuesday, January 28, 2025, be adopted.

CARRIED

5. Discussion Items

A) Accessibility Checklist for the Durham Home Builders' Association

N. Dash advised that in follow up to a request from Committee members regarding the number of accessible units required when building homes, she reached out to the Durham Home Builders' Association, and they stated there is a need for an accessible checklist as they have general contractors reaching out to them for requirements. N. Dash stated there are incentives available and credits available when filing income taxes, however they pertain to adding additions onto an existing home, and further advised there are other programs such as the Multigenerational Home Renovation Tax Credit and the Home Accessibility Tax Credit. N. Dash asked Committee members if this project is something they wish to take on and if so, a subcommittee can be created.

Discussion ensued with regards to compiling a list of resources, rather than creating a checklist, and the list of potential resources and businesses that could be provided to the Durham Home Builders' Association.

B) 2024 Annual Report

A copy of the Durham Region Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC) 2024 Achievements was provided as Attachment #2 to the Agenda.

N. Dash advised that as per the Terms of Reference, a report of all activities is required to be submitted to Regional Council.

M. Lloyd advised their name was spelt incorrectly and requested that the event where they spoke about disability employment be included in the AAC 2024 Achievements.

Moved by M. Lloyd, Seconded by D. Campbell,
That we recommend to the Finance & Administration Committee for
approval and subsequent recommendation to Regional Council:

That the Durham Region Accessibility Advisory Committee 2024 Achievements,
as amended, be adopted.

CARRIED

C) 2025 Workplan

A copy of the Durham Region Accessibility Advisory Committee Workplan 2025 was provided as Attachment #3 to the Agenda.

N. Dash advised that the AAC Workplan 2025 will be submitted for approval to the Finance and Administration Committee and for subsequent approval to Regional Council.

Discussion ensued with regards to being involved from an accessibility standpoint on the Durham Vision Zero action plan; coordinating AAC's goals and responsibilities and relating to the work the Durham Active Transportation Committee does; and adding the coordination with the Durham Active Transportation Committee to the AAC Workplan for 2025.

N. Dash advised she would reach out to the Durham Active Transportation Committee and add the item to the 2025 Workplan.

Moved by M. Lloyd, Seconded by D. Campbell,
That we recommend to the Finance & Administration Committee for approval and subsequent recommendation to Regional Council:

That the 2025 Accessibility Advisory Committee Annual Work Plan, as amended, be adopted.

CARRIED

D) Revised Terms of Reference

A copy of the Durham Region Accessibility Advisory Committee Terms of Reference March 2025 was provided as Attachment #4 to the Agenda.

N. Dash advised that the AAC Terms of Reference March 2025 had one addition stating that efforts should be made to ensure representation from a youth with a disability be included in the composition; and it will be submitted for approval to the Finance and Administration Committee and for subsequent approval to Regional Council.

Moved by M. Lloyd, Seconded by Councillor McDougall,
That we recommend to the Finance & Administration Committee for approval and subsequent recommendation to Regional Council:

That the Accessibility Advisory Committee Terms of Reference March 2025, be adopted.

CARRIED

6. Correspondence

There were no items of correspondence to consider.

7. Information Items

A) Education Sub-Committee Update

P. Chandwani advised that at the recent meeting they clarified the difference between the Durham Accessibility Conference and the Fall event to be hosted by the Committee. It was determined that the Durham Accessibility Conference will have employers, community members and accessibility champions. The Fall event will attract people and employers and bring awareness to inclusive hiring practices and the benefits of hiring people with disabilities. P. Chandwani further advised there was discussion on leveraging existing business forums such as the Durham Region business directory to help spread awareness about both events and potentially provide incentives to people and businesses attending the events.

Discussion ensued with regards to using incentives to attract businesses and people to attend events and other ways to increase attendance at events.

B) Site Plan Sub-Committee Update

J. McEwen advised they are currently working on creating a window display or decal to be placed in businesses to identify them as accessible and are looking at what criteria would be required to obtain the decal and a tiered rating system.

Discussion ensued with regards to where this information is currently available; using the open-source app Access Now and its features; potentially collaborating with Access Now for a list of accessible businesses; and whether the accessibility decals would be for the built environment only or considered for digital content such as websites.

J. McEwen advised the next Site Plan Sub-Committee meeting is taking place on April 2, 2025.

C) Update on the Transit Advisory Committee (TAC)

The February 18, 2025 Transit Advisory Committee meeting update from J. McEwen was emailed to Committee members.

W. Henshall advised that operator cyclical training has resumed after not being done for a number of years and that a new app is being implemented to use real-time GPS for transit buses.

D) Accessibility Coordinator Update

N. Dash provided the following update:

- The Durham Accessibility Conference is taking place on May 28, 2025 and they want to know how Committee members would like to be involved in the event.

J. McEwen, D. Campbell, W. Henshall, P. Chandwani, and M. Lloyd advised they would assist with the Accessibility Conference.

- The Durham Region Multi-Year Accessibility Plan 2026 to 2030 is currently in the community engagement stage and Committee members are being requested to provide their thoughts or edits on the survey draft. There is a focus group meeting in May and a further update will be provided after.
- The Annual Accessibility Report is in progress, and they will be reaching out to the Chair and Vice-Chair to provide written greetings for the report.
- Neurodiversity Week took place last week and there were a series of events at the different Works Department buildings outside of Regional Headquarters.
- National AccessAbility Week is from May 25 to May 31, 2025. Durham Region will be hosting a flag raising ceremony on May 26, 2025 at 11:30 AM and asked Committee members if they would like to assist with the event.
- At the Regional Accessibility Coordinators meeting, there was discussion on collaborating for activities and events to avoid conflicts in dates with several initiatives happening at the same time. N. Dash advised there are a number of events coming up and will provide the names and dates to Committee members.

Discussion ensued with regards to connecting and finding speakers for future events.

8. Reports for Information

There were no reports to consider.

9. Other Business

A) Accessing OneDrive Documents

There were concerns from Committee members having difficulty accessing documents being placed in OneDrive.

P. Hines advised they will work with the IT Department to rectify the issue.

10. Date of Next Meeting

The next regularly scheduled Accessibility Advisory Committee meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 27, 2025 at 1:00 PM.

11. Adjournment

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

CARRIED

The meeting adjourned at 2:32 PM

Respectfully submitted,

J. McEwen, Chair, Accessibility Advisory Committee

K. Smith, Committee Clerk