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The Regional Municipality of Durham
Accessibility Advisory Committee Minutes

Tuesday, January 27, 2026

A regular meeting of the Accessibility Advisory Committee was held on Tuesday, January 27, 2026 in the Oshawa Meeting Room, Main Level, Regional Headquarters Building, 605 Rossland Road East, Whitby, Ontario at 1:03 PM.

1. Traditional Territory Acknowledgement

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

Electronic participation was offered for this meeting.
* indicates individuals who participated electronically.

Members

Present: J. McEwen*, Chair
P. Chandwani*, Vice-Chair
W. Henshall* left the meeting at 2:32 PM
M. Jaffer
M. Lloyd* left the meeting at 1:55 PM
Councillor McDougall* left the meeting at 2:12 PM
L. Saumur* attended the meeting at 1:24 PM
S. Sones
J. Stevenson* attended the meeting at 1:11 PM and left the meeting at 2:10 PM

Members

Absent: L. Williams

Staff Present: P. Hines*, R. Inacio, K. Smith, K. Wall

3. Election of Officers for 2026

K. Smith responded to questions from the Committee with regards to the procedural requirements during the election of officers.

K. Smith called for nominations for the position of Chair of the Accessibility Advisory Committee.

Moved by Councillor McDougall, Seconded by P. Chandwani,
That Jim McEwen be nominated for the position of Chair of the
Accessibility Advisory Committee.

K. Smith asked if J. McEwen wished to stand. J. McEwen indicated he would stand.

Moved by M. Lloyd, Seconded by M. Jaffer,
That nominations be closed.

Carried

J. McEwen was acclaimed as the Chair of the Accessibility Advisory Committee.

K. Smith called for nominations for the position of Vice-Chair of the Accessibility Advisory Committee.

Moved by J. McEwen, Seconded by S. Sones,
That Priya Chandwani be nominated for the position of Vice-Chair of the
Accessibility Advisory Committee.

K. Smith asked if P. Chandwani wished to stand. P. Chandwani indicated she would stand.

Moved by J. McEwen, Seconded by M. Lloyd,
That nominations be closed.

Carried

P. Chandwani was acclaimed as the Vice-Chair of the Accessibility Advisory Committee.

J. McEwen assumed the Chair.

4. Declarations of Pecuniary Interest

There were no declarations of pecuniary interest.

5. Adoption of Minutes

Moved by Councillor McDougall, Seconded by M. Jaffer,
That the minutes of the Accessibility Advisory Committee meeting held on
Tuesday, November 25, 2025, be adopted.

Carried

6. Discussion Items

A) Multi-Year Accessibility Plan (MYAP) 2026-2030

K. Wall advised that there are five action items under the 2026-2030 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan (MYAP) and that they are aligned with the Durham Region 2025-2035 Strategic Plan. She advised that they would be implemented over a four-year period. K. Wall provided a brief overview of the five action items as follows:

Employment

1. Inclusive Hiring & Accommodation (2026-2027)
2. Strengthen Leadership Confidence and Capacity (2026-2027)
3. Expand and Diversify Employment Outreach (2026-2027)
4. Prioritize Accessible and Supportive Work Environments (2026-2028)

Information and Communications

1. Implement Inclusive Communication Practices (2027-2028)
2. Employee Capacity Building (2026-2028)
3. Strengthen Public Education and Outreach (2027-2030)
4. Develop Consistent Accessible Messaging (2026-2028)

Customer service

1. Establish a Unified Approach to Service Delivery (2026-2028)
2. Improve Service Coordination (2026-2028)
3. Expand Ways to Access Services (2027-2030)
4. Outreach and Education (2026)

Design of Public Spaces

1. Promote Accessibility as a Core Design Concept (2027-2030)
2. Support Fair and Transparent Planning (2026-2030)
3. Enhance Mobility and Inclusive Planning (2026-2029)
4. Plan for Growth and Accessibility Needs (2026-2027)

Transportation

1. Advocate for Inclusive Future Focused Planning (2027-2030)
2. Foster Integrated Planning Between Services (2027-2030)
3. Invest in Wayfinding and Travel Support Technologies (2027-2030)
4. Improve Access to the Transit Network (2027-2030)

Committee members provided feedback on the action items with regards to ensuring that person first language is used throughout the document; including infrastructure when prioritizing accessible and supportive work environments; ensuring that all existing and future documents being posted on durham.ca are in an accessible format; ensuring that proper training is provided to staff for

accessible document creation; and selecting priority projects to consult on for Regionally owned projects.

K. Wall advised she would provide the action items list to Committee members following the meeting and requested that any additional feedback on the document be provided to her by February 3, 2026.

B) 2026 AAC Workplan

A copy of the 2026 AAC Workplan was provided as Attachment #2 to the Agenda and was received.

K. Wall advised that the Durham Region decal project was added to the Workplan, and that it had a few minor revisions from last year. K. Wall requested feedback from the Committee members by January 30, 2026 as it will be presented to the Finance and Administration Committee and Regional Council in the February cycle.

C) 2025 AAC Annual Report

K. Wall advised that the 2025 AAC Annual Report is in the final stages of review and that it will be presented to the April 14, 2026 Finance and Administration Committee and subsequently to the April 29, 2026 Regional Council for approval. K. Wall requested that Committee members send any photos taken at any of the events to be shared for inclusion in the 2025 AAC Annual Report.

7. Information Items

A) AODA Correspondence – Jim McEwen

A copy of the AODA Correspondence from Jim McEwen was provided as Attachment #3 to the Agenda and was received.

J. McEwen advised that he, as a private citizen, sent an email to the Honourable Raymond Cho, Minister for Seniors and Accessibility, to express his concerns regarding enforcing the AODA accessibility compliance for businesses.

B) Site Plan Sub-Committee Update

J. McEwen advised that the site plan sub-committee met on January 16, 2026, and discussed the Durham Accessibility Decal Project and how businesses can participate in the project to ensure that the public knows that their business is accessible. He stated that businesses would need to complete a self assessment and a declaration in order to obtain the decal for their business. The decal project will be promoted through the website and pamphlets, and that the target launch would be Spring 2026.

K. Wall shared the criteria for applying for the Durham Region Accessibility Decal and advised that there are three required criteria to obtain the decal. She advised that there is a list of eight areas for the accessibility feature checklist that are in

line with the Durham Standard. The physical accessibility features include entrance accessibility, interior navigation and washroom accessibility; the communication and signage features include signage, wayfinding, and communication and sensory accessibility; and the customer service and policy features include digital and information accessibility, service accessibility, and emergency preparedness.

Committee members provided feedback on the Durham Region Accessibility Decal Application Form with regards to stating the need for it to be in compliance with the current Ontario Building Code; adding in functional and maintained automatic doors; having toilet paper and soap dispensers at an accessible height and location; ensuring the regular maintenance of public washrooms; having coat hooks and shelves at an accessible height; ensuring that signage uses Sans Serif font and mixed case lettering; signs being used appropriately for accessible spaces and using universal images where applicable; having priority seating signage available; having flexible seating options for diverse mobility needs and body types; providing different formats for inclusive booking and scheduling systems; including a mechanism for staff to provide their specific needs during an emergency evacuation; using a sign in form for visitors on site at business locations; having a renewal system in place for maintaining the decal; adding an indemnification clause to the application form; and ensuring that the forward moving accessibility image is not used for accessible parking spaces.

K. Wall advised there will be a frequently asked questions page that will be included with the decal application.

At this point in the meeting W. Henshall left the meeting and quorum was lost. The remaining agenda items would be deferred to the March 24, 2026 meeting.

C) Accessibility Coordinator Update

Due to a lack of quorum, Item 7. C) was not considered.

8. Other Business

Due to a lack of quorum this item was not considered.

9. Date of Next Meeting

The next regularly scheduled Accessibility Advisory Committee meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 24, 2026 at 1:00 PM.

10. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 2:32 PM

Respectfully submitted,

J. McEwen
Chair, Accessibility Advisory Committee

K. Smith
Committee Clerk